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واکاوی مفهوم صحیح آیه ۱۰۶ بقره با تاکید بر روش تاریخ گذاری

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چکیده

آیه ۱۰۶ بقره مشهور به آیه نسخ یکی از مهم‌ترین ادله قائلان به نسخ در قرآن است؛ که بر این باورند این آیه به صراحت به مقوله نسخ آیات قرآن اشاره نموده است. جدای از تحلیل درون متنی آیه (که پژوهش‌هایی در این باره انجام شده است) تاریخ گذاری این آیه و آیات ناسخ می‌تواند به فهم صحیح این آیه کمک کند. پژوهش فرا رو با روش توصیفی- تحلیلی به بررسی تاریخ نزول آیه ۱۰۶ بقره و آیات ناسخ می‌پردازد و از این رهگذر، ارتباط این آیه با آیات ناسخ را به لحاظ تاریخ گذاری این آیات، مورد واکاوی قرار می‌دهد. از نتیجه پژوهش برمی‌آید که تاریخ نزول آیات ناسخ پس از نزول آیه ۱۰۶ بقره بوده است که بر این اساس معنای نسخ آیات قرآن با استناد به این آیه بی‌معنا است؛ زیرا قبل از این آیه نسخی صورت نگرفته که به دنبال آن خداوند به فلسفه نسخ آیات قرآن اشاره نماید. معنای صحیح این آیه با توجه به تاریخ گذاری و فضای نزول آن، به معنای نسخ شریعت‌های آسمانی پیشین به وسیله قرآن کریم است.

واژه‌های کلیدی

نسخ، آیه ۱۰۶ بقره، آیات ناسخ، پهود، شریعت‌های پیشین.

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Analysis of the Concept of Verse 106 of Surah al-Baqarah with an Emphasis on the Method of Dating

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ABSTRACT

Verse 106 of Surah *al-Baqarah*, known as the "Verse of Abrogation (*Naskh*)," is one of the most important pieces of evidence cited by those who believe in abrogation (*Naskh*) within the Quran. They argue that this verse explicitly refers to the abrogation of Quranic verses. Aside from the internal textual analysis of the verse, dating this verse and the abrogating verses can aid in a correct understanding of it. The present study, using a descriptive-analytical method, aims to examine the date of revelation of Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* and the abrogating verses, and in doing so, analyzes the historical relationship between this verse and the abrogating verses in terms of dating. The research findings indicate that the abrogating verses were revealed after Verse 106 of Surah *al-Baqarah*. Therefore, the meaning of abrogating Quranic verses based on this verse is rendered meaningless, as no abrogation had occurred before this verse for God to then refer to the philosophy of abrogating Quranic verses. The correct meaning of this verse, considering its dating and the context of its revelation is the abrogation of previous divine laws by the Holy Quran.

KEYWORDS

Abrogation, Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*, Abrogating Verses, Jews, Previous Divine Laws, Dating.



Introduction

Abrogation in the Quran is one of the most significant issues that have been discussed among Quranic scholars and exegetes from the early ages until now. There has been considerable disagreement regarding the definition of abrogation and its instances. Some have only accepted one type of abrogation (abrogation of a commandment) in the Quran, while others have mentioned three types of abrogation (Ṭabrisī, 1972 AD/1372 AH: 1, 348-350; Ṭabarī, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 1, 379-384; Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 1, 60-61; Ṭanṭāwī, 1993: 1, 242-243). It is also worth noting that there is a difference between early and later scholars regarding the number of abrogated verses. For example, Ibn Jawzī counts 247 verses, Ibn Ḥazm 214 verses, Naḥḥās 138 verses (cf. Jabrī, 1980: 109), and Suyūfī 21 verses (Suyūfī, n.d.: 2, 708-712) as abrogated.

This disagreement also exists among later scholars, though the number of abrogated verses they claim is much lower than what early scholars claimed. Among later scholars, some consider eight verses (Ma'rifat, 1996 AD/1416 AH: 2, 300-316), some six verses (Zayd, 1963 AD/1383 AH: 2, 803), and *Allamah Khu'ī* only one verse (Khu'ī, n.d.: 498) to be abrogated. The notable point here is that many of the verses that early scholars considered to be abrogated were not instances of the technical abrogation referred to by later scholars; rather, concepts like general and specific, absolute and restricted, and exception were considered forms of abrogation (Zayd, 1971: 1, 72; Ma'rifat, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 181).

Regardless of the foundational and specific differences that have existed and continue to exist, the evidence of those who believe in abrogation is a more significant challenge in

this field. This is because the evidence they rely on sometimes lacks sufficient strength. Among the Quranic evidence cited by those who believe in abrogation is Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*, which they believe explicitly refers to the abrogation of Quranic verses.

The main question of the present study is: assuming this verse indicates the abrogation of Quranic verses, which verses were abrogated before it so that this verse could then explain the philosophy of abrogating Quranic verses? In response to this question, this research aims to analyze whether the abrogating verses were revealed before or after Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*, by examining the time of revelation of both Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* and the abrogating verses.

A point that can be raised regarding the research questions is that the absence of abrogating verses before the verse of abrogation cannot, on its own, be a sufficient and independent reason to argue that Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* does not relate to technical abrogation. This is because it could be argued that this verse was intended to prepare for the important topic of abrogation in Islamic law, so that abrogation could practically occur later.

What can be said about this question is that the verse of abrogation is not meant to prepare for the topic of abrogation but was revealed in response to a misconception about abrogation. This is for two reasons:

1) The phrases used in this verse indicate the realization of an event, not preparation. These are conditional phrases used to respond to the questioner who either denied abrogation or did not understand its philosophy, and had doubts about its goals and outcomes;

2) The verses after Verse 106 show that the issue of abrogation had already occurred and these verses were revealed in response to

the misconceptions of those who denied it. This is because Verse 107 is in an interrogative form and follows the same previous topic. Verse 108 also uses an interrogative form to raise another doubt related to abrogation. This question clearly shows that it is an interrogative statement seeking to respond to a doubt about an event that has already occurred;

3) The narrations about the "Causes of Revelation" (*Asbāb al-Nuzūl*) concerning this topic explicitly mention the Jews' misconception about abrogation, which shows that this verse was revealed to respond to the Jews' doubt about abrogation (cf. Mughniyah, 2003 AD/1424 AH: 1, 170; Balāghī, 1966 AD/1386 AH: 1, 83-84, etc.).

1. Research Background

Numerous studies have been conducted on abrogation in the Quran from the time of the early scholars until now. However, most of the research on the non-occurrence of abrogation in the Quran has been done by later scholars. For example, 'Abdul Muta'āl Jabrī in his book "*Lā Naskh fī al-Quran, li Mādhā?*" Sayyid Murtaḍā 'Askarī in his book "*al-Quran al-Karīm wa Riwayāt al-Madrasatayn*" and Hānī Ṭāhir in his book "*Tanzīh Āy al-Quran an al-Naskh wa al-Nuqṣān*," have criticized the view of those who believe in abrogation. They do not consider the meaning of Verse 101 of *al-Nahl* to be indicative of abrogation in the Quran. These studies generally state that Verse 101 of *al-Nahl* does not indicate abrogation in the Quran.

However, some articles have been written specifically about this verse, analyzing it. Fiqhizadeh and Tahmesebi Boldaji, in an article titled "Analysis and Review of Commentators' Views on the Verses of Abrogation," have criticized and reviewed the views of commentators on Verses 106 of *al-Baqarah* and

101 of *al-Nahl*, and argue with evidence that these verses are insufficient to prove abrogation in the Quran (Fiqhizad, Tahmesebi Boldaji, 2015 AD/1395 SH: 77-88). Isma'ilizadeh, in an article titled "A Discussion on the Quranic References for the Occurrence of Abrogation in the Quran and Their Meaning," examines the contextual sequence of the verses related to abrogation and rejects the idea that these verses indicate the occurrence of abrogation of Quranic verses (Isma'ilizadeh, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 9-34). Mousavi Andarzi, in an article titled "Rethinking the Interpretation of the Verse of Abrogation: Abrogation of Persuasive Verses and Their Causes," has analyzed the verses of abrogation and, through them, proposes the concept of persuasive verses (Mousavi Andarzi, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 64-97).

Another article titled "A New Reading of Verse 106 of Surah *al-Baqarah*; With an Emphasis on Internal Contextual Evidence" (Sadeghi, 2022 AD/1401 SH: 67-86) is related to the present article, as it analyzes and reviews the interpretation of this verse. It concludes that the word "*Āyah*" (verse) does not refer to Quranic verses, but rather to prophethood, which God takes away from one lineage and places in another (Sadeghi, 2022 AD/1401 SH: 67-86).

However, the main focus and innovation of the present article is on examining the historical dating of the revelation of this verse and the issue of abrogation, which ultimately, by examining historical evidence, leads to a different conclusion than the aforementioned article; although both studies share the view that this verse does not indicate the abrogation of Quranic verses. In other words, this article, by examining the historical interpretation of Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* and the lineage of the revelation of the abrogating verses, addresses

the meaning of abrogation in this verse with a new method and approach. It analyzes the relationship between the abrogating verses and Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* with a historical perspective.

Other articles such as "A New Look at the Verse of Abrogation" by Mohammad Ehsanifar in issue 6 of *Hadith Andisheh Journal* in autumn and winter 1387, and "A Review of Commentators' Views on the Verse of Abrogation" by Ghasem Faез in issue 72 of *Articls and Invstigations* in 1381, are also related to the current discussion. However, the difference between all of the aforementioned works and this article is its distinct and historical perspective on the matter.

2. Commentators' Views on Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*

Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*, known as the Verse of Abrogation, is one of the Quranic proofs cited by those who believe in the occurrence of abrogation in the Quran. In this verse, God says: "Whatever a verse We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring forth [one] better than it or similar to it. Do you not know that Allah is over all things competent?" (*al-Baqarah*: 106) Commentators do not hold a single view on this verse and have presented different opinions.

Some commentators state that this verse indicates the abrogation of Quranic verses. According to them, this means that God abrogates some verses of the Quran and reveals better or similar ones. *Shaykh Tūsī*, in his commentary on this verse, explains the three-fold concept of abrogation and writes: "In reality, any legal evidence that shows a ruling established by a first text is no longer valid in subsequent cases—in a way that if this change had not occurred, the same ruling would have remained valid in subsequent cases as well with the first text—so when this matter is

established, abrogation in law is of three types: "Abrogation of the ruling without abrogating the wording; abrogation of the wording without abrogating the ruling; abrogation of both (wording and ruling) together." (*Tūsī*, n.d.: 1, 393) He then explains the conditions for the abrogation of verses (*ibid.*, 393-397). *Ṭabarī*, in his commentary on this verse, refers to instances of the abrogation of rulings and writes: "And this is because it makes the lawful unlawful and the unlawful lawful and it makes the permissible forbidden and the forbidden permissible; and this only occurs with commands and prohibitions, restrictions and permissions, and prohibitions and allowances. But as for the news (narrative statements), there is neither an abrogator nor an abrogated." (*Ṭabarī*, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 1, 378)

Ṭabrisī, citing this verse, explains the three types of abrogation of verses (abrogation of ruling, abrogation of recitation, and abrogation of both ruling and recitation) and writes: "We have explained the reality of abrogation from the perspective of researchers, and it was said that its meaning is the removal of a verse or the ruling of a verse." (*Ṭabrisī*, 1952 AD/1372 AH: 1, 345-347) *Zamakhsharī*, while referring to this verse regarding the abrogation of Quranic verses, narrates the cause of its revelation as follows: "It is narrated that they criticized the issue of abrogation and said: "Do you not see that Muhammad (PBUH) commands his companions to do something, then forbids them from it and commands them to do the opposite, and today he says something and tomorrow he goes back on it?" Then this verse was revealed." (*Zamakhsharī*, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 1, 176) *Allamah Ṭabāṭabā'ī* considers one of the instances of this verse to be the abrogation of verses of the Quran itself, in a way that with the revelation of abrogating verses, the previous ones are abrogated. However, he does not limit

the scope of abrogation to only legislative matters but also believes in its occurrence in cosmic matters. In any case, he considers this verse to indicate the occurrence of abrogation of the ruling of Quranic verses (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 1, 249-253).

The author of *Tafsir Nemooneh* also considers this verse to indicate the abrogation of the ruling of some verses and refers to some of the abrogated verses in this regard (Makarem Shirazi, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 1, 389-391). Sadeghi Tehrani considers one of the instances of abrogation in this verse to be the abrogation of the ruling of verses (Sadeghi Tehrani, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 2, 90-92). Some commentators also state that one of the instances of the verse is the abrogation of the ruling of Quranic verses (Abul Futūḥ Rāzī, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 2, 100; Fakhr Rāzī, n.d.: 3, 635-640; Faḍlullāh, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 2, 155-157; Ṭayyib, 1989 AD/1369 SH: 2, 138-141).

Scholars of Quranic sciences have also cited this verse to prove the occurrence of abrogation in the Quran. *Zarkashī*, in his book *al-Burhan*, writes: "There is no disagreement on the permissibility of the abrogation of the Quran by the Quran. God Almighty says: "Whatever a verse We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring forth [one] better than it or similar to it." (al-Baqarah: 106) (Zarkashī, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 2, 32) One of the cases is the change of *Qibla*, which some commentators have referred to (cf. Baghawī, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 1, 153). *Zurqānī* also considers this verse to be among the textual proofs for the occurrence of abrogation in the Quran (Zurqānī, n.d.: 2, 193).

Therefore, what the proponents of abrogation rely on to prove its occurrence in the Quran is this blessed verse. Based on this, abrogating verses were revealed and some verses were abrogated.

Apart from the textual and content analysis of this verse, which has been the subject of research that negates abrogation based on its textual analysis and context, this verse should also be examined historically and in relation to the revelation of surahs and verses. The question is 'Whether any abrogation had occurred before the revelation of this verse?' And if so, 'Which verses were abrogated before this verse?' In light of this abrogation, this verse would then explain the wisdom and philosophy behind it.

For this reason, the date of revelation of Surah *al-Baqarah* and Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* will first be analyzed and reviewed, and then the date of revelation of the abrogating verses will be examined. This is because unless an abrogating verse has been revealed, no verse is abrogated, and naturally, no abrogation occurs. Therefore, the date of revelation of the abrogating verses and their timing relative to the date of revelation of Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* clarifies the meaning of this verse.

3. Date of Revelation of Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*

Surah *al-Baqarah* is a Madinan surah, and there is no disagreement among commentators on this matter. However, some opinions suggest that Surah *Muḥammad* was revealed before Surah *al-Baqarah* and that the issue of jihad in it could abrogate the verses of pardon and forgiveness in Surah *al-Baqarah*. But this view is considered rare, as most historical and narrative sources confirm that Surah *Muḥammad* was revealed after Surah *al-Baqarah*. Surah *al-Baqarah* is the 87th surah, and Surah *Muḥammad* is the 95th (cf. Darwazah, 1963 AD/1383 AH: 1, 17). Furthermore, a historical examination of the revelation of these two surahs and the context

of their verses clearly proves that Surah *al-Baqarah* was revealed before Surah *Muhammad*.

The initial context of Surah *al-Baqarah* indicates pardon and forgiveness, which shows that the Muslims were not in a position to wage jihad or engage in serious confrontation. The history of the Hijrah shows that in the early years of the Muslims' arrival in Medina, the Islamic community was new and not in a condition for jihad; it had not yet achieved sufficient strength and cohesion for the verses of jihad to be revealed. Therefore, a historical and contextual review of these two surahs clearly and explicitly indicates the precedence of Surah *al-Baqarah* over Surah *Muhammad*.

For this reason, most commentators consider Surah *al-Baqarah* to be the first Madinan surah (Suyūṭī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 17; Sadeghi Tehrani, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 1, 151; Khaṭīb, n.d.: 1, 3). *Ibn 'Ashūr* states that this surah is the first Madinan surah, and although he mentions a narration that it was revealed after Surah *al-Muṭaffifīn*, he writes: "Surah *al-Baqarah* was revealed in Medina by the consensus of scholars, and it is the first surah that was revealed in Medina. *Ibn Hajar* in his *Bukhārī's* commentary narrates this consensus. However, some believe that Surah *al-Muṭaffifīn* was revealed before it, on the basis that Surah *al-Muṭaffifīn* is Medinan; but without a doubt, the ruling for the obligation of fasting is found in Surah *al-Baqarah*, and fasting became obligatory in the first year of the Hijrah. First, the fasting of 'Ashūrā became obligatory, and then the fasting of Ramaḍān in the second year of the Hijrah, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) fasted seven *Ramaḍān*, the first of which was in the *Ramaḍān* of the second year of the Hijrah. Therefore, Surah *al-Baqarah* was revealed either in the late first year of the

Hijrah or in the second year of the Hijrah." (*Ibn 'Ashūr*, 1973 AD/1394 AH: 1, 199)

Khaṭīb writes: "This surah was revealed in Medina and is the first surah that was revealed after the Prophet's (PBUH) migration to Medina." (Khaṭīb, n.d.: 1, 3) Some state that the entire surah was revealed in Medina, with only a few of its verses being revealed during the Prophet's Farewell Pilgrimage in the tenth year of the Hijrah (Sabzewari, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 1, 7; Zuḥaylī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 1, 68; Sabzewari Najafi, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 1, 25; Ṭūsī, n.d.: 1, 47; Ṭabrisī, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 1, 111). With this interpretation, the revelation of this surah continued from the first year of the Hijrah until the tenth year. However, this statement does not align with the context and content of the surah, which would require another study to examine. But what is clear from a historical perspective and the surah's context is the continuous revelation of this surah in the early days of the Prophet's migration to Medina.

The next point to be raised is in what time interval Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* was revealed relative to the other verses of this surah? Examining this point is important because three of the abrogating verses claimed by proponents of abrogation are located in Surah *al-Baqarah*. Verses 150, 185, and 187 are among the abrogating verses (claimed by most proponents of abrogation). The issue that must be clarified is whether Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* was revealed before or after these verses?

In response, it must be said that the order of verses within surahs is based on the time of their revelation; that is, Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* was revealed earlier than the later verses. An examination of this verse shows that its time of revelation was in the initial months of the revelation of Surah *al-Baqarah*. The reason for this is the context of the verses of

Surah *al-Baqarah*. Verses 1 to 39 of Surah *al-Baqarah* discuss general topics related to the qualities of the pious, the disbelievers, and the hypocrites. These verses address multiple topics such as the challenge of the Quran, the story of the creation of Adam, and the command for the angels to prostrate to him. Additionally, multiple topics related to monotheistic matters are expressed.

However, from Verse 40 of Surah *al-Baqarah* to Verse 146, the discourse is directed towards the Children of Israel and the Jewish people, and multiple stories from the time of Prophet Moses, the history of this people, and their actions are narrated. After recounting the history of this people and especially their inappropriate actions towards Prophet Moses and the previous prophets, the discourse turns to the Jewish people during the time of the Prophet.

In Verses 105 to 109, one of the sabotages of this people in connection with the Holy Quran is mentioned. An important piece of evidence for the revelation of this verse in the early months of the Hijrah is the context of Verses 105 to 109, as Verse 106 is situated within these verses. In Verse 104, it states that the People of the Book and the polytheists do not wish for any good to be sent down upon the Muslims from their Lord: "The disbelievers among the People of the Book and the polytheists do not wish that any good should be sent down upon you from your Lord. But Allah selects for His mercy that He wills, and Allah is the possessor of great bounty." (al-Baqarah: 105) In Verse 109, believers are commanded to be lenient with the People of the Book and to overlook their faults until God's command comes: "Many of the People of the Book wish that they could turn you back to disbelief after your belief, out of envy from their own selves,

after the truth has become clear to them. So pardon and overlook until Allah brings His command. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent." (al-Baqarah: 109) Some commentators have identified this verse as being abrogated by the verses of fighting (al-Tawbah: 29) (Ṭabarī, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 1, 390; Ṭūsī, n.d.: 1, 407; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 1, 257).

The author of *Tafsir Nemooneh* writes: "This is essentially a tactical instruction given to the Muslims to use the weapon of pardon and forgiveness against the severe pressure of the enemy under those specific circumstances and to focus on building themselves and the Islamic community, while awaiting God's command. The "Command of God" here, according to many commentators, is the "Command of jihad," which had not yet been revealed at that time, perhaps because they were not yet fully prepared for this command; therefore, many believe that this verse was abrogated by the verses of jihad that will be mentioned later." (Makarem Shirazi, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 1, 399)

The author of *A Light of Quran* also emphasizes this point and writes: "The explicit ruling of this verse on pardon is a temporary and conditional ruling related to the period of the Muslims' spiritual and apparent weakness." (Taleqani, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 266)

Commentators state that the pardon and forgiveness of the Muslims were due to their circumstances in terms of strength and power, and after they became powerful, the command to fight the polytheists and the People of the Book was given in multiple verses (Faḍlullāh, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 2, 167; Ṭayyib, 1990 AD/1369 SH: 2, 148).

As the author of *al-Tafsir al-Jadīd* states, the meaning of God's command is the war with the Jews in multiple battles and victory over them,

and he writes: "Until God issues His command [which included] the killing of *Banū Qurayzah*, the expulsion of *Banū Naḍīr*, the humiliation and subjugation of the rest of the Jews [other than these two tribes], and also the imposition of *Jizyah* on them and all the People of the Book." (Sabzewari Najafi, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 1, 128)

This verse clearly describes the situation of the Muslims at a time when they had not yet achieved sufficient power and strength and were not in a position to fight with the Jews. This suggests that this verse describes the early months of the Prophet's migration to Medina, when they had just arrived in Medina and were facing the difficulties of migration and the Muhajirin, as well as the existing disagreements in Medina. In addition to the problems in the early months of the Hijrah, they also faced the Jews and their sabotage and schemes to harm the Prophet and the Muslims. Therefore, considering the context of Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*, it is clear that this verse was revealed in the early months of the Hijrah.

4.A Study of the Date of Revelation of Abrogating Verses

What commentators have stated regarding verse 106 of Surah *al-Baqarah* is that God explicitly refers to the abrogation of some verses in this verse. The reason for the revelation of this verse is that the Jews taunted and ridiculed the Prophet, saying that one day he would order Muslims to do something and the next day he would prohibit it. In this verse, God responded to their skepticism and the philosophy of abrogation.

According to this interpretation, the abrogating verses must have been revealed before verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*. This abrogation must have taken place so that the Jews could raise this doubt. The most important verses that most proponents

of abrogation believe to be abrogating will be historically analyzed and studied to determine whether their revelation was before or after verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*.

It is worth noting that there is a difference among early and later scholars regarding the number of abrogated verses. For example, *Ibn al-Jawzī* considers 247 verses abrogated, *Ibn Ḥazm* 214 verses, *Naḥḥās* 138 verses (Jabrī, 1980: 109), and *Suyūṭī* 21 verses (Suyūṭī, n.d.: 2, 708-712). This difference also exists among later scholars. However, the number of abrogated verses claimed by later scholars is much fewer than the number of abrogated verses in the view of early scholars. Among later scholars, some consider eight verses abrogated (Ma'rifat, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 2, 300-316), some six verses (Zayd, 1963 AD/1383 AH: 2, 803), and *Khuṭīb* (Khuṭīb, n.d.: 498) considers only one verse abrogated.

A notable point here is that many of the verses that early scholars considered abrogated were not the standard abrogation cited by later scholars. Instead, they considered general and specific, absolute and restricted, and exceptions as part of abrogation (Zayd, 1971: 1, 72; Ma'rifat, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 181). In other words, with a small exception, restriction, and specialization between two verses, early scholars considered the first verse to be abrogated and the later verse to be the abrogator, while no abrogation has actually occurred, and the ruling of both verses remains in its place. For this reason, this study will examine the verses whose abrogation is common among both early and later scholars and are almost agreed upon by most of the proponents of abrogation.

In this section, the verses—related to the article's title—that *Khuṭīb* introduces as abrogated verses in his book "*al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*" will be analyzed and examined.

These verses have been collected based on the standard definition of abrogation from the perspective of later scholars. It is worth noting that even based on the definition of abrogation from the perspective of early scholars and the abundance of abrogating and abrogated verses in their view, there is no abrogating verse before this surah. Some of the claimed verses, upon textual and internal analysis, are of the type of absolute and restricted or general and specific, which means no abrogation has occurred (cf. Jabrī, 1980: 109; Suyūṭī, n.d.: 2, 708-712) that could be used to refute the hypothesis of this article.

First Verse: Surah al-Baqarah, Verse 150

"And from wherever you go out, turn your face toward the Sacred Mosque; and wherever you are, turn your faces toward it, so that people will not have any argument against you, except for those who are wrongdoers among them. So do not fear them, but fear Me. And that I may complete My blessing upon you and that you may be guided."

Surah *al-Baqarah* was revealed in Medina after the Hijrah. This verse is also about the change of the *Qibla*, which occurred in the second year of the Hijrah. Some say it was before the Battle of *Badr* (Ibn Kathīr, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 3, 252), while others believe it was after it (Ṭūsī, 1985 AD/1364 SH: 2, 43). *Shaykh Ṭabrisī*, in *Majma' al-Bayān*, citing a narration from Imam Sadiq, states that the change of the *Qibla* occurred 19 months after the Prophet's migration to Medina (Ṭabrisī, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 1, 413). As mentioned, verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* was revealed among verses related to the Jewish people, which was in the early months of the Prophet's migration to Medina. In those early months, the conditions

for changing the *Qibla* from Jerusalem to the Kaaba had not yet been prepared.

The context of the *Qibla* change verses indicates that the change of the *Qibla* was revealed after the Jews' objections to the Prophet and the Muslims regarding the Muslims' prayer direction. Historical reports also confirm this matter, which shows that the change of the *Qibla* was not at the beginning of the Hijrah. Therefore, it is certain that the revelation of this verse was after verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* (cf. Ibn Hishām, n.d.: 1, 550; Ibn Kathīr, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 3, 252; Ibn Sa'd, n.d.: 1, 186).

Second Verse: Surah al-Baqarah, Verse 185

"The month of *Ramaḍān* in which the Qur'an was revealed, guidance for humanity, and clear proofs of the guidance and the criterion; so whoever among you witnesses the month, let him fast it; and whoever is ill or on a journey, then an equal number of other days. God intends ease for you and does not intend difficulty for you and to complete the period and to glorify God for that which He has guided you, and perhaps you will be grateful."

This blessed verse is about the rulings of fasting. According to historical reports, the verses related to fasting were revealed in the second year of the Hijrah (Hillī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 125; Balādhurī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 1, 272; Ibn Kathīr, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 3, 254). *Ibn Sa'd Wāqidī* states that the legislation of the obligation of fasting was after the change of the *Qibla* in the second year of the Hijrah (cf. Ibn Sa'd, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 1, 191). The revelation of this verse, whether in the second year of the Hijrah or after the change of the *Qibla*, shows that this verse was revealed after verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*.

Third Verse: Surah *al-Baqarah*, Verse 187

"It has been made lawful for you the night of the fast to have sexual relations with your wives. They are clothing for you, and you are clothing for them. God knew that you were deceiving yourselves, so He accepted your repentance and forgave you. So now, have relations with them and seek that which God has ordained for you, and eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct from the black thread of the night. Then complete the fast until the night. And do not have relations with them while you are in a state of retreat in the mosques. These are the limits of God, so do not approach them. Thus does God make clear His verses to the people so that they may become righteous?"

As mentioned, the verses related to the legislation of fasting were in the second year of the Hijrah or after that in Medina, which naturally would be after the revelation of verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*. The other verses mentioned in the book *Al-Bayan* are not discussed separately as they are not directly related to the article's title, but they are mentioned concisely and integrated below.

- Surah *al-Nisā'* (verses 11 and 16) revealed in Medina after Surahs *al-Baqarah* and *Āli 'Imrān* (around the 4th year of the Hijrah). Verse 11 explains the laws of inheritance, and verse 16 is about the punishment for adulterers (Ibn 'Āshūr, 1973 AD/1394 AH: 4, 211).

- Surah *al-Mā'idah* (verses 5, 6, and 45) is the last detailed surah of the Qur'an, revealed in the final years of the Prophet's life. Verse 5 of *al-Mā'idah* abrogates verse 221 of *al-Baqarah* and amends the rulings on marriage with the People of the Book. Verse 6 explains the rulings of ablution and dry ablution (tayammum). Verse 45 emphasizes the law of retribution (Qīṣās) (Tūsī, n.d.: 3, 413; Ṭabrisī,

1993 AD/1372 SH: 3, 231; Suyūṭī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 252; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 5, 156).

- Surah *al-Tawbah* (verses 5, 29, and 73) revealed in the final years of the Prophet's life. Verse 5 is about disavowal of the polytheists and was announced during the Farewell Pilgrimage (10th year of the Hijrah). Verse 29 was revealed during the Battle of *Tabūk* (9th year of the Hijrah) and refers to fighting the People of the Book until they pay the *Jizyah* tax (Suyūṭī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 4, 167).

- Surah *al-Anfāl* (verse 66) revealed after the Battle of *Badr* (2nd year of the Hijrah). It reduced the required ratio for victory in battle from 1 to 10 to 1 to 2 (Khāzin, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 2, 325; Suyūṭī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 4, 103).

- Surah *al-Mujādalah* (verse 13) revealed in Medina after the establishment of Islam and deals with social issues. The abrogation in it is a matter of consensus (Khaṭīb, n.d.: 14, 807; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 19, 176; Qurṭubī, 1964 AD/1384 AH: 17, 269).

5. Historical Analysis of the Context of Revelation of Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*

The historical context of the revelation of verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* is analyzed in several aspects:

5.1. Date of Revelation of Abrogating Verses

As mentioned, the date of revelation of the abrogating verses was after verse 106 of *Al-Baqarah*. The rulings and related discussions were revealed in the Medinan surahs, and there were no legislative rulings in the Meccan surahs like the Medinan ones. The verses in which abrogation has been claimed are in the Medinan surahs. Since this verse was revealed in the early months of the Prophet's migration to Medina, it is clear that no abrogation had

occurred before this verse in the early verses of Surah *al-Baqarah* and the Meccan surahs that were revealed before it. Thus, God would not have referred to the philosophy of abrogation of Qur'anic verses or responded to the Jews' doubt and objection about the abrogation of Qur'anic verses.

5.2. History of the Jewish People in Medina in Relation to the Prophet's Mission

A historical look at the background of the Jewish people in Medina and their expectation of the coming of a prophet is another clue to the correct understanding of verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*. The Jewish people considered themselves followers of monotheism and, in the face of harassment from the polytheists, promised to overcome them with the appearance of a prophet. The Holy Qur'an also confirms this matter: "And when there came to them a Book from God, confirming that which was with them—although before they used to pray for victory against those who disbelieved—but when there came to them that which they recognized, they disbelieved in it. So the curse of God is upon the disbelievers." (al-Baqarah: 89) The "Book" in this blessed verse refers to the Qur'an. The meaning of the verse is that the Jews were waiting for a prophet to overcome the polytheists' harassment with his appearance.

On the other hand, this verse explicitly states that when the Prophet migrated to Medina, the Jews completely recognized him as the very prophet whose characteristics were mentioned in the Torah. Also, the verses of the Qur'an were a confirmation of the verses of the Torah, and this was completely clear to the Jews (cf. Ṭabrisī, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 1, 313; Ṭabarī, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 1, 25; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 1, 222; Faḍlullāh, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 2, 125; Sabzevari Najafī, 1985 AD/1406

AH: 1, 108; Ṭayyib, 1990 AD/1369 SH: 2, 98). In early historical sources, this matter is also explicitly mentioned. *Ibn Kathīr* quotes the prayer of the Jews in battles as follows: "O! God, we ask You, for the sake of Muhammad, the unlettered Prophet whom You promised us You would raise at the end of time, to grant us victory over them." The narrator says: "So whenever they faced an enemy, they would recite this prayer, and as a result, they would defeat the *Ghatfān* tribe." "But when the Prophet was sent, those very people who used to pray disbelieved in him." (Ibn Kathīr, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 2, 378)

After the rise of Islam, this people did not believe in the Prophet and opposed him.

Some people even debated with the Jewish people, saying, "You promised us, who were polytheists, that you would believe in the Prophet, but now we have believed in him, and you have denied him." (Ḥalabī Shāfi'ī, n.d.: 2, 150) *Ṣāliḥī Shāmī* quotes the words of *Mu'ādh ibn Jabal* to the Jews, rebuking their lack of faith in the Prophet: "O! Group of Jews! Fear God and embrace Islam. You (before this) used to ask for victory against us (polytheists) by the name of Muhammad, while we were idol worshipers! And you used to inform us that he would be sent and describe his characteristics to us." (Shāmī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 3, 377)

These points clearly explain that although the Jews explicitly found the signs of the Prophet to be consistent with their holy book, they denied his prophethood due to their prejudice and worldly interests. Therefore, these verses of Surah *al-Baqarah*, leading up to verse 106, were revealed to explain the Prophet's mission, the divine nature of the Qur'an, and the abrogation of previous laws and holy books by the final holy book.

5.3. Examining the History of the Jews' Belief in Denying Abrogation

The Jews denied the abrogation of the law of Prophet Moses and the Torah. For this reason, they did not accept the abrogation of laws. *Shahristānī*, in his book *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, describes the Jews' belief about abrogation as follows: "The Jews claim that the law can only be one, and this law began with Moses and ended with him. Before him, there was no law, except for rational rules and expedient rulings. They fundamentally do not permit abrogation (repealing and replacing rulings) and say: After Moses, no law can exist, because abrogation in divine commands means *Badā'* (change of opinion), and *Badā'* is not permissible for God Almighty." (*Shahristānī*, 1985 AD/1364 SH: 1, 251)

An examination of verses 85 to 101 of Surah *al-Baqarah* shows that the Jews were not looking to examine the content of the Qur'an's verses, for example, to object to the Prophet by the abrogation of some verses. Rather, they did not accept the Qur'an as a holy book in principle, and this view of theirs was fundamental. In this way, they denied abrogation in the law of Prophet Moses, so they denied abrogation and considered only their law to be eternal and non-abrogable. Accepting the Qur'an and the Prophet's mission meant rejecting this belief of theirs, and in a way, by accepting the Prophet and the Qur'an, they would accept the abrogation of the law of Prophet Moses and the holy book of the Torah.

5.4. Examining the Meaning of the Word "Āyah" Before the Revelation of Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*

According to the author's survey, the word "Āyah" has been mentioned approximately 58 times in its singular form in the surahs and verses before verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*. This

word has mostly been used in the meanings of "miracle," "Sign," and "Clear Evidence." However, what is stated about this word in Meccan surahs is exclusively in the meaning of "Miracle" and "Clear Evidence of Prophethood." (cf. Yūnus: 20; al-Ra'd: 7 and 27; Ṭāhā: 133; al-Anbīyā': 5)

The word "Āyah" in the Qur'an's surahs has not been used in the meaning of "Verses of the Qur'an." (*Hānī Ṭāhir*, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 22; 'Askari, 2003 AD/1424 AH: 2, 294) In this verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*, this word has not been used in the meaning of "Verses of the Qur'an" either, because as mentioned, no abrogation had occurred before this verse that would necessitate this verse to explain the philosophy of abrogation of Qur'anic verses.

6. The Correct Meaning of Abrogation in Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*

Based on what has been stated according to Qur'anic and historical propositions, the concept of abrogation in verse 106 does not mean the abrogation of Qur'anic verses. This is because no abrogation had occurred in the Qur'anic verses before this blessed verse that would necessitate this verse to explain the philosophy of abrogation of Qur'anic verses. Instead, with a look at the aforementioned propositions, this verse is in the position of explaining the truth of the abrogation of previous laws and miracles by the Holy Qur'an. In reality, it was revealed in response to the Jews' claim about the non-abrogation of the law of Prophet Moses. This point clarifies that if God abrogates a previous holy book, He will certainly bring something better or at least similar to it for the people. This is an easy matter for God because God is capable of everything (cf. *Khaṭīb*, *ibid*: 1, 121-129; *Sharaf al-Dīn*, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 1, 57). This is in contrast to the Jews' view who considered

God's hands to be tied and therefore considered abrogation impossible. These two blessed verses, verse 106 and 107, emphasize God's power to do anything, including abrogating previous laws and holy books and bringing a better holy book and law (Faḍlullāh, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 2, 157-160; Taleghani, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 263-264).

Therefore, this blessed verse was revealed to explain the philosophy of abrogating previous laws. Since the verse is among verses that were revealed in relation to the Jews, it indicates that the address is to the Jews and not to the Muslims. Explaining the philosophy of abrogation to the Jews also refers to the abrogation of their laws by the Qur'an, and with the coming of the new prophet, it was necessary for them to believe in his law. Because according to this verse, if God abrogates a law, He brings a better one or a similar one, and believing in this new law will be better for a person. Based on what has been said, it seems that verse 106 is consistent with the view that seeks to prove the righteousness of the Qur'an as the abrogating law of the Torah. This interpretation is supported by early commentators such as Ṭabarī and Ibn Kathīr, and later commentators such as Ṭabāṭabā'ī and others whose views were mentioned earlier.

Conclusion

Based on the preceding points, the meaning of abrogation in verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* is the abrogation of previous laws, including the law of Prophet Moses, by the Holy Qur'an. It goes without saying that the abrogation of previous laws does not mean rejecting and denying them. Rather, it means their completion and perfection in accordance with the demands of the time. For this reason, even though the Holy Qur'an is the abrogator and completer of

previous holy books, it is also a confirmer of the original holy books that were revealed to previous prophets.

Verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* was revealed as a response to the doubt and mistaken belief of the Jews about denying the abrogation of the law of Prophet Moses, as they did not believe in abrogation. This is because they considered their law to be the only eternal one. This is while God has revealed every law and book in accordance with a specific time and period, and He has sent the Holy Qur'an and the law of the Final Prophet for all human beings until the Day of Judgment. For this reason, this verse responds to the Jews' doubt about the non-abrogability of the law of Prophet Moses for multiple reasons:

- **First:** The most important reason for the lack of this blessed verse's indication of the abrogation of Qur'anic verses is the date of revelation of the abrogating verses. This means that until an abrogating verse is revealed, an abrogated verse does not come into existence, and naturally, no abrogation occurs. For this reason, a study of the date of revelation of the abrogating verses shows that these verses were definitely revealed after verse 106 of *al-Baqarah*. This is a strong reason for the fact that no abrogation had occurred before this verse that would cause the Jews to accuse the Prophet of abrogating Qur'anic verses and for God to respond by explaining the philosophy of the abrogation of Qur'anic verses.

- **Second:** The history of the Jewish people and their view on abrogation is another reason that emphasizes the lack of this verse's indication of the abrogation of Qur'anic verses. The Jewish people did not believe in the Prophet and did not accept the Qur'an as a holy book because they believed that the law of Prophet Moses was non-abrogable and that the

prophets after Prophet Moses were only in the position of explaining and interpreting the law of Prophet Moses. But when they learned that they had to believe in the Prophet's law and the Qur'an and follow its teachings and rulings, they raised the doubt of the non-abrogation of laws, and this verse was revealed in response to them.

- **Third:** The use of the word "ayah" before the blessed verse 106 of *al-Baqarah* indicates that the word "*Āyah*" in the singular form has not been used in the meaning of "Verses of the Holy Qur'an." The word "*Āyah*" in the singular form has been used before this verse in the meaning of "Miracle," "Clear evidence," and "Sign." In this verse also, it has the same meaning because the date of revelation of the abrogating verses and also the context of this verse show that the word "*Āyah*" in this blessed verse has not been used in the meaning of "verses of the Qur'an".

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