The Qur'ānic Reasons for the Authoritativeness of Traditions in Response to the Evidences Presented by Aḥmad Ṣubḥī Manṣūr for Qur'ānism

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Abstract

Aḥmad Ṣubḥī Manṣūr is a contemporary Egyptian researcher who has been considered by some as the spiritual leader of the Qur'ānists in that country. Relying on the Qur'ān, he tries to introduce this divine book as the only source of legislation and prove the non-authoritativeness of the Sunna. Referring to the verses that seemingly consider God and the Qur'ān to be enough for the human, deem the Qur'ān as expressing everything, and regard the Prophet of Islam (s) seemingly indifferent to Sharī'a, and claiming that Ḥadīth is oral, he questions the authoritativeness of the Prophet's (s) sunna. In his references to the foregoing verses he does not take into account the linguistic context, ignores some of the verses that introduce the responsibility of the Prophet (s) to explain the Qur'ān and those that introduce the Prophet (s) as the best role model as well as the ambiguous (mutashābih) and inconclusive (mujmal) verses, and tries to justify some of these verses. The Qur'ān considers the Prophet (s) free from any vice, and provided that some conditions are met, deems a solitary narration as authoritative, let alone the authentic traditions. In order to prove his claims, Ṣubḥī Manṣūr ignores all these evident reasons.

Keywords

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Introduction

Qur'ānists are a group of people who call themselves "Ahl al-Qur'ān" (people of the Qur'ān). They do not believe in the adoption of Ḥadīth and consider the Qur'ān as the only valid source of legislation. Qur'ānism and rejection of Ḥadīths comprise a false viewpoint as Ḥadīth is an undeniable reality; any effort to reject Ḥadīth is fruitless. Although the Qur'ān is the only definite text which is taken from the absolute revelation in which no distortion has been made, it does not address details as it is considered as entailing the principal outline of the Islamic knowledge. The explication of the details has been delegated to sunna; it should limit the absolute assertions of the Qur'ān and explain its inconclusive verses, and specify its generalities. The Qur'ān's need to sunna is not less than the sunna's need to the Qur'ān. Therefore, it is necessary to use Ḥadīth to explain the Qur'ān, though massive efforts should be made to purify the Ḥadīths so that the Ḥadīths attributed to the Infallibles (a) represents the Qur'ān, not the forged and distorted Ḥadīths.

In the study at hand, in response to the rejection of the authoritativeness of Ḥadīth and Qur'ānism, the viewpoints of Aḥmad Ṣubḥī Manṣūr will be criticized so that the Qur'ān's need to Ḥadīth is proved.

Significance of the Study

Aḥmad Ṣubḥī Manṣūr rejects Ḥadīth, which according to the majority of both Shī'a and Sunnī scholars is the second source of Islam after the Qur'ān. If this stance comes to prominence, Muslims will be deprived of the guidance of the Prophet (s) and his Ahl al-Bayt. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research projects to confront the beliefs of this sect.

Research hypothesis

Our premises in the explication of the reasons provided by the pro-Ḥadīth scholars and the criticism of Aḥmad Ṣubḥī Manṣūr's opinions against the authoritativeness of Ḥadīth are as follows.

1. The supporters of Ḥadīth authoritativeness rely on those qur'ānic verses that deem obeying the Prophet (s) at the same level as obeying God, intellectual reasons, and the Qur'ān's need to be interpreted by the Prophet (s) and Imāms (a).

2. Ṣubḥī Manṣūr's pro-Qur'ānist views could be challenged by arguments such as his selective treatment of the qur'ānic verses and the incongruence of his interpretation with the linguistic context. This could be aided by the verses that refer to the authoritativeness of Ḥadīth.

Review of literature
Works written on the criticism of Qur'ānist views to Islamic legislation are as follows.

1. The book "*Qur'ānist sects*" written by Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Rawshan Ḍamīr (2011) and (2) the book "Al-sunna wa makānatuhā fī tashrī' al-Islāmī" by Muṣṭafā Sabā'ī (2007) examine the origin and reasons for the appearance of the Qur'ānists but do not criticize their opinions.

2. A thesis penned down by Ja'far Yāsimī and entitled "*Examination and criticism of Qur'ānism in tafsīr*" (2010) that regards the relationship between the Qur'ān and sunna in the qur'ānic interpretation does not criticize the Qur'ānists' reasons and just criticizes it for its interpretations. However, the article at hand criticizes Ṣubḥī Manṣūr's opinions using the reasons for the authoritativeness of Ḥadīths within the realm of guidance and legislation.

3. The article "*Qur'ānists and rejection of Ḥadīth authoritativeness: An examination of the Qur'ānists' origin and opinions*" by 'Alī Āqā'ī (2010) that investigates the origin and types of the Qur'ānists but does not criticize their ideas.

4. The article "*Examination and criticism of Aḥmad Ṣubḥī Manṣūr's Qur'ānist opinions that consider the Qur'ān as the only source based on the book al-Qur'ān wa kafā maṣdaran li-tashrī' al-Islām*" by Majīd Ma'ārif (2014) criticizes some ideas of Ṣubḥī Manṣūr, provides short answers to them, and presents some verses that refer to Ḥadīth authoritativeness. However, that article does not offer a true interpretation of the verses that have been referred by Ṣubḥī Manṣūr.

5. The article "*Criticism of the principles and findings of Aḥmad Ṣubḥī Manṣūr about the Qur'ān and sunna*" by Maḥmūd Qurbānlū rejects the reasons for the self-sufficiency of the Qur'ān based on the interpretation of Qur'ān 6:38 and Qur'ān 16:89 verses as well as the criticism of Ṣubḥī Manṣūr's opinion on the prohibition of Ḥadīth recordation.

As it is clear, none of the foregoing works has adopted an approach similar to one applied in this article, though there might be some overlapping in secondary issues.

Qur'ānists' principles
Qur'ānists believe in the sufficiency of the Qur'ān as the only source of legislation and reject the authoritativeness of Ḥadīth in this regard. Their main claim is that the Qur'ān is the only revealed text and legislative authority. The self-sufficiency of the Qur'ān has requirements, including the rejection of inconclusiveness, generality, and abrogation, as well as the

acceptance of the point that the Qurʾān does not have a fixed meaning and can have different meanings in different situations. The rejection of Ḥadīth authoritativeness stems from the lack of divine features in Ḥadīth, because it is only the Qurʾān that is divine revelation, and the Prophet's (s) words and practices do not have a divine nature and originate from his human dimension. Therefore, they are not obligatory for Muslims. The Qurʾānists believe that the Qurʾān is a comprehensive book, includes all religious details, and all Islamic requirements can be extracted from the Qurʾān. Nonetheless, most of their efforts have regarded the manner of ritual fulfillment, especially the prayer qualities (Ilāhībakhsh, 1985: 95).

Qurʾānists are divided into two groups. The first group is comprised of those who deem the true sunna as acceptable rather than the seeming sunna. They believe that if we are certain that the Companions have narrated a practice from the Prophet (s), it is acceptable (Ṣādiqī Tihrānī, 1999:5). Another group – including Aḥmad Ṣubḥī Manṣūr – totally rejects the sunna authoritativeness, even if a tradition has been received from Prophet (s) himself.

The contemporary Sunnī school of interpretation whose roots can be tracked to the early and middle centuries of Islamic history is the fast growing Qurʾānist movement that adopts the sufficiency of the Qurʾān and the rejection of the role of sunna in knowing the religion due to its intra- and inter-religious views. Since the principles of this movement – such as the detailed comprehensiveness of the qurʾānic truths, the rejection of vagueness in religious teachings in the light of the possibility and permissibility of reflection in the Qurʾān, and the rejection of the role of sunna in knowing religion due to reasons such as the consideration of traditions as non-divine, polytheistic, speculative and alterable, limited to time, aiming at disunity, and impossible to truly assign to the Prophet (s), can lead to the expansion of a negative view to sunna as well as a tendency to the personal interpretation of the meaning and significations of the verses.

Regardless of the disagreements among Qurʾānists, their principles face problems such as the selective treatment of the verses, disregard for the linguistic context, disregard for the appearance of the qurʾānic text, personal interpretation of the verses, and disregard for the verses that express the necessity of obeying the Prophet (s) and introduce him as the explainer of the qurʾānic verses.

The theorists of this movement have paved the way for personal interpretation of the qurʾānic verses through their rejection of the role of sunna in understanding and interpreting the Qurʾān which stems from their view that Ḥadīth is not authoritative and cannot be attributed to the Prophet

(s). Moreover, due to their disregard for the role of demonstrative intellect, negligence of Arabic language rules, and reliance on weak backings, Qur'ānists have abandoned the appearance of the qur'ānic verses in many cases and have adopted personal interpretation of the verses that does not rely on the demonstrative intellect.

The origin of Qur'ānism
The origin of the Qur'ānist thought goes back to the early centuries of Islam. Ibn Abī Malīka narrates that Abū Bakr asked people to gather after the demise of the Prophet (s) and said, "You narrate from the Prophet of God (s) some traditions in which you disagree, and the disagreements will exacerbate in people that will come after you. Therefore, do not narrate from the Prophet of God (s). If someone asked you about it, just say 'the book of God is among us, accept licit what it introduces as licit and consider illicit what it introduces as illicit" (Dhahabī, n.d., vol1: 8). Two main contradicting movements can be identified in that era: those who opposed Ḥadīth as a legal proof, and those who opposed the traditions that conflict with the Qur'ān or other traditions (Khiḍrī, 1994: 185). It is mentioned in Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī that when the Prophet of God (s) asked for ink and pen, 'Umar said, "Sickness has prevailed the Prophet … God's Book suffices us!" (Bukhārī, 1981, vol.5: 17).

In the contemporary centuries, great efforts have been made in India to expand the Qur'ānist sect, and the Arab Qur'ānists are indebted to them in this regard. The reformist movement leaded by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān Hindī (1817-1898) set the grounds for the appearance of Qur'ānists and as a result, the rejection of sunna came to existence in India following his order. He interpreted the Qur'ān using the intellectual method, and set difficult conditions for the acceptance of traditions (Mazrū'a, 2005: 95). Among his works is the unfinished commentary *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān wa huwa al-hudā wa al-furqān*, which is a kind of personal interpretation (Hindī, n.d., vol.1: 35).

Then, 'Abdullāh Jakr Alwī followed him in Pakistan and rejected Ḥadīth. After him, Ghulām Aḥmad Parwīz invited others to his thoughts through the journal Ṭulū' al-Islām (Mazrū'a, 2005: 95; Ilāhībaksh, 1985: 31).

Muḥammad Tawfīq Ṣidqī was the first one who was affected by the Indian Qur'ānists' thoughts and published articles in the journal Al-Manār and delivered these thoughts to Arab world by the slogan "al-Islām huwa al-Qur'ān Waḥda" (Rashīd Riḍā , n.d. vol. 10: 140). Other scholars of the Qur'ānist movement include Muḥammad Shaḥrūr (Shaḥrūr, 1992: 31) and Muḥammad Abū Zayd al-Damanhūrī.

Qur'ānic reasons for the authoritativeness of prophetic traditions
Since the efforts of Aḥmad Ṣubḥī Manṣūr revolve around his premise that

Ḥadīth is not authoritative, some qur'ānic reasons for the authoritativeness of prophetic traditions are presented in this section.

The Explanation verse
Based on the verse "(We sent them) with Clear Signs and Books of dark prophecies; and We have sent down unto thee (also) the Message; that thou mayest explain clearly to men what is sent for them, and that they may give thought" (Qur'ān 16:44), the Prophet (s) should have both delivered the divine revelations and explained the verses. Now the question is that if there is no proof except for the Qur'ān, what does the statement "that thou mayest explain clearly to men what is sent for them" express? Taking the act of explanation here as the delivery of the qur'ānic text is not congruent with the linguistic context and the meaning of the verse, and is a redundancy, because this meaning has been asserted at the beginning of the verse by the clause "We have sent down unto thee (also) the Message". On the other hand, if the referent of the word *dhikr* (message) is the Qur'ān – just like Qur'ān 15:9 and other verses – then we cannot take the clause "thou mayest explain clearly to men" as the Qur'ān. Rather, the meaning of this statement is the explanation of the verses and the assertion of the meaning of Islamic rules and legislations in case the Companions were in need of them (Ṭabātabā'ī, 1997, vol.12: 261). This verse is a reason for the authoritativeness of the words of the Prophet (s), as it has been considered by the previous and contemporary Sunnī interpreters as a proof for the interpretation of the verses by the Prophet (s) (Qushayrī, 2000, vol.2: 299; Ibn 'Aṭiyya, 2002, vol.3: 395; Bayḍāwī, 1998, vol.3: 228; Ṭanṭāwī, 2002, vol.3: 2526; Quṭb, 1992, vol.4: 467). Baghawī has stipulated this through the statement "Explaining the Qur'ān is attained through sunna" (Baghawī, 2000, vol.3: 80). Maybudī says, "In this verse there exist both the Book and the sunna" (Maybudī, 1973, vol.1: 545). Fakhr Rāzī has taken this verse to refer to the inconclusive verses of the Qur'ān (Fakhr Rāzī, 2000, vol.20: 212; Qurṭabī, 1985, vol10: 109; Ibn Kathīr, 1999, vol.4: 493). Some have taken the verse to mean the ambiguous and unclear (mushkilāt) verses (Kāshānī, 1984, vol.3: 76; Qumī Mashhadī, 1989, vol.3: 217; Ālūsī, 1995, vol.7: 389).

Ṣubḥī Manṣūr believes that people have misunderstood this verse because they have separated it from the linguistic context before and after it. This, he deems, has led them to consider it as a reason for the authoritativeness of the non-qur'ānic traditions. In other places, he limits this verse to its cause of revelation, and takes the word nās (people) as the People of Book and the clause "what is sent for them" as "the previous divine books". Then, he uses the previous verse "And before thee also the apostles We sent were but men, to whom We granted inspiration: if ye realise this not, ask of those who

possess the Message" (Qur'ān 16:43) as an evidence for his assertion, and refers to the specificity of the word nās (people, men) in the verses "Men said to them: 'A great army is gathering against you…'" (Qur'ān 3:173) and "'O Joseph!' (he said) 'O man of truth! Expound to us (the dream) of seven fat kine whom seven lean ones devour, and of seven green ears of corn and (seven) others withered: that I may return to the people, and that they may understand'" (Qur'ān 12:46) to prove the specificity of this word in this verse (Ṣubḥī Manṣūr, 2005: 21-24).

Dhikr in many verses means the Qur'ān and cannot mean the People of the Book. The word nās, too, has been used in many verses in its general meaning (e.g. Qur'ān 4:170). It is interesting that the specificity of the word nās in Qur'ān 3:173 can be made clear if we refer to the narrations about the cause of revelation of this verse! Those who do not believe in suchlike traditions cannot argue using this verse. They have forgotten to note that the pronoun in the clause "We have sent down unto thee (also) the Message" refers to the Prophet (s). In this case, this clause separates the subsequent linguistic context from the clause "(We sent them) with Clear Signs and Books of dark prophecies".

Introducing the Prophet (s) as the best role model

The most important and transparent word in this regard is Qur'ān 33:21 that has introduced the Prophet's sunna as authoritative and has presented him as the role model to Muslims. The Prophet (s) was not like a voice recorder to simply deliver what he received from God. In addition to the oral delivery of the divine message, he put the divine revelation in practice in his life and was the true manifestation of the divine teachings. That is to say, the qur'ānic term *best role model* is true about him, and consequently, Muslims should follow him as their role model; this view is hold by almost all interpreters of the Qur'ān. The meaning of the verse is that Muslims should follow his words and practices (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1997, vol. 16: 452; Ṭabarī, 1992, vol.21: 91; Tha'labī, 2002, vol.8: 22; 'Alam al-Hudā, 2010, vol.3: 217).

Then, it should be asked from Ṣubḥī Manṣūr that what does the Qur'ān intend by calling the Prophet (s) as the role model? Why does God insist upon introducing him as the role model? In essence, what is the function of being a role model other than asking people to follow the words and practices of that person? This verse not only proves the authoritativeness of the Prophet's (s) sunna, but also explicitly considers the true sunna of the Prophet (s) – just like the Qur'ān – as trustable for Muslims. It is true that all Muslims agree to reject an untrue tradition attributed to the Prophet (s). Forged traditions should not be taken to reject Ḥadīths altogether. However, in many cases, Ṣubḥī Manṣūr treats true and seeming sunna reports in the

same way. For instance, when he refers to the Ḥadīth forging or the existence of fictitious Ḥadīths, the discussion is on the seeming sunna, while other discussions such as the difference between rasūl and nabī regard the true sunna.

The language of the Qur'ān is not different from the language of the customary practice and the practices of the wise, because the legislator is essentially the highest wise. When we talk about the role model, we mean that the words and practices of a person is taken as the role model. Therefore, the question that comes to mind is that how can one forget the meaning of suchlike verses and reject everything except for the Qur'ān, in a way that even the true and continuously recurrent traditions – such as Ghadīr, Manzilat, and Thaqalayn traditions – are rejected? Despite all disagreements that exist in beliefs and interpretive methods, there is not even one exegete who has come to such a conclusion. Isn't this consensus a robust evidence for the rejection of Ṣubḥī Manṣūr's words?

Freedom of the Prophet (s) from whims of the soul
Verses three and four of the Star chapter (Qur'ān 53: 3-4) express that the Prophet (s) does not speak based on his whims, and whatever he says is nothing but divine revelation. Although almost all Sunnī and Shī'a interpreters have taken the Qur'ān as the referent of this verse (Ḥaqqī Barūsawī, 1985, vol. 9: 212-213; Shukānī, 1984, vol.2: 897; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1997, vol.19: 50), it should be said about suchlike verses that "validity comes from the generality of the expression rather than the particularity of the cause" (Shukānī, 1984, vol.2: 990). Consequently, Shukānī writes in the interpretation of the verse, "That is, the Prophet (s) does not say anything about the Qur'ān or non-Qur'ān based on his whims" (ibid: 897). 'Allāmah, too, takes the verse as general and believes that it includes the Qur'ān and the words of the Prophet (s) (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1997, vol.19: 50). Therefore, both Sunnī beliefs – as quotations from Shukānī and Ḥaqqī reveal – and Shī'a beliefs – as the quotation from 'Allāmah shows – state that the Prophet (s) has not said anything based on whim, be it the qur'ānic revelations or anything other than that. Revelation is of two types: the recited revelation that is the same as the Qur'ān which has been revealed by angel Gabriel (ibid), and the non-recited revelation that includes the words of the Prophet (s) to explicate the recited revelation ('Āshūrī, 2006: 27). The tradition "Be aware that the Qur'ān is given to me, and its equivalent accompanies me" (Ibn Ḥanbal, 1996, vol. 1: 12; Ibn Naṣr Marwẕī, 1988, vol. 1: 216) verifies the division between the qur'ānic and non-qur'ānic revelations.

The necessity of adherence to all teachings of the Prophet (s)
The verse that can be used to prove the authoritativeness of Ḥadīth is the verse "So take what the Apostle assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you" (Qur'ān 59:7). Although some interpreters take the spoils of war as the intention of this verse (Shukānī, 1984, vol.2: 990), many interpreters believe that it means all orders and prohibitions of the Prophet (s) (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1997, vol.19: 419; Ibn Juzī, 2002, vol.4: 258; Zamakhsharī, 1987, vol.4: 503; Ṭabrisī, 1992, vol.4: 268; Fakhr Rāzī, 2000, vol.29: 507). Qushayrī deems this verse to be a principle for the obligation of adherence to the Prophet (s) and following his practices (Qushayrī, 2000, vol.3: 560).

Shukānī continues, "This verse includes all actions, words, and prohibitions made by the Prophet (s). Although it has a certain cause of revelation, the validity of the generality of expression is more than the particularity of the expression" (Shukānī, 1984, vol.2: 990). Despite accepting the cause of the revelation of this verse, the majority of great Sunnī scholars consider its reference to be generic (Ibn 'Āshūr, 2000, vol.14: 493; Ālūsī, 1995, vol.20; 422; Quṭb, 1992, vol.7: 163). The former and contemporary Shī'a interpreters, too, have accepted the generic reference of this verse (Ṭabrisī, 1993, vol.9: 391; Makārim Shīrāzī, 1995, vol.18: 181).

This understanding of the verse is also true with regard to the conventional and linguistic perceptions, and no other understanding is conceivable other than it. All Muslims agree that since the Qur'ān does not belong to a certain time, even if a verse has been revealed for a certain cause, that verse is not limited to that certain cause; rather, the generality of the expressions of the Qur'ān are accepted, not the cause of the revelation. With regard to this verse, too, many Shī'a and Sunnī scholars take the content of the verse to be general, as the Prophet (s) stipulated in the interpretation of this verse, "You have been ordered to accept my words and follow my practices" (Ḥaqqī Barūsawī, 1985, vol.9: 430). This tradition is in clear opposition to Ṣubḥī Manṣūr who tries to reject the authoritativeness of Ḥadīth.

The details of religious legislations, stories, and teachings such as Resurrection day cannot be extracted by people directly from the Qur'ān without reference to the words of the Prophet of God (s). There are other verses with the same meaning of the foregoing verse. Then, it can be understood that the role of the Prophet (s) is to teach this divine book (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1997, vol.3: 131).

The authoritativeness of the Judgments of the Prophet (s)
One of the verses that implies the authoritativeness of the Prophet's (s) sunna is Qur'ān 24:51 that asserts that obeying the judgments of the Prophet (s) is obligatory. The linguistic context of the sentence "The answer of the

Believers … is no other than this" – in which the word "kāna" (is) has been emphasized – as well as the quality of having belief in the word "mu'minīn" (believers) – imply that the sentence "We hear and we obey" stated a response to the invitation of God and his Messenger is a prerequisite for the belief in God and the Prophet (s). The reason is that the word "kāna" and "mu'minīn" show that those who have faith have always been so. The prerequisite for the true belief in the adherence to what God and the Prophet (s) rule for is to accept and put into practice the rulings of God and his Prophet (s), not to reject it (ibid, vol.15: 205).

Inherent need of some verses to interpretation
The need of the Qur'ān to interpretation can be examined from two aspects, namely internal and non-internal. The internal need of the Qur'ān to interpretation regards verses which, regardless of the external factors, face kind of inconclusiveness; without interpretation, these cannot be truly understood. The non-internal need to interpretation regards verses of the Qur'ān that are not vague per se; rather, external factors such as the events of a certain era or the specific conditions of the audience have made difficult the direct understanding of the intentions of God (Shākir, 2003: 2). Of course, our main purpose in this article is to address the internal need of some verses to interpretation that shows they have had kind of vagueness at the time of their revelation and the Prophet (s) had to express their interpretations. Some examples are as follows.

Mutashābih (ambiguous) verses
The existence of ambiguous verses is undeniable, as the Qur'ān itself has stipulated it in Qur'ān 3:7. As Ṭabāṭabā'ī (1997, vol.3: 131) says, "Ambiguous verses are capable of attributing different meanings; however, what is certain is that not all of those possible meanings are true; rather, in many cases, their seeming meanings is not intended [by the Qur'ān] due to their opposition to the muḥkam [precise] verses".

   Although the Qur'ān itself determines the meaning of the term "ambiguous verses" based on the need of suchlike verses to the precise verses, these verses do not clarify the truth per se and are in need of interpretation and not everyone can easily interpreted them. Therefore, the Qur'ān has said that the interpretation of them is only known to God and those with firm knowledge (Shākir, 2003: 3). Certainly, the clear example of "those with firm knowledge" is the Prophet (s) himself (Subḥānī, 2012: 264-267).

   God says in the Qur'ān, "Guard strictly your (habit of) prayers, especially the Middle Prayer" (Qur'ān 2:238). Without reference to true evidence, we

will not be able to determine the referent of the term "Middle Prayer" (Subḥānī, 2012: 156).

Multidimensionality of some verses
Some verses of the Qur'ān are capable of having multiple dimensions, and the preference of one dimension over others is in need of explication. Examples include ambiguity in the referent, the type of exception and excepted-from, the type of grammatical inflection, and implied meaning (Shākir, 2003: 7).

An example of ambiguity in referent
The Qur'ān says, "O thou man! Verily thou art ever toiling on towards thy God- painfully toiling, but thou shalt meet Him" (Qur'ān 84:6). Here, it should be found out which of the words "God" and "Toiling" is the referent of the third person pronoun "Shalt meet Him" (Ṭabrisī , 1993, vol.26: 395).

An example of the disagreement in the excepted-from
Three rulings have been given in Qur'ān 24:4-5 about those who accuse men and women for adultery: whipping them eighty lashes, not accepting them as witness, and ruling for their distortion. There is a disagreement among interpreters that if repentance merely removes the distortion only or has also the same effect on the two previous punishments (ibid, vol.17: 99).

An example of disagreement in the implied meaning
In the verse "Then seest thou such a one as takes as his god his own vain desire? God has, knowing (him as such), left him astray" (Qur'ān 45:23), two implied meanings are possible: God has left that human astray based on the knowledge of that person, or God has left that human astray based on His own knowledge (Māwirdī, 1992, vol.5: 364).

Multilayered nature of the Qur'ān
There are numerous traditions which – based on commensurate or associative signification – assert that in addition to having the seeming meanings, the Qur'ān entails internal and non-verbal meanings. It has been narrated from the Prophet (s) that the Qur'ān has up to seven layers (Āmulī, 2002, vol.5: 13). The internal meanings can be discovered through reflection on the verses. Therefore, some verses of the Qur'ān invite people to reflect on this divine book (e.g. Qur'ān 47:24). Shākir (2003: 9) notes that "Since people at the Qur'ān revelation era were generally in a simple thinking state and the basic and superficial understanding of the verses satisfied their intellectual and spiritual needs, the understanding of much knowledge of the Qur'ān was not achieved up until a time the gradual perfection of human thought can uncover those hidden meanings". Of course, the traditions which

show the multilayered nature of the Qur'ān also reveal that the Infallibles (a) have been familiar with these layers and in some cases have informed people about them.

Verses that depict obeying God and obeying the Prophet (s) as equal
Based on verses such as Qur'ān 4:80, obeying Muḥammad (s) is obeying God (Wāḥidī Nayshābūrī, 1995, vol.1: 277), and according to Qur'ān 3:132, obeying God and the Prophet (s) brings about divine blessing. Moreover, as asserted in Qur'ān 47:33, disobeying Allāh and the Prophet (s) invalidates one's deeds. We can conclude from these and numerous similar verses that separate mentioning of the necessity of obeying the Prophet (s) and the necessity of obeying God shows the authoritativeness of the Prophet's (s) words in line with the authoritativeness of the words of God.

   In order to push his stance, Ṣubḥī Manṣūr tries to give in a different interpretation of the word "rasūl" (prophet). He asserts that people's understandings of the referent of nabī and the referent of rasūl are wrong. He writes that the word nabī is used to show Muḥammad (s) as an individual with certain aspects of his life, his human attachments to people around him, and his free activities, where some of his human activities are capable of being blamed by God. In such situations, God uses the word nabī to blame him. For instance, God says, "O Prophet! Why holdest thou to be forbidden that which God has made lawful to thee? Thou seekest to please thy consorts" (Qur'ān 66:1), and about the Badr captives He asserts, "It is not fitting for an apostle that he should have prisoners of war until he hath thoroughly subdued the land", and in another instance He notes, "No prophet could (ever) be false to his trust" (Qur'ān 3:161), and when the prophet asks God to give some of his relatives, He tells him, "It is not fitting, for the Prophet and those who believe, that they should pray for forgiveness for Pagans" (Qur'ān 9:113), and He talks about a difficult battle the Prophet (s) has fought and says, "God turned with favour to the Prophet, the Muhajirs, and the Ansar,- who followed him in a time of distress, after that the hearts of a part of them had nearly swerved (from duty)" (Qur'ān 9:117). In the same vein, in Qur'ān 33:1-3 in which God orders the Prophet (s) to be pious, follow the divine revelation, keep complete trust in God, and avoid obeying the disbelievers, He uses the word nabī. Moreover, the Qur'ān uses the word nabī when it talks about the interest of Muḥammad (s) in his wives (Qur'ān 33:28; 66:3); it does not say *oh wives of rasūl* (Qur'ān 33:30-32). Also, when the qur'ānic text is about the attachment of the Prophet to his relatives, the word nabī is used (Qur'ān 33:59). For instance, the Qur'ān says, "The Prophet is closer to the Believers than their own selves, and his wives are their mothers" (Qur'ān 33:6).

However, Ṣubḥī Manṣūr asserts that when the Prophet (s) starts to recite the Qur'ān, he is a rasūl obeying whom is equal to obeying God, e.g. "We sent not an apostle, but to be obeyed, in accordance with the will of God … He who obeys the Apostle, obeys God" (Qur'ān 4:64 & 80). And Prophet Muḥammad with his human qualities is the first person who obeys the Qur'ān. Therefore, when he was ordered to follow the divine revelation, the Qur'ān ordered Muslims to obey him (Qur'ān 24:54). Nowhere in the Qur'ān it is said "obey God and obey nabī", because when we obey the Prophet (s), we do it not because of his human qualities (nabī) but because of his prophetic mission; it is obeying rasūl, which is in fact obeying the words of God revealed to him, and one who is a nabī is the first to obey. Consequently, not even one instance of the word rasūl is used when the Qur'ān blames the Prophet (s). There is a framed meaning for the word nabī: a person selected by God from among human beings to receive the divine words through divine revelation and be the "rasūl".

According to Ṣubḥī Manṣūr, rasūl means the Qur'ān, i.e. the rasūl of Allāh continues to exist among us in the form of the divine book which is protected by God to the Resurrection day. This can be understood from the words of God in the verse "And how would ye deny Faith while unto you are rehearsed the Signs of God, and among you Lives the Apostle?" (Qur'ān 3:101), i.e. up to the time the divine Book is recited, the Prophet (s) is among us, and whoever clings to God and his Book will be guided to the Right Path by Him. This is true for any era in which the light of the Qur'ān continues to shine. The word rasūl clearly referrs to the Qur'ān in some qur'ānic verses, such as the verse "He who forsakes his home in the cause of God, finds in the earth Many a refuge, wide and spacious: Should he die as a refugee from home for God and His Apostle, His reward becomes due and sure with God" (Qur'ān 4:100). This verse expresses a general rule that continues to be true to the Resurrection day. Therefore, migration for the cause of God and his Prophet (i.e. the Qur'ān), and the endurance of the Qur'ān or the prophetic mission after the demise of the Prophet (s) is still true and continuous. In some verses, the word "rasūl" is the Qur'ān and the meaning of the prophetic mission is limited to this sense, without the inclusion of any other meaning. An example of such verses is "In order that ye (O men) may believe in God and His Apostle, that ye may assist and honour Him, and celebrate His praise morning and evening" (Qur'ān 48:9). The phrase "and His Apostle" here only implies the divine Word rather than the Prophet because the pronoun of the phrase "and His" is singular. Therefore, the basic meaning of this verse is "Assist and honor Him and praise Him morning and evening". The singular pronoun is that God and His Prophet/Word are one rather than two things, as

He does not say "Assist and honor both of them and praise both of them morning and evening". Praise cannot be for anyone other than God, and there is no distinction between God and His Word, because God has the unity of essence and attributes. Moreover, He says elsewhere, "To you they swear by God. In order to please you: But it is more fitting that they should please God and His Apostle" (Qur'ān 9:62). If the word rasūl (apostle) in this verse was the Prophet Muḥammad (s), God would say, "It is more fitting that they should please them both". The word nabī regards the Prophet Muḥammad (s) as a human in his public and personal life, but the term "rasūl" is the same nabī when he recites the Qur'ān and delivers the divine revelation, e.g. "O Apostle! proclaim the (message) which hath been sent to thee from thy God" (Qur'ān 5:67; Ṣubḥī Manṣūr, 2005: 29-33).

That part of Ṣubḥī Manṣūr's words in which he interprets rasūl to be the Qur'ān is not congruent with the appearance of the verses. For instance, with regard to Qur'ān 3:101, there is not even one interpreter who agrees with the interpretation given by Ṣubḥī Manṣūr. Ibn 'Āshūr has taken this verse to mean the migration to Medina in order to visit the Prophet of Allāh (s) (Ibn al-Sa'dī, 2000, vol.4: 18). Another interpreter has interpreted this migration to be for the sake of God's satisfaction and as a sign to love the Prophet (s) (ibid, vol.1: 996). Still others have interpreted this migration as a way to fulfill the "sublimation of the Word of Allāh and the word of his Prophet" (Ṭanṭāwī, 2002, vol.3: 1049). Therefore, the interpretation given by Ṣubḥī Manṣūr is not only isolated and abnormal, it is also far from the conventional understanding of the foregoing noble verse.

In fact, Ṣubḥī Manṣūr concludes that Muḥammad (s) as a nabī uses a certain language with his wives and companions and has attachments as a leader, teacher, and ruler, while Muḥammad (s) as a rasūl uses a different language as a Messenger and Apostle who has been sent the divine revelation to deliver to people.

In response to this view, it can be said that since Muḥammad as a nabī is a Messenger of God, this title (i.e. nabī) does not exclusively refer to Muḥammad (s) as a person, but rather, it takes into account the divine position of prophethood. However, in prophetic mission, the responsibilities of the Prophet (s) are increased. No matter if Muḥammad (s) is called nabī or rasūl, the Qur'ān has verses that are ambiguous and inconclusive and it does not explain the details of religion, and based on the verses discussed earlier in this article, it is the responsibility of the Prophet (s) to explicate the details and legislate accordingly where the Qur'ān does not so. Moreover, the Qur'ān has ordered people to follow rasūl and follow nabī (Qur'ān 7:157). Elsewhere it says, "The Prophet [nabī] is closer to the Believers than their

own selves" (Qur'ān 33:6). It should be asked if the Prophet's (s) state of being closer to the Believers means anything but following him.

Another point is that Ṣubḥī Manṣūr believes the Prophet's (s) being a rasūl has nothing to do with his personal affairs; rather, he is a rasūl to deliver the divine revelation to people. Nonetheless, the word rasūl has been used in the Qur'ān about the personal affairs of the Prophet (s), too. For instance, the Qur'ān says, "O ye who believe! When ye consult the Apostle in private, spend something in charity before your private consultation" (Qur'ān 58:12).

Authoritativeness of a solitary narration

The qur'ānic verses are at different levels of signification and appearance; some are evident and have only one possible meaning (naṣ), while others have multiple possible significations. With regard to the certainty of issuance and attributability to God, all verses are super-consecutive. However, they have different significations: some have definite significations while others have doubted significations. Whenever a narration is authoritative with regard to its chain of transmission, in a way that it comes to be reassuring for the wise and its signification is evident, it can be used to determine the correct possibility (Subḥānī, 2012: 159-160).

There are numerous signs in the qur'ānic verses for the authoritativeness of the solitary narration. We lack knowledge about many things, and moving solely based on science is in most cases impossible and in some cases brings about a lot of difficulties, distorts the life system, and destroys humanity. Consequently, we discover the general permission of God in our speculative actions, as God does not like the destruction of humanity and the creation system. It is certain that in speculative action, we should always look for the strongest possibility. The solitary narration provides such a speculation. The authoritativeness of the solitary narration can be extracted from some verses as follows.

Naba' verse

The Qur'ān does not easily reject the seemingly wrong narration; rather, it orders us to examine it (Qur'ān 49:6). Now, isn't a solitary narration with some trustable people in its chain of transmitters worthy of examination? Many legal theoreticians have accepted that this verse implies the authoritativeness of the solitary narration (Ṣubḥānī, 2010, vol.3: 214).

Nafar verse

The Qur'ān prohibits the Believers of other cities to go to Jihād altogether; rather, some of them are asked to come to Medina to learn the divine rules from the Prophet (s) (Qur'ān 9:122). This verse intends to say that when

these people finished learning the legal rules, they might go back to their cities and inform other people (Ṭabāṭabāʾī, 1997, vol.9: 55).

In other words, this verse wants to say that the words of these immigrants should be trusted. This signifies that the solitary narrations should be trusted. Now if the words of an Infallible (a) are delivered to us and we trust the transmitters, their words will certainly be authoritative for us.

Kitmān verse
God says, "Those who conceal the clear (Signs) We have sent down, and the Guidance, after We have made it clear for the people in the Book, on them shall be God's curse, and the curse of those entitled to curse" (Qurʾān 2:159). When God condemns the People of the Book's concealing of the reasons and signs, then if they did not conceal these reasons, their words would be trustable, although they were not infallible, and could be taken by the people of that era as authoritative. Therefore, our trust in the intermediary figures in the chain of transmission is flawless.

The concealment of the right by the People of the Book has been so important that the other part of the verse refers to the point that these people waste the efforts made by Prophets and the self-sacrifice of the pious people in the dissemination of the verses. This is an unforgivable sin (Makārim Shīrāzī, 1995, vo.1: 547). This ruling involves all scholars who conceal the right (Marāghī, n.d., vol.2: 445; Mughniyya, 1998, vol.1: 445). This generality of the ruling also includes the intermediary figures in the chain of transmitters of Ḥadīths. Therefore, if a solitary narration comes to be viewed as trustable due to some reasons and indications, then it is authoritative.

The Question verse
God says in the Qurʾān, "If ye realise this not, ask of those who possess the Message" (Qurʾān 21:7). In this verse, the phrase "whom we granted inspiration" are the religious scholars of the People of the Book, because they followed the disbelievers in opposition to the Prophet of Allāh (s), were respected by them, might be consulted by them, and were asked questions to be used to test the Prophet (s). In opposition to Muslims, these People of the Book told the disbelievers, "They are better guided in the (right) way Than the believers" (Qurʾān 4:51; Ṭabāṭabāʾī, 1997, vol. 14: 254). If this is the case, the words of the People of the Book are kind of authoritative. Now, aren't the words of the Prophet (s), Imāms (a), and the trustworthy transmitters of Ḥadīth as authoritative as the words of the People of the Book?

The high status of the Prophet (s)
In Qurʾān 31:14-15, God recommends children to obey their parents. He considers the orders of non-infallible parents – when they don't call the child

to disbelief – as authoritative, while He says about the Prophet (s), "The Prophet is closer to the Believers than their own selves". So, when the status of the Prophet (s) is higher than that of parents, shouldn't we consider the order of the Prophet (s) authoritative?

With regard to solitary narration, the foregoing verses of the Qur'ān were used. However, the general foundation used by Twelver Shī'a legal theoreticians – especially the later ones – is based on the conduct of the wise. This is addressed in the following lines.

Prohibition of surpassing the Prophet (s) (authoritativeness of the Prophet's ruling)

God says in the Qur'ān, "O Ye who believe! Put not yourselves forward before God and His Apostle" (Qur'ān 49:1). The object of the verb "put not before" is omitted; it seems that the deleted word has been words and rulings. That is to say, the verse intends to say that when ruling and expressing the licit and illicit, wait for God and the Prophet (s) to issue them (Qurashī, 1998, vol.10; 269; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1997, vol.18: 456). It is noteworthy that the juxtaposition of God and the Prophet in this verse indicates the divinity of the rulings made by the Prophet of Allāh (s).

Intellectual reason

The disbelievers asked that God send them the Book directly instead of sending the Book to the Prophet (s) (Qur'ān 17:93). Definitely in such a scenario the miraculousness of the Qur'ān could be realized better and the hopes for the conversion of disbelievers to Islam were higher. However, God did not choose this method. Now the question is that if traditions are not authoritative, then why God insisted on sending the Prophet (s)? In fact, a prophet is sent because a divine Book per se is not enough to correction. That is to say, when there is not a teacher to clarify the concepts of that Book and act as a role model – one whose words and actions are obligatory to follow – the fulfillment of this goal is impossible.

Moreover, the authoritativeness of Islamic tradition has been accepted by all Muslims. If all these people are misguided and none has understood Islam in 14 centuries, then the question that comes to mind is that how can a religion be followed when it has not been understood by even one person during 1400 years?

The Prophet (s) as the Divine Mercy for people around the world

The Qur'ān introduces the Prophet (s) as a Mercy for the whole people of the world (Qur'ān 21:107). This means that if anyone in this world wants to attain bliss, he/she should follow the Prophet (s) (Ḥuwwā, 2004, vol.7:

3499), and following the Prophet (s) involves following his words, actions, and assertions. This proves the authoritativeness of Ḥadīth.

Verses on the adherence to Ahl al-Bayt (a)

Some verses of the Qurʾān have addressed the authoritativeness of the words of Ahl al-Bayt (a) either alone or in line with the necessity of obeying God and the Prophet (s). These verify the necessity of adherence to the sunna of the Prophet (s) and his Ahl al-Bayt, some of which are as follows.

Uli al-Amr verse

God asks the believers to obey God, the Prophet (s), and the Uli al-Amr (Qurʾān 4:59). The clear instances of "Uli al-Amr" are the Infallible Imāms (a), and this verse explicitly proves the authoritativeness of the words of the Prophet (s) and Imāms (a).

Thaʿālibī believes that kings and scholars are the referents of the term Uli al-Amr (Thaʿālibī, 1998, vol.2: 255). However, this verse does not obligate the necessity of obeying any king or scholar, because believers are the referent of the pronoun after Uli- al-Amr. Therefore, Uli- al-Amr needs to be a believer, and corrupt kings and scholars cannot be obeyed.

The verse "When there comes to them some matter touching (Public) safety or fear, they divulge it. If they had only referred it to the Apostle, or to those charged with authority among them, the proper investigators would have Tested it from them (direct)" (Qurʾān 4:83), too, proves the authoritativeness of the understanding of the Prophet (s) and Uli al-Amr in the explanation different topics for the wondered.

The verse of Wilāya

Also, the verse of Wilāya "Your (real) friends are (no less than) Allāh, His Messenger, and the (fellowship of) believers, those who establish regular prayers and regular charity, and they bow down humbly (in worship)" (Qurʾān 5:55) implies the guardianship of God, the Prophet (s), and Uli al-Amr. The precondition for this is the authoritativeness of the sunna of the Prophet (s) and his Ahl al-Bayt (a).

Ṭabarī has collected numerous narrations that assert the word "Muʾminīn" (believers) regards ʿAlī (a) (Ṭabarī, 1992, vol.6: 186). The sentence "those who establish regular prayers and regular charity, and they bow down humbly (in worship)" proves the specificity of verse, because the only person in the history who has given his ring to a poor person as a charitable act during prayer has been ʿAlī (a). In many Sunnī resources, there are many narrations that introduce ʿAlī (a) as the cause of revelation of this verse. In some of them, his charitable act of giving his ring in the prayer has also been mentioned (Ibn Ḥajar ʿAsqalānī, 1095: 56; Suyūṭī, 2002: 104).

This narration has also been narrated by Ibn 'Abbās, 'Ammār Yāsir, 'Abdullāh b. Salām, Salama b. Kahīl, Anas b. Mālik, 'Utba b. Ḥakīm, 'Abdullāh Ubay, 'Abdullāh b. Ghālib, Jābir b. 'Abdullāh Anṣārī, and Abūdhar Ghaffārī (Ḥillī , n.d., vol.2: 399).

Mawaddat verse

The Qur'ān says, "Say: 'No reward do I ask of you for this except the love of those near of kin'" (Qur'ān 42:23). Some believe that "the love of those near of kin" regards love toward one's relatives in general (Subḥānī, 2010, 23). However, showing love to relatives in an absolute manner is not desirable and Islam does not invite people to do so, since it explicitly asserts, "Thou wilt not find any people who believe in God and the Last Day, loving those who resist God and His Apostle, even though they were their fathers or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred" (Qur'ān 58:22).

Ṭabātabā'ī (1997, vol.18: 44) writes in this regard,

> Islam does not recommend people to love their relatives merely because they are their relatives, rather, the essence of inviting people to show love toward relatives by Islam is love of God, without an interfering role for the relatives. Of course, Islam pays considerable attention to kinship and people's relationships, but only in the form of keeping bonds with relatives … not as having love for their relatives … and we cannot says that the love of "those near of kin" in this verse implicitly shows keeping bonds with relatives and doing favorable acts for them and bestowing giving charitable sums of money to them, because in this verse there is no indication that shows it means keeping bonds with the relatives rather than the real meaning of love. Keeping bonds with relatives is one thing and feeling love of God another one.

Ibn Jarīr, too, believes that love here means love of the Prophet's (s) Ahl al-Bayt (Ṭabarī, 1992, vol.25: 15). In addition, those who claim that the phrase "the love of those near of kin" is showing love to one's relatives should be told that the previous part of this verse (i.e. do righteous deeds) refers to this point, and there is no need to remind it again. Therefore, "the love of those near of kin" should be a superior act, which cannot be anything other than showing love to and obeying Awliyā' – i.e. Ahl al-Bayt (a).

Another proof comes from the fact that the relatives of the Prophet (s) were known to people; in some verses they have been given a certain share of the Fifth tax (Qur'ān 8:41). The majority of interpreters believe that in this verse, the term "Dhi al-Qurbā" regards the near relatives of the Prophet (s) (Ṭabarī, 1992, vol.10: 5; Ṭabrisī, 1993, vol.4: 8350; Fakhr Rāzī, 2000,

vol.15: 485). Moreover, in Qur'ān 17:26, the Prophet is ordered to pay their share (Subḥānī, 2010: 24).

Prophets: teachers of wisdom and rulers of society
God asserts in the Qur'ān, "It is He Who has sent amongst the Unlettered an apostle from among themselves, to rehearse to them His Signs … and to instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom" (Qur'ān 62:2).

Ignorance and aberration are the two reasons for the decadence of a society, and the main objective of the Islamic government in the cultural sector is to remove ignorance and aberration; ignorance is to be removed and replaced with knowledge, Book, and wisdom, and aberration, moral deviation, and practical distortion are to be removed and replaced with the purification and edification of soul. In the foregoing verse and other similar verses in which the goals and programs of the Islamic rulers are discussed, instructions for the removal of ignorance and purification for the removal of aberration from the main principles of their plans are presented (Jawādī Āmulī, 2005: 47-48).

The attribution of the wisdom instruction to "rasūl" indicates the authoritativeness of the Prophet's (s) words. In Sunnī interpretations, the word "ḥikamt" (wisdom) is interpreted as "reflection in religion" (Abyārī, 1985, vol.11: 324).

Conclusion
Because of the following reasons, the consideration of the Qur'ān without reference to Ḥadīth is not enough for guidance.
1. The Qur'ān has obligated the Prophet (s) to interpret it and introduces him as the best role model;
2. The Qur'ān takes the Ijtihād (free investigation) of prophets as authoritative and orders people to follow them completely;
3. The Qur'ān involves mutashābih, mujmal, and aḥkām (rules) verses, it does not refer to the details, and is in need of interpretation;
4. Prophets (s) are sent because the Qur'ān alone is not enough for the correction of corruptions; therefore, before the appearance of a teacher to explicate those concepts, who is the practical role model of it, and whose words and actions are obligatory to follow, the fulfillment of this goal (i.e. correction of corruption) is not possible;
5. The Qur'ān does not easily reject the words given by a distorted person and orders for its examination. Now, isn't a solitary narration with some trustable figures in its chain of transmitters worthy of examination and acceptance? When the words of a distorted person – in case they are true – are authoritative, the words of the Infallibles will certainly be acceptable.

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