

## Teaching the Qur'ān and Receiving Wage from the Viewpoint of the Qur'ān

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### Abstract

According to the Qur'ānic verses, God is the first teacher of the Qur'ān. The Prophet (s) used different methods to teach the Qur'ān and recommended others to teach it, especially to one's children. The question of the permissibility or impermissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān has brought about some disagreements among Muslim scholars, where each group has relied on some Qur'ānic verses to prove its stance. In this article, the verses for the prohibition of receiving wage and the verses for the permissibility of receiving wage are presented and the interpretations of both these two groups of verses are examined and evaluated. At the end, a summary of the verses and the conclusions of the study are provided. Some jurisprudential denominations point out that the present-day Muslims do not have the vigorous faith of the Muslims of the early centuries and so, the impermissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān and religious issues will lead to the abandonment of the Islamic rules. This way, they assert that receiving wage is permissible for the teaching of the Qur'ān. The adoption of this viewpoint has led to the prevalence of the Qur'ān and its teaching in the Muslim community.

### Keywords

Teaching, Wage, Qur'ān, Qur'ān teacher, Gift.

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## **Introduction**

Teaching the Qur'ān is of utmost importance, in a way that some have taken it to be a general obligation and have emphasized that anyone who teaches something from the Qur'ān to any other person has undertaken a ritual obligation (Baḥrānī, 1995, vol. 1: 256). On the other hand, based on the verse "But the bounty of the Lord - rehearse and proclaim!" (Qur'ān 93:11), the Prophet (s) is asked to remember the teaching of the Qur'ān as a divine grace (Nasafī, 1988, vol. 2: 325). According to the Qur'ān 55:2, God is the first teacher of the Qur'ān (Baḥrānī, 1995, vol. 1: 256).

As the first teacher of the Qur'ān after God, the Prophet (s) recited the divine verses to people. He was the excellent exemplar in every aspect of life, including "the teaching of the Qur'ān." After the demise of the Prophet (s), the Infallible Imāms (a) generally taught people the way of living with the Qur'ān.

In order to encourage people to teach the Qur'ān, the Prophet (s) said: "The best person among you is the one who learns the Qur'ān and teaches it to others" (Ray Shahrī, 1997, vol. 2: 2521). Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān Sulamī took this statement and taught the Qur'ān for forty years. He said, "This statement installed me in my place (for the teaching of the Qur'ān)" (Bukhārī, 1981, vol. 6: 108).

In addition to allocating a section in his book to the teaching of the Qur'ān to the children, Ibn Khaldūn has called teaching the Qur'ān as the motto of Islam and the basis of education (Ibn Khaldūn, n.d., vol. 1: 537).

Some Qur'ānic verses imply the permissibility of teaching the Qur'ān to disbelievers with the aim of guiding them. An example in this regard is the verse "None shall touch it save the purified ones" (Qur'ān 56:79) ('Āmilī, 1982, vol. 8: 168). Yet there are several verses that have been used to suggest the impermissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān.

With regard to the related literature, it should be said that no exclusive study was found on the teaching of the Qur'ān from the viewpoint of the Qur'ān. However, there are some points in the exegetic and jurisprudential resources about his issue. Therefore, the study at hand answers the following questions.

1. Has the Qur'ān talked about the teaching of the Qur'ān?
2. If the answer to the first question is positive, then how does the Qur'ān rule for the teaching of the Qur'ān?
3. What are the different forms of teaching the Qur'ān from the viewpoint of the Qur'ān?
4. How should the Qur'ān be taught?
5. Is it permissible to receive wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān?

### **Different types of the teaching of the Qur'ān**

Different forms of the teaching of the Qur'ān have been mentioned and recommended in the Qur'ān. The Qur'ānic verses related to the teaching of the Qur'ān can be classified into several groups.

### **The verses that have considered God as the first teacher of the Qur'ān**

1) The verses “(Allāh) Most Gracious! It is He Who has taught the Qur'an” (Qur'ān 55:1-2).

These verses talk about teaching the Qur'ān by God. The verses that follow them refer to the creation of the human and teaching speaking to him.

Prioritizing the teaching of the Qur'ān over the creation of the human and teaching him how to speak reveals the importance of teaching the Qur'ān, because the Qur'ān includes the Right Path and expresses the way to salvation. Therefore, it is the best divine grace.

2) The verse “We will make you recite so you shall not forget” (Qur'ān 87:6).

The Prophet's (s) learning of the Qur'ān started with the revelation of the Qur'ān. Therefore, the verses that have talked about the revelation of the Qur'ān give in a picture of the teaching of the Qur'ān. To make the divine revelation more tangible, this educational scene is presented closely similar to the human educational scenes.

Some exegetes have taken the word “sanuqri'uka” (make you recite) in this verse similar to “sanu'limuka” (we will teach you soon) (Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1994, vol. 5: 317). Moreover, some Muslim scholars have noted that the Prophet (s) sent some people to teach the Qur'ān to those who were far from the Muslim community. They recited the Qur'ān to them and taught them through auditory channel. Example of such teachers include Muṣ'ab b. 'Umayr and Ibn Umm Maktūm (Zurqānī, 1995, vol. 1: 218).

3) The verse “Certainly Allāh conferred a benefit upon the believers when He raised among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His communications and purifying them, and teaching them the Book and the wisdom...” (Qur'ān 3:164).

This verse has introduced teaching the Qur'ān as an act of God. Teaching the Qur'ān is different from reciting it, as it involves interpretation, esoteric interpretation, and the knowledge about the esoteric meanings of the Qur'ān. This type of teaching is an act that Ahl al-Bayt (a) are able to do (Ṭayyib, 2000, vol. 2: 200). In other words, teaching here means making the learner understand and attain knowledge, and it implies the means of knowledge attainment (Abū Ḥayyān Andulusī, 1999, vol. 1: 637). Therefore, the

humans – including the Prophet (s) – are the means of teaching, while the true teacher is God.

### **The method of teaching in the Qur’ān**

In addition to encouraging the education of the Qur’ānic content, the Qur’ān also refers to the method of this education. For example, according to the verse “We will make you recite so you shall not forget” (Qur’ān 87:6), Gabriel (a) first recited the Qur’ān many times to the Prophet (s) so that he can memorize it. When the Prophet (s) was prepared to receive and memorize the whole Qur’ān, he was advised to continue reciting the Qur’ān carefully. Therefore, repeated listening to the Qur’ānic verses, memorizing the verses and concepts, and repeated recitation of the Qur’ānic verses have an important role in its learning.

The forgoing verse has also encouraged spending energy and money for the teaching of the Qur’ān. As Fakhr Rāzī says: “The foregoing verse is like the statement of a person who says: ‘I taught that person manners.’ In fact, he wants to say ‘I have caused him to learn manners and have spent my money for it’” (Fakhr Rāzī, 1999, vol. 29: 338).

In addition to encouraging to the teaching of the Qur’ān and its recitation, a certain type of recitation called *tartīl* (slow recitation) has also been recommended (Qur’ān 73:4).

In addition to the necessity of having general qualities such as commendable moral qualities, affability, patience, and forbearance, freedom from hypocrisy, etc., the teacher and reciter of the Qur’ān should have some more attributes that the Prophet (s) had when he recited the Qur’ān and taught it to people. These include:

1. Beautiful voice (Nūrī, 1988, vol. 4: 184);
2. Clarity of recitation: the Prophet (s) recited the Qur’ān with a beautiful voice, absolute clarity, and perfect separation of the sounds and verses, as ‘Aqaba b. ‘Āmir stipulates that the Prophet (s) taught the recitation of some verses to him (Nisā’ī, 1929, vol. 10: 254-255).
3. The observation of the recitation pauses: knowing the locations of pause in the recitation and their careful observation has been one of the bases of the Prophet’s (s) teaching of the Qur’ān. Some have said in this regard: “As we were learning the Qur’ān, we were learning the pauses, too.” Ṭabrisī says under the interpretation of the Qur’ān:112: “It is narrated that the Prophet (s) paused at the end of every verse of this chapter” (Ṭabrisī, 1994: vol. 10: 843).
4. Kawtharī recitation: this is a kind of recitation that brings about a lot of blessing but might not have an eye-catching appearance, and is opposite to *takāthurī* recitation (which is not acceptable). It is narrated

that a person went to the Prophet (s) and asked to be taught the Qur'ān. The Prophet (s) started reciting the Qur'ān. When he recited the Qur'ān 99:7-8, the man said: "this is enough for me." Then he stood up and left. The Prophet (s) said: "This man left while he had become a learned person" (Shahīd Tha'labānī, n.d., vol. 4: 141).

**The verses that imply the permissibility of teaching the Qur'ān to the disbelievers**

One of the verses that is used for this means is the verse "None shall touch it save the purified ones" (Qur'ān 56:79).

There is a disagreement over the meaning of the word "Lā yamassuhū" (None shall touch it). Some have taken it as the real touching with the body limbs, while others have said that the phrase "Lā yamassuhū" means that no one tastes the benefits and advantages of the Qur'ān other than the purified ones, i.e. the people who are free from disbelief or ritual impurity (Ḥaqqī Burūsawī, n.d., vol. 9: 337).

Some have interpreted "mass" (touching) as the belief, and have asserted that "the purified ones" are the believers in the Divine Unity. Therefore, the recitation of the Qur'ān by the disbelievers and non-monotheists (Qanūjī, n.d.: 428) and the teaching of the Qur'ān to the disbelievers is not permissible, unless it is done with the aim of guiding them (Muḥaqqiq Karakī, 1993, vol. 9: 173).

**The verses on the permissibility or impermissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān**

These verses are divided into the following two groups.

**The verses that imply the permissibility of receiving wage**

Due to the importance of the Qur'ān, the general obligation of its teaching (according to the opinion of some scholars) and the stipulation of some narrations that disfavor receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān, many Shī'a and Sunnī scholars have ruled receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān as ritually prohibited or detestable. 'Allāma Ḥillī has said in this regard: "The most severe illicit act is receiving money for the teaching of the Qur'ān, because the Qur'ān is one of the greatest miracles and its promotion and successive narration is obligatory. Therefore, receiving wage for its teaching is not permissible. However, receiving gifts for the teaching of the Qur'ān is permissible" (Ḥillī, 1990, vol. 2: 475).

In his other works, 'Allāma Ḥillī has deemed receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān as impermissible (id., 1993, vol. 13: 636). Ibn Idrīs Ḥillī (Ibn Idrīs Ḥillī, 1990, vol. 2: 223), Fāḍil Ābī (Fāḍil Ābī, 1990, vol. 6: 446), and some other jurisprudents have taken receiving money for the

teaching of the Qur'ān as ritually detestable. Shī'a jurists have deemed it permissible to set the teaching of the Qur'ān as a marriage portion. However, Sunnī jurists such as Abū Ḥanīfa and Zuhri have taken it ritually detestable to set the teaching of the Qur'ān as a marriage portion because the teaching of the Qur'ān is a physical act of worship (Abū Ḥayyān Andalusī, 1999, vol. 1: 289).

The belief in the unacceptability of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān and setting the teaching of the Qur'ān as a marriage portion in the early centuries of Islam has been among the means to spread the Qur'ān among Muslims. However, the later Ḥanafī jurists suggest that as the present-day Muslims do not have the profound beliefs and robust faith of the past Muslims and the belief in the necessity of teaching religious issues for free will lead to the weakening of the bases of Islam and the Qur'ān. This way, they deem it permissible to receive wage for the teaching of religious issues – including the Qur'ān – and have taken this permission as a means to spread the reach of the Qur'ān (Ibn 'Ābidīn, 1994, vol. 4: 328).

The following verses have been used by the opponents of the permissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān:

1. The verses “Whoever desires the gain of the hereafter, We will give him more of that gain; and whoever desires the gain of this world, We give him of it, and in the hereafter he has no portion” (Qur'ān 42:20) and “Whoever desires this present life, We hasten to him therein what We please for whomsoever We desire, then We assign to him the hell; he shall enter it despised, driven away” (Qur'ān 17:18).

Some have relied on these verses to rule for the impermissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān. As Jaṣāṣ says: “As a result, our companions have said that it is not permissible to receive wage to do acts related to Ḥajj, prayers, the teaching of the Qur'ān, and other deeds that need to be done with the intention of getting closer to God, as these verses and other similar ones clarify that receiving wage for suchlike actions takes [the person] away from the ‘proximity of God’ intention” (Jaṣāṣ, 1985, vol. 2: 173).

2. The verse “Surely those who conceal the clear proofs and the guidance that We revealed after We made it clear in the Book for men, these it is whom Allāh shall curse, and those who curse shall curse them (too)” (Qur'ān 2:159).

Some have relied on this verse (Kitmān verse) and said that teaching the religious sciences – including the Qur'ān – should be free, and deem it impermissible to receive wage for it. Their reason is that the verse talks about the necessity of revealing knowledge – including the knowledge about the Qur'ān – and avoiding its concealment, and curses those who conceal

knowledge – including the knowledge about the Qur'ān. Therefore, the outer appearance of the verse indicates the impermissibility of receiving wage for revealing knowledge and the impermissibility of concealing the knowledge. As a result, receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān and other types of knowledge is wrong (Jaṣāṣ, 1985, vol. 1: 125).

There are other verses with similar content that have been used in this regard, including “Those whom We have given the Book recognize him as they recognize their sons, and a party of them most surely conceal the truth while they know (it)” (Qur'ān 2:146), “Surely those who conceal any part of the Book that Allāh has revealed and take for it a small price, they eat nothing but fire into their bellies, and Allāh will not speak to them on the day of resurrection, nor will He purify them...” (Qur'ān 2:174), and “And when they come to you, they say: We believe; and indeed they come in with unbelief and indeed they go forth with it; and Allāh knows best what they concealed” (Qur'ān 5:61).

3. The verses “...Neither take a mean price in exchange for My communications; and Me, Me alone should you fear” (Qur'ān 2:41) and “...Fear not the people and fear Me, and do not take a small price for My communications; and whoever did not judge by what Allāh revealed, those are they that are the unbelievers” (Qur'ān 5:44).

Arguing based on suchlike verses as well as narrations with similar content, some exegetes have taken the teaching of the Qur'ān – and other types of knowledge – in exchange for wage as an instance of selling the Qur'ānic verses for a mean price, and so, have ruled for its impermissibility (Abū Ḥayyān Andalusī, 1999, vol. 1: 289). Some Muslim scholars have relied on the foregoing verses to assert that as it is noted in the Torah “Teach free of charge, as you were taught so,” the teaching of the Qur'ān should also be for free (Ṭabarī Kiyāharāsī, 1991, vol. 1: 361). Ḥanafī scholars have used these verses to prohibit receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān (Gharnāṭī Kalbī, 1983, vol. 1: 82). On the contrary, the majority of Sunnī scholars, including Mālik b. Anas, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Shāfi'ī, and Abū Thūr have ruled for its permissibility based on some traditions. An example regards an occasion when some people told the Prophet of Allāh (s): “We receive wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān,” and the Prophet (s) said: “The best thing for which you can receive wage is the Book of God” (Qurṭabī Anṣārī, 1945, vol. 1: 334-336).

4. The verse “They listen to your words a lot to deny it, devourers of what is forbidden...” (Qur'ān 5: 42).

Ibn 'Abbās has interpreted this verse as the wage of teachers who condition teaching the Qur'ān to receiving wage (Nūrī, 1988, vol. 2: 435). In

the light of this interpretation, conditioning the teaching of the Qur'ān to receiving wage is an instance of *suht* (money gained from unfavorable jobs) and is forbidden.

Numerous instances for *suht* have been mentioned in the narrations, including wine, bribe, a gift from a rabbi, working a sinful job, and similar cases, and *suht* in its general meaning includes all these.

5. The verse “And I do not ask you any reward for it; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds” (Qur'ān 26:109 & 127).

There are some verses in the Qur'ān with this content in which the prophets remind their people that they do not ask for any wage for their prophetic mission and their wage is on God. Some Muslim scholars have taken these verses to conclude that receiving wage for teaching religious issues, including the Qur'ān, is impermissible (Nasafi, 1988, vol. 2: 137).

Similar to the Sunnī denomination, there is a certain strictness toward religious knowledge, including the teaching of the Qur'ān, in the Shī'a denomination, in a way that according to the stipulation of some Shī'a jurists, it is not permissible to recruit someone to do something that is legally obligatory for the person himself and it is not permissible to receive wage for doing such an act. One of the secondary principles of this denomination is that receiving wage in exchange for doing acts of prayer and obligatory religious rituals such as leading and lecturing at the Friday prayer, teaching the Qur'ān, and teaching sciences is not permissible; rather, if the person affords it, he should perform the foregoing deeds free of charge as they are obligatory religious issues (Subhānī, 1998: 344).

### **The verses that imply the permissibility of receiving wage**

There are few suchlike verses. Therefore, the proponents of the permissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān relied on them less frequently. These verses include what follows.

1. The verse “And that man shall have nothing but what he strives for” (Qur'ān 53:39).

Some believers in the legality of the intellectual property rights have relied on this verse to say that the word “*mā*” (what) in this verse is a generic one. The philologists also stipulate that the word “*sa'y*” (strive) regards the general meaning of “making efforts” (Ibn Manzūr, 1985, vol. 14: 385). Therefore, the foregoing verse indicates that all intellectual, scientific, technical, and artistic productions and the manifestations of all human talents are the examples of this verse. Based on this verse, the efforts of the one who teaches the Qur'ān should not be left financially unappreciated, i.e. it should not be free of charge.



2. The verse “Every soul is held in pledge for what it earns” (Qur’ān 74:38).

According to this verse, every person owns his material and immaterial achievements in this world and the other world. The words “mā” (what) and “kasabat” (earns) have a wide scope and involve all worldly and otherworldly issues, including the teaching of the Qur’ān. Therefore, the teacher of the Qur’ān should own the wage of his teaching.

### **Examination and criticism**

#### **The criticism of augments that rely on the verses that imply the impermissibility of receiving wage**

None of the verses that have been relied upon by the opponents of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur’ān suggests such impermissibility. The first verse (Qur’ān 42:20) contradicts the narrations that declare the permissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur’ān. It is also incongruent with other interpretations of the verse (which are more appropriate) (Ṭabrisī, 1994, vol. 9: 41). The reason is that based on one interpretation, this verse talks about taking part in Jihād, i.e. anyone who goes to the holy struggle for the cause of collecting spoils of war and mundane benefits, he will have his worldly share of spoils of war (Khusrawānī, 1970, vol. 4: 267). Hasan Baṣrī has a different viewpoint and asserts that the verse intends to say that anyone who works for the otherworld will attain both this world and the other world, but anyone who works only for this world will not have any share in the other world, because the higher level never follows the lower level (Ṭabrisī, 1994, vol. 9: 41). Based on another interpretation, the meaning of the verse is that if a person wants to achieve the worldly benefits through his acts, God will give him only part of it (not all of it) based on the requirements of the Divine wisdom (Qāsimī, 1997, vol. 2: 434). Some others have asserted that the verse intends the hypocrites who do not have any divine reward in the otherworld (Amīn Iṣfahānī, 1983, vol. 9: 129).

From the viewpoint of ‘Allāma Ṭabāṭabā’ī, if an agent does an act to achieve something in this world rather than the other world, he will attain his favorite result in this world, but he will not have anything in the other world. However, based on the Qur’ān 6:69, if an agent does an act in this world in order to achieve its results in the other world, he will be given much more divine reward (Ṭabāṭabā’ī, 1996, vol. 18: 40).

‘Allāma Ṭabāṭabā’ī’s opinion is more inclusive and involves other meanings such as going to holy struggle to achieve spoils of war, doing acts hypocritically, etc. On the other hand, based on all the interpretations given for the Qur’ān 42:20, it might be said that the verse asserts that doing acts

with the worldly and otherworldly intentions leads to two different results. Therefore, this verse is unrelated to the foregoing claim, because none of its meanings is connected with the wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān.

Similarly, the second verse (the Kitmān verse) does not imply the impermissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān, as the use of the foregoing decree for this verse is unacceptable due to the presented causes of revelation and other reasons. In fact, according to the causes of revelation, this verse was revealed about the scholars of the People of the Book who denied the Rajm (the qur'ānic verse on the stoning of the adulterer) and Amr (obeying the Prophet (s)) verses (Wāhidī Nayshābūrī, 1991: 29). Another cause of revelation suggests that the foregoing verse was revealed about the Judaist leaders and scholars who received gifts from the ordinary Jews and hoped that the to-be-appointed prophet would be from among them. However, when the Prophet (s) was appointed and it got clear that the divinely chosen person was not one of them, they got afraid that they might lose the gifts they were receiving and the leading position they had. Therefore, they changed the written account on the qualities of the promised prophet, presented it to people, and told them that these are the qualities of the prophet of the last days, which are not similar to the traits of the Prophet of Mecca (ibid). According to another cause of revelation, the verse intends the Jews and Christians such as Ka'ab b. Ashraf, Ka'b b. Asad, Ibn Šūriyā, Zayd b. Bābuī, etc. who rejected the obedience of the Prophet (s) and his prophethood, although it was mentioned in the Torah and the Gospel (Ṭabrisī, 1994, vol. 1: 446).

The common point among all foregoing causes of revelation of this verse is that the Judaist or Christian scholars denied the realness of the Prophet (s) and his prophethood, and so, they have been reproached in this verse. Therefore, the verse is not related to the wage of teaching the Qur'ān.

Even if we accept the generality of the Qur'ān 2:159 content (the Kitmān verse) and that it is not limited to the foregoing causes of revelation, this verse and other qur'ānic verses along with the narrations that have talked about the incorrectness of concealment and have prohibited it do not imply the ritual prohibition of concealing knowledge or the impressibility of receiving wage in exchange for education, as the reason for the prohibition of knowledge concealment is one of the following issues:

1. The ritual prohibition of concealment in the Kitmān verse is related to asking about and answering religious questions, because it is obligatory for the scholar and jurisconsult to answer the question of an inquirer, especially if he/she is one of their followers.

2. The concealment of knowledge is ruled as ritually prohibited because it leads to the concealment of scientific facts and brings about ignorance and inaccuracy, causes confusion due to the observation of political issues, or is done because of the fear from the oppressors. Accordingly, the foregoing verse does not imply the abovementioned claim, especially because of the fact that the devoted scholars feel ethical and legal responsibility not to fear anyone other than God in their expression of the right (as stipulated in the Islamic texts). For example, some narrations indicate that talking in the presence of an oppressive ruler is the biggest Jihād (Majlisī, 1983, vol. 97: 93). Moreover, the promotion of good and the prevention of evil is a ritual obligation in Islam.
3. The ritual prohibition of knowledge concealment regards anyone who conceals knowledge and avoids spreading it so as to prevent people from considering anyone other than him as a scholar or to keep knowledge exclusive to a certain group. On the other hand, although the ritual prohibition of hoarding is definitive, no one has ruled that the hoarder should be forced to give his products to people free of charge. Therefore, jurists have ruled that the hoarded product should be sold with a fair price so that no one (i.e. producer and consumer) is financially damaged. Therefore, this verse is not related to the foregoing claim.

Similarly, the third group of verses (i.e. the ones that prohibit selling the Qur'ānic verses for a mean price) do not imply the foregoing claim, because according to the stipulations of exegetes such as Ṭabrisī, these verses intend that – unlike the Judaist scholars – people should not exchange God's verses and rules for a mean price (that is, bribery and lust for power) (Ṭabrisī, 1999, vol. 2: 79). On the other hand, the sentence "...Whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the unbelievers" at the end of Qur'ān 5:44 is about Judaist scholars who denied and ignored God's verses because of their intense disbelief and oppression, and ruled based on the principles of non-God because of their deep corruption. Therefore, the foregoing verse does not imply the abovementioned claim and is not related to receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān.

With regard to the concept of verses that prohibit selling God's verses for a mean price, some exegetes have suggested another possibility, which cannot be used as a basis for the interpretation of those verses for the impermissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān, either. This new interpretation asserts that those verses intend to say that the divine obligations and preventions should not be sold in exchange for a mean price

(i.e. worldly life) (Qurṭabī, Anṣārī, 1945, vol. 1: 334). In other words, these verses prohibit changing and distorting the divine obligations and preventions.

On the other hand, the Qur'ān has negatively mentioned two types of business and has warned people against undertaking them: doing business with the divine words and verses, and doing business with the divine covenants. These verses can be used to reject the reliance on the foregoing verses to rule for the impermissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān.

There are other wrong businesses that confirm the unrelatedness of the foregoing verses to the impermissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān. Examples include:

1. Selling the otherworld in exchange for this world: “These are they who buy the life of this world for the hereafter” (Qur'ān 2:86).
2. Selling guidance to aberration: “These are they who buy error for the right direction” (Qur'ān 2:16).
3. Selling faith to disbelief: “Surely those who have bought unbelief at the price of faith shall do no harm at all to Allāh” (Qur'ān 3:177).

In addition to the warning against the foregoing harmful businesses, the Qur'ān also notes some useful businesses that strengthen the belief in the unrelatedness of the foregoing verses to the foregoing claim. Instances include:

1. Giving one's life in exchange for God's satisfaction: “And among men is he who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allah...” (Qur'ān 2:207).
2. Giving one's life and properties in exchange for Paradise (Qur'ān 9:111).

Similarly, the *Suḥt* verse (Qur'ān 5:42) does not imply the impermissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān, because illicit is not the only meaning of *suḥt*; in some narrations from Ibn 'Abbās, this word has been used to describe receiving wage for teaching as ritually detestable (Khu'ī, 1990, vol. 1: 478). Likewise, one of the literal meanings of *suḥt* is “ritually detestable” (Ibn Manzūr, 1985, vol. 2: 41). Moreover, Faḍl b. Abī qara says: I told Imām Ṣādiq (a): some say that the teacher's gain is *suḥt*. He said: “They lie and are enemies of God. They don't want their children to learn the Qur'ān. If a person gives the ransom of his [murdered] child to a teacher, it is licit for the teacher” (Ray Shahrī, 1997, vol. 2: 2078).

Suchlike verses show that the prophets do not pursue material goals; rather, their purpose is to satisfy God and any wise person should have a motivation for any act.

In other words, these verses intend to say, “[The prophets say] I asked you to reflect. Now think and ask your conscience what has caused me to warn you against the intense punishment by God? What benefits can this invitation bring to me? What is its material profit for me? Moreover, if your pretext for shunning away from the right is that you think you should pay a lot to me, I tell you that I don’t want you any wage or reward” (Makārim Shīrāzī, 1996, vol. 18: 144).

The fifth group of verses (such as Qur’ān 26:109) indicates that the Prophet (s) does not ask for any wage in exchange for his prophetic mission. These verses contradict the narrations on the permissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur’ān, such as “The best thing for which you can receive wage is the Book of God” (Bukhārī, 1981, vol. 7: 23). In addition, the teaching of the Qur’ān can be done in different forms. In one form, the teacher of the Qur’ān freely teaches it. This is what prophets do. In another type, the teacher receives a gift rather than wage. This type of teaching the Qur’ān is undoubtedly true. The third type of the Qur’ān is to teach it in exchange for receiving wage (Zarkishī, 1971, vol. 1: 457). There are disagreements over this type of teaching the Qur’ān which has been labeled by some narrations as “teaching conditioned to receiving wage.” Moreover, there is a fourth type, which is “teaching the Qur’ān and being paid by the public treasury.” This type of teaching the Qur’ān is also undoubtedly permissible.

The majority of Muslim scholars have deemed the third type (teaching in exchange for wage) as permissible, while some scholars believe in its impermissibility. In addition, unlike their antecedents, some later Ḥanafī jurists have used their juristic preference to rule for the permissibility of receiving wage for doing some Islamic rituals such as being the imam of prayers, reciting the call for prayer, and teaching the Qur’ān. They argue that the fervor of our contemporary Muslims is lower from that of the Muslims of the early days of Islam, in a way that if the Friday prayer and community prayer imams, the reciters of the call for prayer, and the teachers of the Qur’ān, the religious rules, and other Islamic rituals are not paid wage, their normal life will be disrupted, the teaching of the Qur’ān and the expression of the Islamic rules will not be fulfilled, and the religious rituals will be ignored (Ibn ‘Ābidīn, 1994, vol. 2: 339-340). Moreover, they have relied on the religious principle “The need to change the religious rules because of the era changes cannot be rejected” to support their foregoing stance. Nonetheless, they have deemed it impermissible to receive wage for the recitation of the Qur’ān, as it is not a pressing problem (Ibn ‘Ābidīn, 1994, vol. 2: 339-340). In fact, they have made a distinction between essential

needs such as the teaching of the Qur'ān and similar issues, and unessential needs such the recitation of the Qur'ān. On the other hand, some have said that since giving gifts and rewards to the teacher – which was a common practice during the early days of Islam – was not practiced by the rich and the public treasury anymore, receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān was ruled for in order to remove the financial problems of teachers, as they could not run their lives through undertaking jobs in farming, business, or industry. Without such a ruling, no one would do the foregoing religious tasks, and the prevalence of the Qur'ān and religion would be damaged (Sābiq, n.d., vol. 3: 184).

### **Criticism of the arguments based on the verses that support the permissibility of receiving wage**

The verses that have been relied upon to argue for the permissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān cannot be used as so and do not confirm such a permissibility. Although the general meaning of the word sa'y in the Sa'y verse (Qur'ān 53:39) also includes the teaching of the Qur'ān, it cannot be used to support the permissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān, because when this verse notes that the human strives are not without outcome, it evidently refers to the otherworldly reward and punishment, as the Qur'ān 20:15 does. The rest of this verse that talks about the otherworldly outcome confirms this claim. Therefore, some jurists have relied on this verse to assert that the lapsed acts of worship of a dead person, such as prayers and fasting, is not acceptable (Sharīf Murtaḍā, 1994: 198). Moreover, some have used this verse to maintain that a living person cannot ask another person to do physical acts of worship such as minor ablution, major ablution, prayers, etc. instead of him (Ḥillī Saywarī Fāḍil, n.d., vol. 1: 160).

Even if this verse regards all worldly and otherworldly and material and immaterial acts, it cannot be used to rule for the permissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān, as there is no interdependence between this verse and the permissibility of receiving wage, because in this case, the verse means that the human does not receive anything for his acts other than the results of them, and his every effort in this world has a worldly and otherworldly reflection. This way, if one does a good act such as teaching the Qur'ān, he will see its good consequences – including satisfaction, respect, peacefulness, and other worldly benefits – and will have an otherworldly reward, too. Therefore, this verse does not imply the permissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān. For the same reason, the second verse (Qur'ān 74:38) does not imply the permissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān, either.

### **Narrations used for the permissibility or impermissibility of receiving wage for teaching of the Qur'ān**

In the Shī'a and Sunnī jurisprudence, some narrations have also been used to rule for the permissibility or impermissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān. Some of these are as follows.

#### **Narrations for the impermissibility of receiving wage**

1. Some Sunnī scholars have not deemed it permissible to receive wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān because it is narrated that Ubayy b. Ka'b taught the Qur'ān to someone and he gave him an archery bow as a gift. The Prophet (s) told him: "If you accept it, you have gotten a bow of fire"; therefore, Ubayy b. Ka'b gave the bow back (Nawawī, n.d., vol. 15: 14).
2. The Prophet (s) says: "Recite the Qur'ān but do not set it as your means of making a living." Abū Ḥanīfa, Zuhri, and some other Sunnī jurists have relied on this tradition to conclude the impermissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān (Nuwayrī, 2003, vol. 1: 67). Some Shī'a jurists have referred to this tradition to rule that receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān is ritually detestable (Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', 1940, vol. 1: 203).

#### **Narrations for the permissibility of receiving wage**

Against the narrations that prohibit receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān, there are some other narrations that allow it. These include:

1. The Prophet (s) says: "The best thing for which you can receive wage is the Book of God" (Nūrī, 1988, vol. 13: 117).
2. Abū Sa'īd narrates: "The Prophet (s) sent us for a battle. We came across a tribe and asked them to host us, but they did not accept. Meanwhile, the head of that tribe was bitten by a scorpion. They asked: Is there anyone among you who can break the spell of the scorpion? I said: Yes, I can, but I will break the spell if you give us one sheep. They said: We will give you 30 sheep. We accepted their offer. I recited the Opening chapter [Qur'ān 1] seven times and the chieftain was healed ... We came to the Prophet (s) and told him the story. He said: divide the sheep among yourselves" (Ibn Abī Shayba Kūfī, 1989, vol. 5: 446).

Tirmidhī has said that in the light of this tradition, the teacher can condition the teaching of the Qur'ān to receiving wage. Shāfi'ī has also allowed for it (Sakhāwī, 1998, vol. 1: 231).

### **Compromising the two sets of narrations**

Based on what we said, as the presented verses cannot be relied upon to support any of the two viewpoints (i.e. the permissibility or impermissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān), we should refer to the narrations that evidently talk about receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān. However, since these narrations also contradict each other, a compromise should be achieved based on one of the following scenarios.

### **Compromise based on the type of the obligation of teaching the Qur'ān**

In this method, there should be made a distinction between those parts of the Qur'ān that are needed for saying the prayers (i.e. Qur'ān 1 & 112) and other parts of it. The reason is that learning the Qur'ān 1 and 112 is an individual obligation and it is not permissible to receive wage for teaching them, while learning the other parts of the Qur'ān is not obligatory and receiving wage for teaching those parts is not prohibited.

### **Compromise based on the conditioning or not conditioning the wage**

In this type of compromise, if the teaching of the Qur'ān is not conditioned to receiving wage, receiving wage in practice will not be problematic. However, if it is conditioned, some jurists believe that such a property is illicit. 'Allāma Ḥillī's abeyance in this regard (Ḥillī, 1991, vol. 15: 428) shows the difficulty of making such a compromise. As a result, many jurists tend to rule for the permissibility of receiving wage in an absolute manner.

### **Compromise based on precautionary concealment and lack of such concealment**

In this scenario, the narrations from the Shī'a Imāms (a) about the prohibition of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān are interpreted as manifestations of precautionary concealment. Baḥrānī, who was a traditionalist himself, has preferred this suggestion (Baḥrānī, 1985, vol. 18: 231).

### **Compromise based on the role of receiving wage in the spread or the Qur'ān or lack of such a contribution**

In this compromise, the effect of prohibitive narrations on slowing down the spread of the Qur'ān and lowering its value in the society should be taken into account. That is, the simplicity of the needs of the early Muslims and the simplicities that occurred in the ensuing eras due to new simple issues and connections with the Iranian and Roman civilizations caused Muslims to spend time and energy whole-heartedly for learning and teaching the Qur'ān



along with their daily financial endeavors. However, in the later eras when Muslims got deprived of their direct relationship with the Infallibles (a) and faced new complex issues, the need was felt for the existence of certain individuals who exclusively embarked upon teaching the Qur'ān and its content. Otherwise, insisting on the free teaching of the Qur'ān would damage the teaching of the Qur'ān and its content, and would lead to its ignorance in the society.

### **Conclusion**

Based on what we said, the following findings can be mentioned as the results of the study.

1. God is the first teacher of the Qur'ān. Unlike the natural path, the Qur'ān first discusses the teaching of the Qur'ān by God, then the creation of the human, and finally the teaching of speaking to the human. This sequence leads us to conclude the importance of teaching the Qur'ān. The reason is that on the one hand, teaching the Qur'ān is a divine act, and on the other hand, it is the biggest divine grace that brings about salvation in this and the other world.
2. As the first learner of the Qur'ān among the humans and the jinni, the Prophet (s) on the one hand had qualities such a good voice and the observation of correct recitation pauses, and on the other hand, taught the Qur'ān with an interesting method. Following him and his advice, the Companions tried to teach the Qur'ān to their children, especially the young ones.
3. The qur'ānic verses and Islamic narrations that are used by the proponent and opponent of receiving wage for the teaching of religious issues, especially the teaching of the Qur'ān, show the importance of this issue for both groups. The viewpoint of early Ḥanafī scholars on the impermissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān and the viewpoint of the later Ḥanafī scholars who compared the contemporary Muslims and the ones in the early days of Islam and used their juristic preference to rule for the permissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān and religious issues clearly shows that importance. Therefore, both groups have contributed to the spread of religious education, especially the teaching of the Qur'ān.
4. The sensitivity of Muslims to the Qur'ān and the question of receiving wage for its teaching has been more outstanding than their sensitivity to other religious educations because of the sacredness, miraculousness, and respectfulness of the Qur'ān. This sensitivity then

permeated other educations such as Islamic sciences.

5. Both Shī'a and Sunnī scholars have reacted to receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān. However, the Sunnī scholars' use of the verses to rule for the impermissibility of receiving wage is more extensive.
6. Since narrations are the only appropriate reasons for the permissibility of receiving wage for the teaching of the Qur'ān, and since narrations have talked differently about this issue, it is necessary to compromise them.

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The noble Qur'ān

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