

Analytical-Critical Review of the Narration of Silent Recitation of the Basmalah in the Quranic Chapters by Imam Ali (AS)

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Abstract

1. Introduction

The dispersion of opinions on the issue of reciting the *Basmalah* aloud or in silence has become one of the areas of divergence of Islamic schools of thought, and the main reason for this dispute doubts the revelatory nature of the *Basmalah* and its being a part of every chapter of the Qur'an. According to some definitive narratives that agree with rational axioms, the *Basmalah* is an essential part of the Qur'anic chapters. The *Sirah* of the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions, especially Imam Ali (AS) was based on reciting the *Basmalah* out loud, and any doubt about this issue paves the way for distortion of the Qur'an. However, in some Sunni sources, there is a hadith that contradicts what was mentioned above, as it indicates that Imam Ali (AS) recited the *Basmalah* in silence.

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Research Question(s)

2. Literature Review

The background of this research can be divided into two general and specific parts. Generally, it can be done through the books of hadith and interpretation in which narrations and discussions about the *Basmalah* were mentioned specifically, the following research can be mentioned:

1. *“The Possibility of the Basmala being a Verse from the Shia and Sunni Perspectives”* by Zahra Askarzadeh.

2. *“A Translation and Criticism of the Entry “Basmalah” in the Encyclopedia of the Holy Qur’an”* by Bibi Sadat Behabadi and Hujjatullah Javani.

3. *“Study and Analysis of Sheikh Baha’i’s Narrations and Criticisms in the Interpretation of ‘Urwah al-Wuthqā in the Unity of the Surahs and Partial-Nature of Basmalah”* by Muhammad Ali Tajari and Muhammad Taghaddomi Saberi.

4. *“Examination of the Opinions of Jurists, Commentators and Traditions of Ahl al-Bayt (AS) Regarding the Verse Bismillah al-Rahmān al-Rahīm”* by Muhammad Qorbani Moghaddam.

5. *“The Ontology of the Basmalah as an Introduction to Creating an Ontology of the Teachings of the Qur’an”* by Hossein Hosseinzadeh.

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7. *“The Verse of Basmalah, its Continuation and Revelation”* by Hojjatullah ‘Āshūrī.

8. *“Partial-Nature of the Basmalah and it’s Aloud Recitation”* by Jafar Sobhani.

As it was mentioned, the basic problem in suggesting the partial or non-partial nature of the *Basmalah*, and thus the belief in its aloud or silent recitation, goes back to the conflicting narrations mentioned in this regard, and the problem remains until these narrations are scrutinized in terms of the chain of transmission and the text, and the research in this regard is only a repetition of the previous researches.

The difference between this article and the other researches is that it examines the narration related to the silent recitation of the *Basmalah* narrated from Imam Ali (AS), in terms of the chain of transmission (*Sanad*) and the text, which has not been written in this regard until now.

3. Methodology

This article aims to critically re-read the non-existence of *Basmalah* in the Qur'anic surahs using a descriptive-analytical method, based on the analysis of the chain of transmission and the text of the relevant narration.

4. Results

The results of the research show that the aforementioned narration contains some serious problems. A: There is a major problem regarding its chain of transmission; because among the transmitters there are narrators who have been severely criticized by Sunni scholars. B: Some of the narrators are attributed to the Shias, and this contains a contradiction; because what they say completely contradicts the teachings of the Imams (AS) and his habit of reciting the *Basmalah* aloud. C: Analysis of historical reports indicates that the claim of dropping the *Basmalah* from prayer occurred under a calculated process initiated and supported by the Umayyad regime and with the policy of erasing Alawite monuments. Therefore, the possibility of falsification in these narrations becomes stronger.

6. Conclusion

According to the findings of this research, the aforementioned hadiths contain some serious problems. First: It has major problems in terms of the chain of transmission; because among the transmitters there are narrators who have been severely criticized by Sunni scholars. Second: Some of the narrators were attributed to Shias, and this contradicts the authentic hadiths that state that the Shia Imams (AS) considered the *Basmalah* to be part of the surahs of the Qur'an and therefore they used to recite it out loud. Finally, historical reports indicate that the idea of dropping the *Basmalah* emerged during a

calculated process initiated and supported by the Umayyad regime. Therefore, there is a high possibility of *Wad'ʿ* and *Tadlīs* (fabrication) in these narrations.

Keywords: Critical Review, Basmalah, Jahr (Aloud), Ikhfā' (in Silence), Imam Ali (AS).

Problem Statement

The first word we see when reading the Qur'an, at the beginning of all the chapters, except Surah al-Tawbah, is the *Basmalah*. It is an abbreviated word for “*Bismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm*” [In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful] which has a high position in the general culture of Muslims and they often start everything with this phrase. Besides, according to the testimony of the various Muṣḥafs [copies of the Qur'an], *Basmalah* has been written from the beginning until now at the beginning of all the surahs of the Qur'an, except Sura al-Tawbah in a uniform manner. Not to mention the insistence of the writers of the Muṣḥafs not to mix non-Qur'anic words with the Qur'an, and they all agreed that non-Qur'anic expressions are not permissible to be included in the Qur'an except with a clear sign.

That is why they wrote the names of the surahs, the number of verses, and the signs of *juz's*, *rub's*, and *sajdahs* in the Qur'an in such a way to be known that they are not parts of the Qur'an. For this reason, they used to write *Basmalah* at the beginning of each surah like all other Qur'anic verses, without any difference between the previous and the next verses, and there is no written Qur'an since the era of the Companions until now except in this form, and there is a practical consensus on the *Basmalah* to be a part of the Qur'an” (Sobhani, 1388, p. 28).

Despite this, one of the controversial issues between Shias and Sunnis is the question of revelatory or non-revelatory nature of *Basmalah* in the Qur'anic Surahs? From the Shia viewpoint, the fact that the *Basmalah* is a part of Surah Al-Fatiha is certain, and some of the Sunnis are of the same opinion. As for the rest of the surahs, what is widely held among the Shias is the view that it is part of the surahs, while the majority of Sunnis believe that it is non-partial nature of it (Qorbani Moghaddam, 1401, pp. 84-85).

Muslim disagreement over whether to read the *Basmalah* aloud or in silence, has led them to be divided into four groups: The first group says that the *Basmalah* must be recited at the beginning of Surah al-Fātiḥa aloud if the prayer is *Jahrīyyah* (aloud), and silently if the

prayer is *Ikhfa'yyah* (silent). This opinion is attributed to Imam Shāfi'ī and his followers. The second group, i.e. Ḥanbalīs, says that it must be read in silence at all. The third group considers reading the *Basmalah* is absolutely forbidden, and they are the followers of Imam Malik (Makarem Shi, 1389, pp. 165-166). As for the fourth group, that is, the Shia jurists, they have unanimously agreed that reciting the *Basmalah* aloud is obligatory in *Jahrīyyah* prayers, and it is recommended in *Ikhfa'iyyah* prayers (Sobhani, 1388, p. 30).

This dispersion in opinions about whether or not the *Basmalah* is part of the surahs, and then reciting it out loud or silently, is due to the conflicting narrations that have been reported in this regard. In the authentic narrations, the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions considered the *Basmalah* to be part of the Qur'an, so they recited it out loud. Reciting the *Basmalah* out loud was part of Imam Ali's known and frequent *Sirah* (Fakhr al-Rāzī, 1420, c. 19, p. 123; al-Nīshābūrī, 1416, c. 1, p. 209). In contrast, there have been contradictory hadiths about the *Basmalah* being non-part of the surahs and not being read out loud in the prayer. Among them are hadiths containing narrators attributed to the Shias, which show that Imam Ali (AS) recited the *Basmalah* in silence (Ibn Abī Shaybah, 1436, vol. 3, p. 409). These hadiths at least propose that this phrase was added to the beginning of the Qur'anic surahs by the Companions, and this issue voluntarily or unwillingly entails the idea of distortion of the Qur'an, and inserting into the Qur'an what is not part of it. Therefore, it is necessary to study the theory of the non-revelatory nature of the *Basmalah* and its silent recitation due to this narration, whether in terms of the chain of transmission (*Sanad*) or the text.

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2. Examination of the Chain of Transmission of the Narration

2.1. The Path (*Ṭarīq*) of ‘Abdul Razzāq (126-211 AH)

“‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī was the first to write this narration in his

book with this chain of transmission:

““Abdul Razzāq, on the authority of Isrā’el, on the authority of Thuwayr ibn Abi Fakhtah, on the authority of his father, that Ali used to not recite *Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* out loud. [Instead] He used to loudly recite *al-Ḥamdu lillāhi Rabbil ‘Ālamīn.*” (Ṣan‘ānī, 1437, vol. 2, p. 376).

Al-Dhahabī, after endorsing ‘Abdul Razzāq, says: “[He] is a Shia” (Al-Dhahabī, 1405, vol. 6, p. 255). Zayd bin Mubāarak accused him of lying and stealing hadith, and others, such as Abū Aḥmad ‘Adī, accused him of becoming Shia (Ibn Ḥajar, 1326, vol. 6, p. 315). Aḥmad bin Zuhayr says: When Ibn Mu‘īn heard that Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal was speaking against ‘Ubaydullah ibn Mūsā because he was a Shia, he said: By God, ‘Abdul Razzāq is many times stronger than him (in terms of Shia), and I learned many times more knowledge and hadith from ‘Abdul Razzāq than I learned from ‘Ubaydullah (Al-Dhahabī, *ibid.*, vol. 80, pp. 509-563).

The reason for their attribution of ‘Abdul Razzāq to Shiism can be stemmed from his theological beliefs in preferring Imam Ali (AS) over other caliphs and his disavowal of Mu‘āwīyah (al-Aqīlī, 1404, vol. 3, p. 6). 107). However, it is not acceptable that some define him as a political Shia (al-Khu‘ī, 1413, vol. 11, p. 15), and it results from the confusion between who likes Imam Ali (AS) and the contemporary term Shia. For example, in the Shia thought, Abū Ṭālib died as a Muslim, but ‘Abdul Razzāq mentions the story of his death and his lack of faith under the verses of al-Qaṣaṣ/56 and al-Tawbah/113 (al-Ṣan‘ānī, 1419, vol. 2, p. 167). He also did not mention under the verse al-Mā‘idah/55 the issues related to the imamate of Imam Ali (AS) (*ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 3) and his opinion on the Sunni Caliphs like his other companions. (al-Dhahabī, 1405, vol. 6, p. 255) Therefore, his theological opinions could be linked to the beliefs of the Mu‘tazila of Baghdad; because they believe in the superiority of Imam Ali (AS) in the imamate and condemnation of the actions of Mu‘āwīyah. Nevertheless, they consider the succession of other caliphs to be valid. (Ibn Aī al-Ḥadīd, 1404, vol. 1, p. 4)

Ibn Ḥanbal, in addition to verifying the narration of Isrā'el ibn Yūnus, expresses his astonishment at the strength of his memory (al-Mizzī, 1400, vol. 2, pp. 515-524). Although Ibn Mu'īn, al-'Ijlī, and Abū Ḥatam confirmed its trustworthiness, Ibn al-Madini, Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Ḥazm, and others weakened it (Ibn Ḥajar, 1406, p. 104; Al-Dhahabī, 1382, vol. 1, p. 209). Ya'qūb bin Shaybah at first considered him truthful but not strong in hadīth, and then he said: "His hadīth is (*Leen*) tender" (ibid., 1405, vol. 7, pp. 361-355). In any case, Sunni scholars finally authenticated him based on al-Bukhārī and Muslim's confirmation of Isrā'el (ibid, 1382, vol. 1, p. 209).

Some have accused Thuwair bin Abi Fakhtah bin Sa'id bin Abī Allaqaḥ, known as al-Fakhtah, of altering the chain of transmission and fabricating the hadīth. Others considered him as a liar and one of the pillars of lying (Ibid., p. 375). Al-Ḥakīm al-Nīshābūrī and Mohsen Amin consider that the weakening of Thuwair is due to his Shia tendencies (Ibn Ḥajar, 1379, c. 13, p. 419; Amin, 1403, c. 4, p. 27). There was no particular mention of him in the sources of Shia *Rijal* narrators, and Allamah Al-Ḥillī doubted authenticity of his narrations (al-Ṭūsī, 1373, p. 182; Allamah Al-Ḥillī, 1402, p. 30). al-Ijli, Al-Dāruqṭunī, and Ibn Ḥibbān considered Sa'id bin Allaqaḥ, known as al-Fakhtah, to be authentic (al-Mizzī, ibid. vol. 11, p. 28). Some have considered him to be among the companions of Imam Ali (A.S.) (al-Barqī, 1430, p. 39).

2.2. The Path of Ibn Abi Shaybah (159-235 AH)

Ibn Abi Shaybah narrated his first path, on the authority of Wakī' bin al-Jarrāḥ, on the authority of 'Abdul Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī:

The first path: "Wakī' narrated to us, on the authority of Isrā'el, on the authority of Thuwair, on the authority of his father that Ali used to not recite *Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* out loud" (Ibn Abi Shaybah, 1436, vol. 3, p. 409).

Ibn Abi Shaybah, the author of the books al-Muṣannaf and al-Musnad, has a high status among Sunni hadīth scholars in terms of reliability and memorization (al-Dhahabī, 1414, vol. 11, p. 122). Wakī' bin al-Jarrāḥ was mentioned with titles such as *Imam*, *Hafīz*,

Muhaddith Al-Iraq, One of the Eminent Figures, *Thiqah* and *Thabt* (al-Mizzī, *ibid.*, vol. 30, p. 462). Ibn Mu'īn considered him like al-Awza'i in his time (Dhahabī, 1405, vol. 9, p. 140).

The reliability of the rest of the narrators in the path of 'Abdul Razzāq was examined.

The second path: "Shāzan narrated to us, saying: Sharīk narrated to us, on the authority of Abū Ishaq, on the authority of Abū Wā'il, that Ali and 'Ammār used to not utter *Bismillah al-Rahmān al-Rahīm* aloud." (Ibn Abi Shaybah, 1436, vol. 3, p. 409)

Aswad bin Amir Shāzan was described as trustworthy and righteous in hadith (al-Mizzī, 1400, vol. 3, p. 227).

Sharīk bin 'Abdullah was considered an acceptable figure. However, they pointed out his poor memorization, confusion in hadith, frequent errors, delusion, and confusion (al-Dhahabī, 1405, vol. 12, p. 471). For this reason, al-Dhahabī says in his description: There is weakness in his hadith, and that is why the imams stopped relying on his individual hadiths, and finally they gave a slight possibility of Shiism about him (*ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 200).

Abū Ishaq al-Subai'i is considered one of the trustworthy narrators, who narrated on the authority of many of the Prophet's (PBUH) companions (al-Mizzī, 1400, vol. 22, pp. 102-112).

Some have authenticated Shaqiq ibn Salamah such as Wakī', Ibn Mu'īn, and Ibn Sa'd (al-Mizzī, *ibid.* vol. 11, p. 52), and some even claim consensus on this authentication (Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, 1405, vol. 2, p. 986).

Shaqiq ibn Salamah Abū Wā'il al-Asadi, is considered one of the *Mukhadramīn* who did not succeed in visiting the Prophet (PBUH) despite their living in his era (Ibn al-Athīr, 1409, vol. 2, p. 375). Shaqiq was a supporter and lover of 'Uthmān. When he was asked whether you love Ali or 'Uthmān more, he said: I love Ali more than 'Uthmān, and then I love 'Uthmān more than Ali (al-Dhahabī, vol. 1405, vol. 4, pp. 164-166).

Although Abū Wā'il is considered one of the narrators of some Shia books, there is no special mention of him in the sources of Rijal

of Imāmiyya (al-Ṭūsī, 1373, p. 68). Some considered him one of the companions of Imam Ali (AS) saying: “It appears that he is an Imami Shia” (Mamaqānī, 1431, vol. 2, p. 88). But Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd mentions the name of Shaḥīq bin Salamah among those who opposed Imam Ali (A.S.) and disobeyed his orders, stating: Abū Wā’il was a supporter of ‘Uthmān and always criticized Ali. It was said: There is no difference in his agreement with *Khawarij* in thought and practice. However, he returned to Imam Ali as repentant and turned away from his previous beliefs (Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, 1404, vol. 4, p. 98).

2.3. The Path of al-Jaṣṣāṣ (305-370 AH)

After ‘Abdul Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī and Ibn Abi Shaybah, there is no trace of the aforementioned narration in Sunni books until the fourth century, when al-Jaṣṣāṣ recorded it in his book *Aḥkām Al-Qur’an* with this chain of transmission:

“Abū Wā’il narrated that Ali (may God be pleased with him), used to not utter it out loud” (al-Jaṣṣāṣ, 1415, vol. 1, p. 18).

Sunni *Rijal* scholars did not discuss Aḥmad ibn Ali Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ in their works, and they limited themselves to expressing his moral qualities such as asceticism and piety (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 1422, vol. 5, p. 513; al-Dhahabī, 1405, vol. 16, p. 340).

The biography of Abū Wā’il has been examined in the paths of Ibn Abi Shaybah.

2.4. The Path of Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (368-463 AH)

Then, after al-Jaṣṣāṣ, the narration of silent recitation of the *Basmalah* attracted the attention of Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, and he narrated it through two paths:

The first path: “Aḥmad bin Qāsim bin ‘Abdul Raḥmān and Muhammad bin ‘Abdullah bin Ḥakam narrated to us, saying: Muhammad bin Mu‘āwīyah narrated to us, saying: Abū Khalīfah al-Faḍl ibn al-Ḥubāb narrated to us, saying: Abū al-Walid Al-Ṭayālasī narrated to us, saying: Qays ibn Al-Rabi’ narrated to us, saying: ‘Āṣim ibn Kulayb narrated to us, on the authority of his father, that Ali (AS) used to not utter *Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* loudly (Ibn ‘Abd al-

Barr, 1421, vol. 1, p. 458).

Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr was a truthful, famous, and prolific figure (Ibn Khallikān, 1994, vol. 7, p. 66).

Some have described Ahmed bin Qāsim as a righteous and ascetic sheikh (Ibn Bashkuwal, 1374, p. 86).

The second narrator, known as Ibn al-Baqarī, is a pupil of Muhammad bin Mu‘āwīyah, known as Ibn al-Aḥmar, and he is a man of virtue and righteousness, and al-Ḥamīdī has verified him (ibid., p. 468).

Al-Dhahabī mentioned Muhammad bin Mu‘āwīyah with qualities such as *Muhaddith Al-Andalus*, *Musnads* and *Thiqah* (al-Dhahabī, 1405, vol. 16, p. 68).

Al-Safadi also considered him a truthful (*Ṣadūq*) man (al-Safadi, 1420, vol. 5, p. 29).

Some considered Abū Khalīfa to be one of the “most venerable scholars of hadith” and had a high status in literature and poetry, and some mentioned him with qualities such as *Imam*, *Allamah*, *Muhaddith*, *Adib*, *Thiqah*, and *Ma'moun* (al-Zabīdī, [n.d.], p. 182; al-Dhahabī, 1405, vol. 14, pp. 7-11).

The mention of Abū al-Walīd al-Ṭayālasī with titles such as “*Mutqan*, *Thiqah*, *Thabt fī al-Hdith*, *Imam*, *Faqih*, and *Hafīz*” indicates his status among Sunni scholars in terms of *‘Ilm al-Rijal* (Ibid., vol. 10, pp. 341-347).

Al-Dhahabī mentioned Qays bin al-Rabī‘ with titles such as *Imam* and *Hafīz*, but Ibn Mu‘īn, Ahmad Ḥanbal, and al-Nisā’ī have declared him weak (ibid., vol. 8, pp. 44-41). Ibn al-Jawzī considers Qays to be a person with “many mistakes” in hadith and with Shia tendencies and objectionable hadiths were narrated about him (Ibn al-Jawzī, 1406, vol. 3, p. 19). It is possible that Qays’s severe condemnation was due to Bukhārī’s words about him: “I did not write down the hadith of Qays nor narrate a hadith from him” (Ibn Ṣalāḥ, 1423, p. 419).

Ibn Sa‘d, with the validation of ‘Āṣim bin Kulaib said: “His hadiths are used as evidence, but he does not have many hadiths” (Ibn Sa‘d, 1421, vol. 8, p. 460). Some people, such as Ibn Mu‘īn, al-Nisā’ī,

and ibn Shāhīn, included him among the trustworthy, but some mentioned him as one the Murji'ah and stopped at his individual hadiths (Ibn Ḥajar, 1406, p. 286).

Some, such as Abū Zar'ah and ibn Ḥibbān, included Kulaib bin Shahāb, the father of 'Āṣim bin Kulaib, among the trustworthy (Al-Mizzī, 1400, vol. 24, pp. 212-211). Others said: "He is not strong in hadith" (Ibn Ḥajar, 1326, vol. 8, p. 445).

The second path: "Abū al-Walīd narrated to us, saying: Qays narrated to us, on the authority of al-Sha'bī, on the authority of al-Ḥārith, that Ali, used to not utter *Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* out loud" (Ibn "Abd al-Barr, 1421, vol. 1, p. 458).

The first and second narrators were previously discussed in the aforementioned hadith.

Al-Sha'bī is Trustworthy according to Bukhārī and Muslim (Al-Ḥākim al-NishAbūri, 1407, p. 194; al-Daruqtunī, 1406, vol. 1, p. 267). He is considered one of the four imams of knowledge after the Prophet (PBUH) (Al-Bukhārī, 1431, vol. 6, p. 450). Ibn Mu'īn while confirming his narration states that his hadiths are used as evidence (Al-Mizzī, 1400, vol. 14, p. 28). Accordingly, even his *Mursal* hadiths are considered *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) (Al-Ijli, 1405, vol. 2, p. 446). It was narrated on the authority of al-Sha'bī that the Muslims was divided into four sects: "those who love Ali and hate 'Uthmān, those who love 'Uthmān and hate Ali, those who love both of them and those who hate both of them" (Al-Dhahabī, 1405, vol. 4, pp. 294-319) and when they asked him, "Which sect are you from?" He said: "I hate who hates them" (ibid.).

Despite this, al-Sha'bī is not an accepted figure among Shia scholars. He was an opponent of Imam Ali (AS) and his followers, and spent most of his life serving the Umayyad regime (Al-Mufid, 1413, p. 216; Al-Khu'ī, [n.d.], p. 652). According to Ibn Sa'd's reports in Al-Ṭabaqāt, al-Sha'bī used to constantly antagonize the Shias and the followers of Imam Ali, insulting and humiliating them (Ibn Sa'd, 1421, vol. 6, p. 261). In general, Shia scholars criticize Al-Sha'bī and do not consider his narrations reliable (Al-Khu'ī, 1413, vol. 10, p. 210; Al-Thaqafī, 1373, p. 443).

As for al-Ḥārith, who, al-Sha‘bī al-Tābi‘ī was contemporary to him and also one of his narrators, there are conflicting opinions about him as follows:

Jarḥ⁽¹⁾ (The Criticizes): Ali bin al-Madīnī accused al-Ḥārith bin ‘Abdullah A'awar of lying, and al-Sha‘bī confirmed that he was a liar (Al-Mizzī, 1400, vol. 5, pp. 244-253). He was weakened by Abū Zar'ah, Abū Ḥātam, al-Nisā‘ī, and al-Daruqṭunī, and others accused him of Shiism and even *Ghuluww* (Ibn Ḥajar, 1326, vol. 2, p. 145). On this basis, they refute his hadith (Al-Daruqṭunī, 1404, vol. 2, p. 148).

Ta‘dīl (The Praises): ‘Uthmān al-Darimi asked ibn Mu‘īn about al-Ḥārith and he said: Yaḥyā trusted him, but ‘Uthmān said we do not follow the opinion of Ibn Mu‘īn in this regard (Ibn Ḥajar, 1326, vol. 2, pp. 147-145). They considered Al-Ḥārith to be the most knowledgeable, the greatest jurist, and the most discerning of the hadiths of Imam Ali (Al-Mizzī, 1400, vol. 5, p. 520). Shaykh al-Ṭūsī counted him among the companions of Imam Ali (AS) (Al-Ṭūsī, 1373, p. 94), who faced the denial of some Sunni scholars who weakened his companionship to the Prophet (PBUH) (Al-Mizzī, 1400, vol. 2, vol. 4, p. 244), but Ibn Ḥajar confirmed that he was one the Companions (Ibn Ḥajar, 1406, p. 146). Al-Kashshī referred to the story of Al-Ḥārith’s love for Imam Ali (AS) in his book (Al-Kashshī, 1404, vol. 1, p. 299).

In examining the opinions mentioned above, it must be said: Various factors combined among the Sunnis to complete the process of *Jarḥ* of Ḥārith al-A'war. The beginning of this process was his contemporary scholar, al-Sha‘bī al-Tābi‘ī, who strongly influenced the opinion of Sunni thinkers to the point that they did not include his hadiths, according to Ibn Khallikān, al-Bukhārī, and Muslim, relying on the *Jarḥ* directed to al-Ḥārith by al-Sha‘bī. But Ibn Khallikān did not mention the reason for al-Sha‘bī’s criticism of al-Ḥārith and why his hadiths were not mentioned by two Shaykhs (Bukhārī and Muslim) (Ibn Khallikān, 1994, vol. 2, p. 339). To clarify this issue, pay attention to the justifications below:

1- “*Jarḥ*” and “*Ta‘dīl*” are two terms used in *Rijāl* sciences meaning “criticism” and “praise”. (Translator)

A: Al-Qurṭubī and Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr say: “It was not reported any lie form al-Ḥārith, but due to his intense love for Ali and his preference over others, he is blamed, and for this reason al-Sha‘bī renounced him” (Al-Qurṭubī, 1364, vol. 1, p. 5; Magalatai, 2011, vol. 2, pp. 155-157). The report that came in al-Tarīkh al-Awsaṭ indicates that al-Ḥārith, during his death in the era of ‘Abdullāh bin al-Zubayr, bequeathed that he only could pray on his corps, which indicates at least al-Ḥārith’s negative view towards the ‘Umayyads, and perhaps for this reason al-Bukhārī quoted the aforementioned news and refrained from mentioning his hadiths (Al-Bukhārī, 2017, vol. 1, p. 155).

B: Others said: “Al-Ḥārith did not lie about the hadith, but rather he had wrong beliefs” (Ibn Shāhīn, 1404, p. 71). What Ibn Shāhīn means by wrong beliefs is al-Ḥārith’s beliefs regarding Imamate of Imam Ali (AS).

C: It was also said: “Al-Ḥārith’s lie was not intentional, but rather happened by mistake” (Al-Dhahabī, 1405, vol. 4, p. 153). These words by al-Dhahabī can be considered a sign of his intelligence so that he does not allow al-Sha‘bī to be weakened intentionally or unintentionally, like did al-Qurṭubī and Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr; because he was trustworthy in front of the two Sheikhs and also one of the narrators of the Two Ṣaḥīḥ Books.

The reason for these weak justifications can be found in Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb of Ibn Ḥajar, where he says: “Al-Ḥārith’s *Jarḥ* is not connected to his hadith-related personality. I saw this article in Mīzān al-I‘tidāl of al-Dhahabī by his own handwriting that al-Nisā’ī and others narrated on the authority of al-Ḥārith despite directing the *Jarḥ* about him, and even al-Sha‘bī himself, in spite of his denial, narrated his hadiths (Ibn Ḥajar, 1326, vol. 2, p. 147).

These contradictions mean that there is a duality between "Ḥārith's criticism" and "Narrating his hadiths". But it must be said that the position of truthfulness in the standards of hadith narrators is like the basis of construction. Hence, we notice again and again that there are narrators from different schools of thought in the sources of both groups who are reliable due to their truthfulness and

trustworthiness.

Some Sunni scholars' overlooking of al-Sha'bī's criticism and quoting al-Ḥārith's hadiths indicates a lack of reliance on al-Sha'bī's inaccurate opinion, and it can be said that al-Sha'bī accused al-Ḥārith of lying for three reasons: 1) His love for Imam Ali (AS); 2) His belief in preferring the Imam Ali over others; 3) His hatred of the Umayyads.

2.5. The Path of al-Bayhaqī (384-458 AH)

Al-Bayhaqī narrated the story of the silent recitation of the *Basmalah* by Imam Ali (AS) through this chain of transmission:

Al-Ḥasan bin Mukram told us, Yazīd bin Hārūn told us, Abū Sa'd al-A'war Saeed bin al-Marzban, who is called al-Baqqal, told me, al-Raḥmān ibn Abi Laila said that Ali (AS) does not utter *Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* out loud." (Bayhaqī, 1436, vol. 2, p. 312)

Al-Bayhaqī and his sheikh, i.e. al-Hasan bin Mukram, are trustworthy (Al-Dhahabī, 1405, vol. 18, p. 165; Al-Khaṭīb Al-Baghdādī, 1422, vol. 8, p. 468).

Yazīd bin Hārūn is one of the narrators of the ninth class, as well as one of the narrators of the hadith of al-Thaqalayn (Al-Dhahabī, 1405, vol. 9, p. 358). He was authenticated and praised by Sunni scholars, who mentioned him as *Imam, Hafiz, Thiqah, Thabt, Sadouq* and *Kathir Al-Hadith*. They also referred to his strong memory (Al-Mizzī, 1400, vol. 32, pp. 261-270). Since he became blind, he used his maid to read his writings to him. For this reason, Yaḥyā bin Mu'īn did not trust his narrations, and did not consider him one of the hadith narrators, because he did not distinguish between authentic hadiths and others, and did not care about whom he narrated from (Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 1422, vol. 16, p. 493). Although his name appears among Shia hadiths, his name is not mentioned in most Shia *Rijal* books, and he was mentioned in some of them without praise or condemnation (Al-Shushtari, 1410, vol. 11, p. 117).

The majority of Sunni scholars have described Sa'īd bin Marzban as weak, *Mudallis* (deceitful), and full of delusions and gross errors,

and on this basis they do not consider his hadiths to be reliable (Al-Nisā'ī, 1396, p. 52; Al-Ijli, 1405, vol. 1, p. 404; Ibn Abi Ḥatam, 1271, vol. 4, p. 62; Ibn Ḥibbān, 1396, vol. 1, p. 317; Al-Mizzī, 1400, vol. 11, p. 52). Some considered 'Abdul Raḥmān bin Abi Laila a Shia and one of the trustworthy companions of Imam Ali. (Al-Ijli, 1405, vol. 2, p. 86) Sheikh Al-Ṭūsī also listed him among the companions of Imam Ali (AS) (Al-Ṭūsī, 1373, p. 72).

2.6. The Path of Khaṭīb Al-Baghdādī (392-463 AH)

Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī in the book "*Dhikr al-Jahr bi al-Basmala Mukhtasaran*" first of all refers to the path of 'Abdul Razzāq:

“It was narrated from the hadith of Isrā'el, on the authority of Thuwayr bin Saeed, on the authority of his father; on the authority of Ali (may God be pleased with him), that he used to not recite *Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* out loud”. Then he said: “It was narrated by Yazīd bin Hārūn, on the authority of Abū Sa'd, al-Baqqal, Sa'īd bin al-Marzban, on the authority of 'Abdul Raḥmān bin Abi Laila, that Ali used to not recite *Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* out loud (Khaṭīb Al-Baghdādī, 2004, p. 305).

The author, due to his distance from Yazid ibn Hārūn, has mentioned the narration with the words “*Ruwīya*” and “*Rawwāhu*” which means “has been narrated” [indirectly]. As for Khaṭīb Al-Baghdādī, he was praised and accepted by Sunni scholars (Ibn Khallikān, 1994, vol. 1, p. 92).

The rest of the narrators of this news were already mentioned in the previous narration.

2.7. The Path of Ibn al-Qaysaranī (448-507 AH)

The transmission chain of his narration regarding the issue of *Tasmīyah* (saying the *Basmalah*) is as follows:

“Abū al-Qāsim Ismail bin Musa bin 'Abdullah al-Tajir told us, Muhammad bin Musa al-Sayrafī told us, Abū al-'Abbās al-Asamm told us, al-Ḥasan bin Mukram al-Bazzaz told us, Yazid bin Hārūn told us, Abū Sa'īd Sa'īd bin al-Marzban told us, 'Abdul Raḥmān bin Abi Laila told me that Ali (AS), used to not recite *Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-*

Rahīm out loud (Ibn al-Qaysaranī, [n.d.], p. 62).

Al-Dhahabī mentions al-Qaysaranī with titles such as *Imam* and *Hafiz*, then says about him: “*Athari* and *Sufi*” (Al-Dhahabī, 1405, vol. 19, p. 361). According to these Sufist tendencies, some people criticized him and stopped trusting him (Ibid, 1413, vol. 35, pp. 169-182).

Although al-Dhahabī discussed the sheikhs of the hadith of al-Qaysaranī in *Tarikh al-Islam* and *Wafayāt al-Mashahīr wal-Alam*, he did not mention Abū Al-Qāsim Ismail bin Musa bin ‘Abdullah al-Tajir (ibid.), and it seems that his name was not mentioned in al-Qaysaranī’s books except in this story of silent recitation of the *Basmalah*.

Muhammad bin Musa al-Sayrafī and his sheikh Abū al-Abbas al-Asamm are trustworthy (Al-Safadi, 1420, vol. 5, p. 59; Al-Dhahabī, 1405, vol. 15, p. 453).

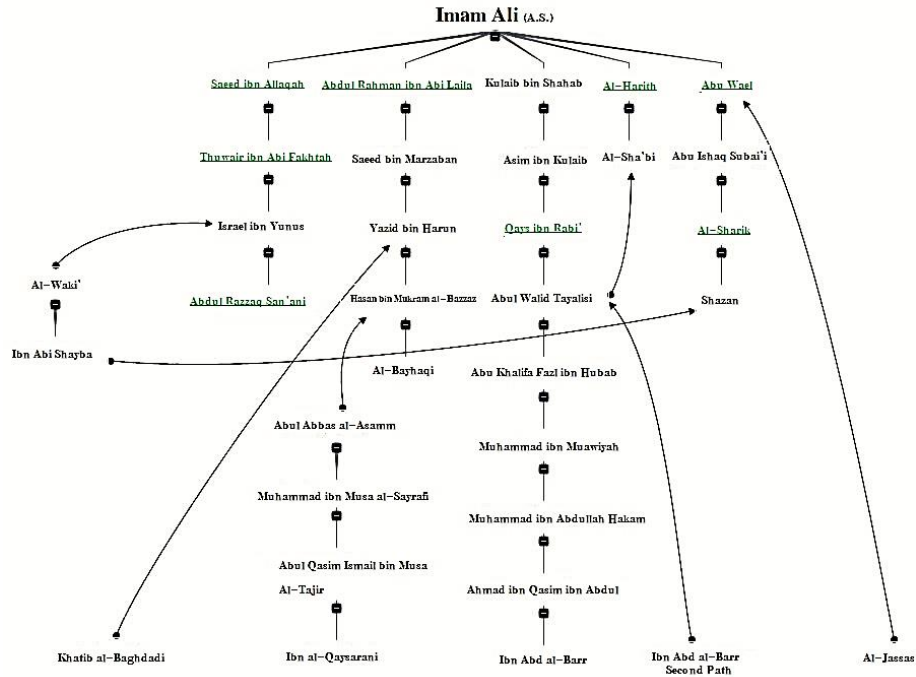
The rest of the narrators in al-Qaysranī’s hadith were investigated through the path of al-Bayhaqī.

2.8. Analysis of the Chain of Transmitters

The aforementioned hadiths contain serious weaknesses and inconsistencies in terms of transmission chain. Their weakness is due to the presence of narrators who are subject to criticism and weakness by Sunni *Rijal* scholars. According to their opinion, there is no doubt about the weakness of Thuwair bin Abi Fakhtah (in the 1st and 2nd hadiths), Sa’īd bin Marzban (in the 7th, 8th, and 9th hadiths) and Qays bin Rabi' (in the 6th and 10th hadiths).

Here is a table of the eight hadiths’ chains of transmission. Narrators attributed to Shias have been marked in green and underlined.

The Table of the Ikhfā' al-Basmalah Hadith's Chains of Transmitters



There is an ambiguity in the path of Ibn Abi Shaybah, on the authority of Abū Wā'il; because al-Mizzī did not mention the name of Abū Wā'il while talking about the sheikhs of the Isrā'el. The path of Al-Jassās was narrated in the manner of *Mursal*, and the word “*Ruwīya*” (has been narrated) indicates that it is not *Musnad*. According to the second path of Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, the time distance between him and Abū al-Walīd al-Ṭayālasī is about three hundred years, the time distance between al-Bayhaqī and al-Ḥasan ibn Mukram is about two hundred years, and the time distance between Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī and Yazid ibn Hārūn about two hundred and fifty years, and although he mentioned the word “*Ruwīya*” which indicates the indirect transmission of the hadith, there is a time gap between them, and the rest of the narrations of the chain of transmission are unknown.

In the second path of Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, some such as al-Mizzī, al-Dhahabī, and Ibn Ḥajar did not mention the name of Qais when mentioning the narrators of Al-Sha‘bī (Al-Mizzī, 1400, vol. 14, p. 28;

al-Dhahabī, 1405, vol. 8, p. 391; Ibn Ḥajar, 1326, vol. 8, p. 391).

On the path of Ibn Abi Shaybah to Abū Wā'il, there is Abū Ishaq Al-Subai'i who is known as one of the narrators of the hadiths of the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH). However, there is ambiguity in his narration of Abū Wā'il, who is considered one of *Mukhadramins*, and this chronological ambiguity increases when the name of Abū Wā'il is not mentioned among 146 Sheikhs of Abū Ishaq Al-Subai'i, although Abū Wā'il is not an unknown person (Al-Mizzī, 1400, vol. 22, pp. 102-114).

There is a very important point that should not be neglected, which is the contradiction in the attribution of some narrators to the Shia. In the first hadith by 'Abdul Razzāq al-Sana'ni, Thawair and his father Sa'id ibn Allaqah; in the second hadith, Thuwair and his father Saeed ibn Allaqah; in the third hadith, Sharik bin 'Abdullah and Abū Wā'il; in the fourth hadith, Abū Wā'il; in the fifth hadith, Qays bin Al-Rabi'; in the sixth hadith, Qays bin Rabi' and Al-Ḥārith Al-A'war; and in the seventh, eighth, and ninth hadiths, 'Abdul Raḥmān bin Abi Laila, have been attributed to the Shias, and there is a contradiction here; because these are considered among the narrators of the hadith that transmitted the narration of *Ikhfa' al-Basmalah* from Imam Ali (AS), while reciting it out loud is the famous and repeated *sirah* of Imam Ali (Fakhr al-Rāzī, 1420, vol. 1, p. 175) and the rest of the Imams (A.S.): "The family of Muhammad (PBUH), unanimously used to recite *Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* out loud." (Nūrī, 1408, vol. 4, p. 189)

In *Musnad* of Zayd al-Shahid, there is a narration related to this issue:

"Zaid bin Ali told me, on the authority of his father, on the authority of his grandfather, on the authority of Ali bin Abi Ṭālib, (may God honor his face): that he used to recite *Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* out loud" (Al-Wasīṭī, [n.d.], p. 104). The only difference between this narration and the narrations were examined in before is addition of the negative article "*la*" (not) which did not exist in this one.

3. Examination of the Text of the Narration

3.1. The Structure of the Basmalah and its Partial-Nature in the Qur'anic Surahs

As mentioned before, spreading doubt about the partial and revelatory nature of the *Basmalah* in the Qur'an is the main reason for the divergence of Islamic schools of thought in reciting it aloud or in silence. In this regard, there are conflicting narratives that sometimes served as the basis that prompted some orientalists to raise the doubt of distortion of the Qur'an and its non-revelatory nature. There are several points of view regarding how the *Basmalah* was revealed:

3.1.1. The Immediate Revelation of the Qur'an (Revelatory nature of the Basmalah)

The first group, like the Shias, confirmed the immediate revelation of the Qur'an including the *Basmalah* along with the rest of the verses and considered it a part of revelation (Al-‘Āmilī, 1410, p. 312) Fakhr al-Rāzī mentions a group of his companions who consider the *Basmalah* to be part of the Qur'an (Al-Fakhr al-Rāzī, 1420, vol. 1, p. 176). Al-Bāqilānī reported in *Al-Intisar* several narrations showing that: “the *Basmalah* is part of the Qur'an (Al-Bāqilānī, 1422, vol. 1, p. 207), and the Prophet (PBUH) following Gabriel's recitation, was reading the Qur'an in the order of *Isti'ādah* (seeking refuge to God) and *Basmala*, then the rest of the verses of the surahs” (Al-Suyūfī, 1421, vol. 1, p. 99; Al-Nūrī, 1408, vol. 4, p. 265).

3.1.2. Non-Revelatory Nature of the Basmalah

Among the second group, who are called the early Sunnis, such as the reciters of Medina and Basra, the reciters and jurists of Sham, Abū Hanifa and his followers, the Malikis, the Hanafiyyah and others, it is mentioned that they do not consider the *Basmalah* to be part of revelation (Al-‘Āmilī, 1410, pp. 314-308; Al-Zurqānī, 1385, p. 539).

3.1.3. The Revelatory-Nature of Basmalah as an Exception in Surah Al-Fātiḥah

This opinion relates to some Sunni scholars, including Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal, Ishaq, Abū ‘Ubayd, the people of Kufa, the people of Mecca,

the people of Iraq, and others, who consider the *Basmalah* of the first verse of Sura al-Fātiḥah to be an exception, so do not consider it a verse in the rest of the surahs (Al-‘Āmilī, *ibid.*). Some have counted most of the jurists of Hijaz in this classification (Fakhr al-Rāzī, 1420, vol. 1, p. 173).

3.1.4. The Development of the Basmala During the Gradual Revelation of the Qur'ān

Fakhr al-Rāzī refers to a group that believes that the *Basmalah* was developed in three stages (the first stage with the revelation of verse 41 of Surah Hud, the second stage after the revelation of verse 110 of Surah Al-Isrā’, and the third stage after the revelation of verse 30 of Sura al-Naml), and they used narrations as evidence to prove their opinion that the Prophet (PBUH) quoted the *Basmalah* from the phrase (*Bismika-Allahumma*), which was common during the pre-Islamic era (*Ibid.*, p. 176). But researchers believe that such narrations have many problems in terms of chain of transmission and semantics and cannot be referred to in this regard (‘Āshūrī, 1373, pp. 75-82).

The opinion chosen in this article is that the gradual revelation of the *Basmalah* with all the surahs is more likely because of the following reasons:

First: What is attained from the verse {*This is from Solomon and this is in the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*} (al-Naml: 30) and some narrations, is that the *Basmalah* is an integral part of all the Holy Books and has been cited on the tongue of all the Prophets (peace be upon them) (Al-Barqī, 1371, vol. 1, p. 40; Fakh al-Rāzī, 1420, vol. 1, p. 176) and on the authority of Ibn Abbas, this expression (*Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm*) was a criterion of the Prophet to know the beginning and end of the surahs (Al-Tha‘labī, 1436, vol. 2, p. 324); That is, the revelation of the new *Basmalah* indicated the completion of the previous surah and the revelation of the new one. There are many narrations in the sources of both groups that support this opinion (Al-Suyūṭī, 1421, vol. 1, p. 99; Al-Nūrī, 1408, vol. 4, p. 265). This type of Qur’anic and narrative transmission directs a serious challenge to the opinions of the second, third, and

fourth categories.

Second: During the explanation of the first verses of Sura al-‘Alaq, Allamah Tabataba’i says: “Assuming that Surah Al-Alaq is the first surah and has been revealed in an *Daf’i* (immediate) manner, it indicates that the Prophet (PBUH) used to pray before the revelation of the Qur’an” (Allamah Tabatabai, 1374, vol. 20, p. 551). According to definitive narrations, the reading of Surah Al-Fātiḥah was also an integral part of prayer. (Muslim, 1334, vol. 2, p. 8) This surah contains seven verses (Al-Kulaynī, 1429, vol. 3, p. 314; Al-Sakhāwī, 1419, vol. 2, p. 496) and the *Basmalah* is the first verse of it (Muttaqī al-Hindī, 1401, vol. 1, p. 496). 560); this fact contradicts the opinion of the second group.

Third: It cannot be relied upon to say that chapters of Ḥūd, al-Isrā’, and al-Naml are examples from which the *Basmalah* was recorded in the earlier surahs. How, for example, can Surah al-Isrā’, which is the fiftieth surah of the Qur’an in descending order, be a model for the surahs preceding it? Based on this rational reason, it will not be possible to accept the third group’s perspective, as it contradicts the opinion of the fourth group.

Fourth: *Tawātur* (the frequency) of the Qur’an and impossibility of its distortion, which is the point of agreement of all Islamic groups and schools of thought, means confirming the current form of the Qur’an, in which the *Basmalah* is an integral part of the surahs (Fakhr al-Rāzī, 1420, vol. 1, p. 175; Al-Zurqānī 1385, p. 495; Al-Khu’ī, [n.d.], p. 123, Ramyar 1369, p. 554). It is not possible to take into account the dispute over whether it is a verse in Surah Al-Fātiḥah and not a verse in other surahs of the Qur’an; because this assumption will lead to admit that the Qur’an has been distorted (Ibn Ṭāwūs, [n.d.], p. 145; Al-Zurqānī, 1385, 1385, p. 495). This claim is supported by Fakhr al-Rāzī’s elaborate reasoning under the verse “**Indeed, We have sent down the Remembrance (Qur’an), and indeed We will preserve it**” (al-Ḥijr/9), where he says: “This verse is strong evidence that the *Tasmiyah* or *Basmalah* is among the verses of the Qur’an, because God has made a firm promise that it is not possible to distort the Qur’an. Saying that the *Basmala* was not part of the Qur’an, but then

it has been added to the beginning of the surahs, means that many distortions occurred in the Qur'an, thus, God's promise about the Qur'an was not fulfilled. If it is permissible to think that the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH) added the *Basmala* to the beginning of the surahs, then it must also be permissible to say that any deficiency also can occur in the Qur'an, and this causes the Qur'an to fall from authenticity, and no one accepts such a false conclusion" (Fakhr al-Rāzī, 1420, vol. 19, p. 123). This situation will defy the opinions of the second, third and fourth groups.

3.2. The Historical Path of the Basmalah

As it was mentioned, the occurrence of the *Basmalah* at the beginning of the surahs of the Qur'an was not for the sake of divine blessing, but rather it was revealed in an immediate manner along with all the chapters, and any attempt to question this issue paves the way for the possibility of distortion of the Qur'an. But the question that arises here is what happened after the death of Prophet (PBUH) that some people said that the *Basmalah* is not a part of the Qur'an, while others only consider it a verse in Surah al-Fātiḥah ?

In the hadiths of the Two Groups of Muslims, the *Basmala* had a special place for the Prophet (PBUH), and he used to recite it out loud during prayer, as the Companions did, such as Omar, Ibn Abbas, Ibn Omar, and Ibn al-Zubayr. Reciting the *Basmala* out loud was part of the famous and frequent *Sirah* of Imam Ali (AS) (Ibid., p. 175).

Al-Bayhaqī's words are also useful in this regard, as he says: "As for the fact that Ali bin Abi Ṭālib used to pronounce the *Basmalah* out loud, it has been proven by frequent transmission, and whoever follows Ali bin Abi Ṭālib in his religion has been guided well, and the evidence for this is what the Messenger of God, (PBUH) said: "O God, turn the truth with Ali [make him the criteria of truth], to wherever he turns." (ibid.)

In support of Al-Bayhaqī's words, it can be referred to the narrations that indicate Imam Ali's complete commitment to reviving the Sunnah of Prophetic prayer. Imran bin Husayn after praying with Imam Ali (AS) in Basra, says: "The man reminded us of the prayer

that we used to pray with the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace” (Al-Bukhārī, 1311, vol. 1, p. 156).

Moreover, reflection on historical events indicates that excluding the *Basmalah* actually occurred during a calculated process initiated and supported by the Umayyad regime, in the direction of the policy of erasing the Alawite monuments and virtues. No one doubts that the Umayyad regime tried to erase the *Sirah* of Imam Ali (AS) by any means, and they were determined to deny every virtue attributed to him or they attribute it to others. Al-Nisā’ī’s summoning to Sham and the story of his writing of the book *al-Khaṣā’iṣ* is clear evidence of this claim.

According to the historical reports, the practice of aloud recitation of the *Basmalah* continued until the beginning of the Umayyad reign, where this revelatory verse was dropped through a complex and calculated process. The following explains the hidden angles of this heresy:

A: Ibn Abbas’s practice was based on reciting the *Basmalah* out loud and starting surahs with the *Basmalah*, and in order to defend this Sunnah, he implicitly blamed a group called “the Satans who stole the *Basmalah* from the people” (Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, 1417, 1417 AH, p. 286). Given that Ibn Abbas died before the year 70 AH (Al-Dāwūdī, [n.d.], vol. 1, p. 239), we can determine the date of the accordance of this heresy to be between the death of the Prophet (PBUH) and the rule of Yazid.

B: The claim of Ibn Abbas strengthens with this report by Al-Shafi’i, saying: “He implicitly refers to a group who changed the entire Sunnah of the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, even the prayer.” (Al-Shafi’i, 1403, vol. 1, p. 269)

C: The examples of those whom Ibn Abbas and Al-Shafi’i mentioned implicitly can be found in the Sunni sources, including a story narrated by al-Ḥākim al-Nishabūri in al-Mustadrak: “Once, Mu‘āwīyah came to Medina and prayed with the people (in congregation), but he did not recite the *Basmalah* and did not say the *Takbir* while sitting and standing. When he finished, the Muhajirīn and Anṣār shouted from all sides: O! Mu‘āwīyah! Did you steal

something from your prayers? Did you forget? After that event, Mu'āwīyah started to recite the *Basmalah*" (Al-Ḥākim al-NayshAbūri, 1411, vol. 1, p. 357).

After mentioning this event, Fakhr al-Rāzī says in *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*: "This narations indicates that the Companions were considering the *Basmalah* to be part of the Qur'an and Surah al-Fātiḥah , and it is better to recite it out loud (Fakhr Al-Rāzī, 1420, vol. 1, p. 175). Although Mu'āwīyah was forced to abandon his action, due to the objection of the Companions and followers in omitting the *Basmalah*, his plan, which was not succeeded, was followed by the Umayyad regime at another appropriate opportunity. After mentioning the story of the drop of the *Basmalah* by Mu'āwīyah, Al-Dhahabī says in *Siyar A'lam al-Nubala* about another attempt by the Umayyads to change this Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH): "Among the sunnahs of prayer was the *Basmala*, and 'Amr bin Sa'īd bin al-'Āṣ (the Umayyad governor of Medina) was the first to recite the *Basmala* in silence" (Al-Dhahabī (1405, vol. 5, p. 343).

Fakhr al-Rāzī has also acknowledged the political omission of the *Basmala*, saying: "Ali was very concerned with uttering *Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* out loud, and when the Islamic rule reached the Umayyads, they went to extremes in prohibiting people to pronounce the *Basmalah* out loud, seeking to nullify the effects of Ali..." (Fakhr al-Rāzī, 1420, vol. 1, p. 181).

Conclusion

Although the phrase "*Basmalah*", which means "*Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm*" (In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful) appears at the beginning of all surahs of the Qur'an, except for Surah al-Tawbah, there is controversy among thinkers of both groups, Shias and Sunnis, regarding the partial or non-partial nature of the *Basmalah* of the Qur'an, and thus whether it is pronounced aloud or in silence. The main reason for this dispute is doubt about the revelatory-nature of the *Basmalah* in the Qur'an. According to authentic narrations that are compatible with rational axioms, the *Basmalah* is an integral part of the Qur'anic surahs, and the *Sirah* of the Prophet (PBUH), and his

companions was based on reciting the *Basmalah* out loud, and Imam Ali (AS) was famous for reciting the *Basmalah* out loud.

However, there is a hadith mentioned in some Sunni sources, the chain of transmission of which is attributed to some Shias narrators, indicating that Imam Ali (A.S.) recited the *Basmalah* in silence. The least repercussion of this narrative is to suggest that this phrase was appended to the beginning of the Qur'anic chapters by the Companions, and this claim per se, voluntarily or involuntarily bring about the idea of distortion of the Qur'an, and inserting into it what is not part of it.

According to the findings of this research, the aforementioned hadiths contain some serious problems. First: It has major problems in terms of the chain of transmission; because among the transmitters there are narrators who have been severely criticized by Sunni scholars. Second: Some of the narrators were attributed to Shias, and this contradicts the authentic hadiths that state that the Shia Imams (AS) considered the *Basmalah* to be part of the surahs of the Qur'an and therefore they used to recite it out loud. Finally, historical reports indicate that the idea of dropping the *Basmalah* emerged during a calculated process initiated and supported by the Umayyad regime. Therefore, there is a high possibility of *Wad'a* and *Tadlis* (fabrication) in these narrations.

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