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Evaluation of the Basis of Punishment for the Claimant to Prophethood (Mutanabbī) from the Perspective of the Qur'an

Ali Mohammadian[1]

Assistant Professor, Jurisprudence and Islamic Law Department, Bozorgmehr University of Qaenat, Qaen, Iran

Mansure Bokaei[2]

Assistant professor, Jurisprudence and Fundamentals of Law Department, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran

Rahele Fadavi[3]

PhD student of Islamic Arts, Tabriz University of Islamic Arts, Tabriz, Iran

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ABSTRACT:

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The majority of Imamiyah jurists believe that anyone who falsely claims to be a prophet should be sentenced to death. All people can carry out this punishment without needing the permission of the ruling authority. This is contrary to the sound teaching of the Qur'an, which indicates that the primary principle regarding human life is to preserve everyone's blood, and any violation of this principle requires valid justification. Given the importance of the issue, this article will look at the documentation of this sentence and criticise such a view based on the Qur'anic principles. Accepting the notion that the claimant of the prophecy deserves to die (*mahdūr al-dam*), in the author's opinion, contradicts the necessity of caution in this matter, as the evidence presented is not sufficient to prove the claim. Moreover, this assertion does not seem to be justified in the light of the verse 33 of surah al-Mā'idah, which describes the verdict of corruption on earth

1. Corresponding Author. Email Address: mohammadian@buqaen.ac.ir

2. Email Address: bokaei@pnu.ac.ir

3. Email Address: r.fadavi@tabriziau.ac.ir

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(*al-ifsād fī al-arḍ*). This is because the separate criminalisation of corruption on earth from fighting against Allah (*al-muḥārabah*) cannot be inferred from the verse in question. Therefore, the punishment of such a person should be determined in the light of the rules and evidence of Sharia punishments i.e. the Ruler of the Sharia should consider the appropriate punishment for him, taking into account the circumstances.

KEYWORDS: Claimant of prophecy, Qur'anic teachings, Verse 33 of Surah al-Māʾidah, Corruption on earth, *al-ifsād fī al-arḍ*.

1. Introduction

For any culture, there can be obstacles that impede growth and progress. Religious culture is not exempt from this, and may be hindered by issues that delay its journey towards perfection. One such issue is the presence of individuals who, for various reasons and purposes, present themselves as saviors of society and even claim to be sent by God Almighty. It is worth noting that these movements existed even in the early days of Islam, and in the late period of the Prophet's (PBUH) life, individuals such as Musaylimah Kadhdhāb and Sajāḥ bint Ḥārith ibn Suwayd, claimed prophethood from the corners of the Arabian Peninsula (Ibn Hishām 1996, 2:349; Bilādharī 1996, 12:199).

It is evident that dealing decisively with such individuals is essential. However, this article aims to address the question of what punishment Islamic law has prescribed for them, taking into account the significance of preserving human lives and the need for utmost caution in such matters in Qur'anic teachings. As it is well known among the Imamiyah jurists, should we disregard the fundamental principle of preserving life (*ḥaqn al-dimāʾ*) and execute those who falsely claim prophethood (*mutanabbī*), or do genuine religious sources propose alternative penalties for this matter? To achieve this objective, renowned documentation will be critically analyzed, after discussing the principle and requirements of the fundamental rules derived from various verses and narrations in this matter.

It is worth mentioning that an article was written under the title "The punishment of the claimant of prophecy: from evidence to execution" (Afḍalī 2016, 34-94), in which the author accepted the implication of hadiths to prove execution. Although he believed that some of these narratives were flawed in terms of reference or implication, he concluded that based on the totality of the documents, the claimant of prophecy should be sentenced to death. The author seems to have disregarded the many traditions that point to the need for caution regarding human life, which is a matter of

questioning and reflection. In the next sections, we will discuss in detail the views of the jurists in this regard.

The present research is a library-based research conducted using a descriptive-analytical method. In this research, it has been tried to collect the necessary information from jurisprudential works and analyse it in a systematic way in accordance with the objectives of the discussion.

2. Lexical Review

All lexicographers have stated that the meaning of *mutanabbī* is a person who falsely claims prophethood, like Musaylimah al-Kadhdhāb, who made such a claim (Ibn Manẓūr 1993, 1:163; al-Ḥimyarī 1999, 10:6276; al-Zabīdī 1993, 20:215). Anyway, the word *Mutanabbī* is not used in common sence except to mean someone whose claim is false, says al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (1991, 790), after making some points about the root of this word. For example, it is said that *tanabbaʾa Musaylimah* and in its diminutive form, it is said that *Musaylimah nubbayiʾu* which refers to the fact that his claims are not from God Almighty.

3. The Perspective of the Imamiyah Jurists

Before mentioning the famous perspectives, it is appropriate to mention, as it results from the study in the legacy of written jurisprudence, the attitude of many ancient jurists in assuming question was not clear and they did not address the issue and they passed it silently. Searching the works of many predecessors, the author did not succeed in finding their approach to the problem. As an example, the opinion of Ibn Bābawayh (al-Ṣadūq al-awwal), was not clear on the issue. He explained some punishments of certain crimes (*ḥadd*) under *Kitāb al-Ḥudūd* (Ibn Bābawayh n.d, 143). Al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq (1994, 427; 1997, 295) is another well-known scholar who did not raise the problem under discussion in his works, although he did give the judgement of many crimes that are subject to punishment. In al-Mufīd's jurisprudential works (1992, 773), no statement indicating his opinion on this issue can be found. Apparently, al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī, a prominent Imamiyah jurist in the 5th century AH, is the first jurist who expressed his point of view on the issue. However, his opinion is not clear in his two argumentative books, namely al-Khilāf and al-Mabsūṭ, and he expressed his opinion only in al-Nihāyah, which is written in fatwa jurisprudence. He said, "Anyone who falsely claims to be a prophet, shedding his blood is permissible and killing him is obligatory" (al-Ṭūsī 1979, 730). Al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī (1987, 4:154; 1997, 1: 221), an eminent Imamiyah jurist in the 7th century AH, also

followed this famous opinion on the issue in his works, Sharāyiʿ al-Islām and al-Mukhtaṣar al-Nāfiʿ. An examination of the works of al-ʿAllāmah al-Ḥillī (1999, 5:396; 1989, 2:179), a jurist of the 8th century AH, reveals that he also agrees with the famous perspective in his jurisprudential works.

It is worth noting that the words of some jurists are apparently or explicitly taken to mean that killing the claimant of prophethood is obligatory for any person who hears such a claim, and there is no need to ask the ruler of the Sharia (al-Fayḍ al-Kāshānī n.d., 2:105; al-Fāḍil al-Hindī 1995, 10:546; Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1997, 16:57; Khomeini n.d., 2:477; Mishkīnī 1997, 508). Al-Khoei (2001, 41:323) believes that whoever claims to be a prophet, it is obligatory for one of the Muslims to kill him if one has the means and no harm will come to him, without the need for permission from the ruler of the Sharia.

On the contrary, some jurists believe that the proof of Sharia punishments should be based on certainty and by the Sharia court, because assigning this dangerous matter to the people will inevitably lead to disruption of the community (Muntaẓirī n.d., 2:528). On the other hand, considering such a matter permissible is not in accordance with the principle of caution (Mūsawī Ardabīlī 2006, 2: 451).

4. The Requirements of the Basic Qur'anic and Narrative Principles

It seems that the use of Qur'anic certainties and narrations indicates that the current principle and rule in the discussed issue is the necessity of strict caution in the lives of human beings, and any deviation from this principle requires a definite reason. Slowing down and reflecting on religious teachings, especially the noble revelations, shows that in the logic of the Qur'an, human live and its protection are of great importance. God says in the verse Q. 5:32:

مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْساً بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعاً وَ مَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعاً

(المائده/32)

... that if any one slew a person, unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land, it would be as if he slew the whole people and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people (Q. 5:32).

As is clear from the above verse, the cruel killing of human beings is considered to be the taking of the lives of all human beings (Makārim Shīrāzī 1992, 4:1356, Rashīd Riḍā 1993, 6:349). It is worth noting that some of the leading commentators have stated that the use of such verses, the unlawful

and cruel taking of human life, is actually a kind of war and struggle with God (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1970, 5:315). Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (1999, 11: 342) believes in the interpretation of the verse that what God means by comparing the killing of one person to the killing of all people is the honouring of human life and that such an act is a terrible deed that people should avoid. Another commentator believes that what is being used from the noble verse is that from the Islamic point of view, human beings have a special dignity and oppression of them is considered as oppression of humanity which is manifested in them and in all human beings and therefore kindness to them will be kindness to all human beings (Mughnīyah 2003, 3:47).

In another verse (Q. 17:33), God says:

وَلا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلا بِالْحَقِّ ... (الإسراء /33)

Nor take life, which Allah has made sacred, except for just cause ...(Q. 17:33).

What is understood from the verse is that this is a principle to preserve human life, unless there is a permission from the Sharia and a valid intellectual reason. It will not be allowed to violate this principle in any way. In the narrations of Imamiyah, the importance of the issue of blood has been emphasized a lot. For example, it has been narrated from imam Muḥammad Bāqir (PBUH) that he said, "the First thing that god will judge on the Day of Resurrection is the issue of bloods" (al-Barqī 1951, 1:106; al-Kulaynī 1986, 7:271; al-Ṣadūq 1985, 277). In another narration, Sulaymān ibn Khālid quotes from Imam Ṣādiq (PBUH) that God revealed to the Prophet Moses (PBUH): "Say to the leaders of the Children of Isrāʿl: 'Avoid killing a human being unjustly. Whoever of you kills someone unjustly in the world, God will kill him a hundred thousand times in hell as he killed the victim" (al-Barqī 1951, 1:1105; al-Ṣadūq 1985, 278).

5. Arguments and Documentation of the Jurists

Most of the jurists, in order to prove their ruling to kill someone who claimed to be a prophet, have mainly cited three narrations below, as well as the alleged consensus which will be examined later.

- The narration of Ibn Abī Yaʿfūr:

Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, from ibn Faḍḍāl from Ḥammād ibn ʿUthmān from Ibn Abī Yaʿfūr, who said, "I said to Abī Abdillāh (PBUH) that Bazīʿ thinks that he is a prophet, So he said, If you heard that he said so, kill him." The narrator said, "So I sat in ambush for him several times, but I was not able to do that" (al-Kulaynī 1986, 7: 258;

al-Ṭūsī 1986, 10:141). [1]

- The narration of Abī Baṣīr Yaḥyā ibn Abū al-Qāsim:

Ali ibn al-Ḥakam narrated from Abān al-Aḥmarī from Abī Baṣīr Yaḥyā ibn Abī al-Qāsim al-Asadī from Abī Jaʿfar (PBUH) that the Prophet (PBUH) said … "O people, there will be no prophet after me and no tradition after my tradition, so whoever makes such a claim after this, his claim and his heresy will be in Fire. Kill him and whoever follows such a person will be in the hell (al-Ṣadūq 1992, 4:163). [2]

- The narration of Ibn Faḍḍāl:

In the book ʿUyūn al-Akhbār, from Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ṭālaqānī from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Saʿīd from Ali ibn al-Ḥassan ibn Ali ibn Faḍḍāl from his father from al-Riḍā (PBUH), it is narrated that he said, "The Sharia of Muḥammad (PBUH) will not be abrogated until the day of judgment and there will be no prophet after him until the day of resurrection. Therefore whoever claims prophethood after him or brings a book after him, it is permissible to kill him for anyone who heard such a claim" (Ḥurr ʿĀmilī 1988, 28: 338). [3]

5.1. Criticism of the Narrations

The first narration is faultless in terms of the chain of transmission and all the narrators are the Twelver Shi'is who have been praised by the scholars of the Imamiyah, except for Ibn Faḍḍāl who belonged to the Faṭaḥīyah sect who believed in the Imamate of Abdullah Afṭaḥ, the son of Imam Jaʿfar Ṣādiq (PBUH), after his death. However, he has also been confirmed by experts and has been introduced as a dignified personality [4](al-Ḥillī 1961, 37; Burūjirdī 1984, 2:245; al-Khoei n.d., 6:150; Ḥāʾirī Māzandarānī 1995, 2: 430). Even as al-Kashshī narrated, he acknowledged the Imamate of Imam Riḍā (PBUH) before his death (al-Kashshī 1983, 2: 837; al-Najāshī 1986, 36). Therefore, there is no doubt in the authenticity of the narrative and the scholars of Imamiyah introduced it as authentic and authoritative (Majlisī al-Awwal 1985, 6:383; Majlisī al-Thānī 1985, 1:280; al-Khoei 2001, 41:322).

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1 «مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنِ ابْنِ فَضَّالٍ عَنْ حَمَّادِ بْنِ عُثْمَانَ عَنِ ابْنِ أَبِي يَعْفُورٍ قَالَ :قُلْتُ لِأَبِي عَبْدِاللَّهِ)ع(: إِنَّ بَرِيعاً يَزْعُمُ أَنَّهُ نَبِيٌّ: فَقَالَ: إِنْ سَمِعْتَهُ يَقُولُ ذَلِكَ فَاقْتُلْهُ؛ قَالَ: فَجَلَسْتُ لَهُ غَيْرَ مَرَّةٍ فَلَمْ يُمْكِنِّي ذَلِكَ».

2 «رَوَى عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْحَكَمِ عَنْ أَبَانٍ الْأَحْمَرِيِّ عَنْ أَبِيبَصِيرٍ يَحْيَى بْنِ أَبِي الْقَاسِمِ الْأَسَدِيِّ عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ(ع)... قَالَ النَّبِيُّ(ص)... أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّهُ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي وَ لَا سُنَّةَ بَعْدَ سُنَّتِي، فَمَنِ ادَّعَى بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَدَعْوَاهُ وَ بِدْعَتُهُ فِي النَّارِ فَاقْتُلُوهُ وَ مَنِ اتَّبَعَهُ فَإِنَّهُ فِي النَّارِ».

3 «وَفِي عُيُونِ الْأَخْبَارِعَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الطَّالَقَانِيِّ عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ فَضَّالٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنِ الرِّضَا(ع) فِي حَدِيثٍ قَالَ: وَ شَرِيعَةُ مُحَمَّدٍ(ص) لَاتُنْسَخُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدَهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ؛ فَمَنِ ادَّعَى بَعْدَهُ نُبُوَّةً أَوْ أَتَى بَعْدَهُ بِكِتَابٍ فَدَمُهُ مُبَاحٌ لِكُلِّ مَنْ سَمِعَ مِنْهُ.»

4 «كان جليل القدر عظيم المنزلة زاهدا ورعا ثقة في روايات».

Nevertheless, there is a problem in the implication of the above narration. For it refers to a personal case and concerns a person named Bazīʿ. Therefore, as scholars have said, it is difficult to derive a general ruling from personal cases (Khomeini 1994, 2: 404), because in such cases, it is possible that the Imam may have issued such a ruling considering the unrevealed aspects of the story (Khānsārī 1984 7: 228; Arākī 1994, 1: 339).

In the second narration, one of the narrators is Yaḥyā ibn abī al-Qāsim al-Asadī about whose character there is much controversy (al-Kashshī, 1983, 474). Some scholars such as al-Ṭūsī (2006, 346) and al-Ḥillī (1961, 264) considered him to be a follower of the Wāqifīyah sect. However, some other scholars do not agree with this opinion. In any case, what is certain is that there is a disagreement about his character among Imamiyah scholars (Ḥāʾirī Māzandarānī 1995, 7: 31)

In the chain of narrators of the third narration, there is Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ṭalaqānī, whose status is unclear in terms of reliability, and there is no explicit confirmation about him (Ḥāʾirī Māzandarānī 1995, 7: 510). Therefore, some jurists have considered the narration to be unknown (Mūsawī Ardabīlī 2006, 2: 451).

Apart from the discussion on the chain of narrators, there is also a problem with the implication of these narrations. Some jurists have argued against the generalization of these narratives because the different situations of the problem have not been examined separately in them. That is to say, if the claimant to prophethood makes such a claim with the knowledge that he is lying and with the intention of deceiving others, then such a case is judged differently than if such a claim is due to an intellectual doubt that arises within him, and he is innocent of any blame. Especially in a situation where he does not explicitly claim to be a prophet, but invites people to him and says words that have the meaning of prophethood and bringing Sharia (Mūsawī Ardabīlī 2006, 2: 451). In response to the above-mentioned rational objection, arguing that the ruling is religious and insisting on narrative documentation will not be a solution, because a rational claim cannot be answered with narrative evidence. For it is rationally clear that the judgement of the one who claims prophethood out of knowledge and intention is different from the case that seems to be caused not by malice but by scholarly doubt. In such a situation, the intellectuals will agree that it is necessary to try to resolve his scholarly doubt through logic and reasoning (Muntaẓirī n.d., 2:529).

It seems that even if all the above problems are ignored, the proof of the murder sentence, which is a clear example of important matters, needs a more valid reason that has the ability to turn away from the basic principles

and allow the shedding of blood. Muḥaqqiq Ardabīlī (1982, 13:88) explains that it should be taken into consideration that the killing of a human being is a very serious matter. For the holy ruler has paid great attention to the preservation of human life, because a person's duties and salvation are based on his life, so God the Wise has made it obligatory to preserve life. This is also confirmed by reason.

A number of jurists have included consensus among their documentation in the issue. For example, Sabziwārī (1992, 28: 33) believes in the fulfillment of the consensus of Imamiyyih scholars regarding the necessity of killing the claimant of prophethood. It seems that it is not acceptable to rely on consensus in this matter, because, as mentioned, a number of predecessors are silent on this matter. So how can one reach their point of view and claim consensus? Moreover, in view of the disagreement of some contemporary scholars, the claim of consensus cannot be sustained (Ṣāniʿī 2009, 151). With the existence of the above-mentioned traditions, the consensus is confronted with the injunction of having documentation and loses its independent legitimacy. Although one may not accept the above reasoning, it can at least be said that it raises a kind of doubt in the matter, and in the presence of doubt, the verdict is subject to the rule of abandoning the sentence (*darʾ al-ḥadd*).

In Shiite and Sunni sources, a narration of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) has been quoted repeatedly in various words that he said, "Stop punishing when in doubt"[1] (al-Ṣadūq 1992, 4:74). His words also state that avoid punishing the Muslims as much as you can. If you find a way out for the Muslim, then let him go. If the Imam makes a mistake in forgiving, it is better for him than to make a mistake in punishing[2] (Bayhaqqī 2003, 8: 413; al-Tirmadhī 1998, 3:85).

6. Analysing the Punishment of Mutanabbī Based on the Verse 33 of al-Māʾidah

In the verse Q. 5:33, God states:

إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الأَرْضِ فَسَادًا أَنْ يُقَتَّلُوا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِنْ خِلافٍ أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الأَرْضِ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِي الآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ (المائدة/33)

The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger, and strive with might and main for mischief through the land is execution, or crucifixion, or the cutting off of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land: that is their

1 «ادْرَءُوا الْحُدُودَ بِالشُّبُهَات».

2 «ادْرءُوا الْحُدُودَ عَنِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ، فَإِنْ وَجَدْتُمْ لِلْمُسْلِمِ مَخْرَجًا فَخَلُّوا سَبِيلَهُ، فَإِنَّ الْإِمَامَ أَنْ يُخْطِئَ فِي الْعَفْوِ خَيْرٌ لَهُ مِنْ أَنْ يُخْطِئَ فِي الْعُقُوبَةِ»

disgrace in this world, and a heavy punishment is theirs in the Hereafter (Q. 5:33).

A search in the Qur'anic verses indicates that derivatives of the root "F,S,D" were used at least 49 times in the Holy Qur'an. Lexicographers have taken the word *fasād* (corruption) to mean "contrary to right" (Ibn Manẓūr 1993, 5:128; al-Zabīdī 1993, 5:164). Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (1991, 636) defined *fasād* in the sense of the object being out of moderation. Since this definition is comprehensive and can include all examples of corruption, it seems to be correct and consistent with the content of the Qur'anic verses. For example, in verses such as Q.30:41,[1] Q.28:83[2] and Q.21:22 [3], although *fasād* can be interpreted as a particular kind of evil, and various examples can be given, the common meaning of all of them is the occurrence of something contrary to right and out of moderation.

Some scholars, referring to the verse Q. 5:33, have believed that *al-ifsād fī al-arḍ* (corruption in the earth) is a title other than *al-muḥārabah* (fighting against God). Qumī (1994, 409) believes that what is discussed in the verse is the occurrence of corruption, and *al-muḥārabah* is considered one of the examples of corruption in the earth. Therefore, if corruption occurs, even if there is no fighting and no drawing of weapons, the punishments mentioned in the verse will be applied. In other words, this group of jurists are of the opinion that every person who corrupts in the earth is subjected to the punishments mentioned in the verse, and fighter will also be sentenced to such a punishment because he is among the corrupt examples in earth (Fāḍil Lankarānī 2001, 638). However, it seems that this interpretation of the verse cannot be accepted, as the majority of Shia and Sunni commentators and jurists have not agreed with this double criminalisation (al-Ṭabarī 1985, 4:135; al-Ālūsī 1984, 5:119; al-Ṭabarsī 1987, 3:291; Mūsawī Bujnūrdī 2006, 151). From the point of view of this group of scholars, the phrase, *wa yasaʿūna fī al-arḍi fasādan*, is mentioned to convey the meaning of *al-muḥārib* (someone fighting against God). In other words, *wāw* in this phrase is of the interpretive type, so the phrase is actually the interpreter of the first phrase, *al-ladhīna yuḥāribūna Allaha wa rasūlahahū*. Thus, the verse criminalises only one behaviour. In other words, *al-muḥārabah* and *al-ifsād fī al-arḍ* are not two separate crimes, because the word *al-ladhīna* is a relative pronoun (*al-muṣūl*) and *yuḥāribūna Allaha wa rasūlahahū* is its relative clause (*al-ṣilah*). The phrase *wa yasaʿūna fī al-arḍi fasādan* is connected to the relative clause with a coordinating conjunction *wāw*, so both phrases were used to convey only one fact (Imāmī kāshānī 1993, 90).

1 «ظَهَرَ الْفَسادُ فِی الْبَرِّ وَ الْبَحْرِ بِما کَسَبَتْ أَیْدِی النّاس» (الروم/41)

2 «تِلْکَ الدّارُ الآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلّذِینَ لَا یُرِیدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِی الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا...» (القصص/83)

3 «لَوْ کَانَ فِیهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا ۚ فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا یَصِفُونَ» (الأنبیاء/22)

As a further explanation, it should be said that according to the Arabic grammar, if God wanted to mention two crimes in the verse, it was necessary to repeat the relative pronoun *al-ladhīna* before the second phrase, *yasaʿūna fī al-arḍi fasādan*. However, since the pronoun is not repeated, the duality of the crimes of *al-muḥārabah* and *al-ifsād fī al-arḍ* cannot be accepted in this verse (Lankarānī 2001, 638). According to this point of view, al-Ṭūsī (1988, 6: 504) means corruption in the land as fighting against God and making roads unsafe. He understands the meaning of the phrase *yasaʿūna fī al-arḍi fasādan* to mean that a person pulls out a weapon and creates insecurity. Moreover, Ṭabāṭabāʾī (1970, 5:334) considers this phrase as an interpretation of the phrase, *yuḥāribūna Allaha wa rasūlahahū,* and takes it to mean disrupting the security of society and banditry.

Thus, it can be concluded that the claimant of prophethood is not included in the punishments mentioned in the verse. However, it is necessary to prevent the arrogance of criminals by predicting deterrent punishments while exercising caution in this matter. This can be done by predicting a punishment other than deprivation of life. Due to the extreme importance of preserving human life from the standpoint of the Sharia, one should not disregard prudence in deciding on the authorisation of killing and behave contrary to caution.

7. Conclusion

The popular perception of evidence and documentation regarding the punishment of a person who claims to be a prophet (*mutanabbī*) is to abandon the basic Qur'anic principle of preserving human life (*ḥaqn al-dimāʾ*). As a result, according to some hadiths and the alleged consensus, the majority of jurists believe that the claimant of the prophecy deserves to die (*mahdūr al-dam*).

The current study analysed the jurists' documentation based on the principle of caution in the matter of human life, recognizing the basic requirements of jurisprudential arguments derived from Qur'anic verses. In this context, three narratives have been identified as the main documentation of jurists. Examination of these three narrations shows that some of them are defective in terms of narrators and others in terms of meaning, so it can be concluded that such a severe sentence cannot be derived from such narrations. The author believes that even if the weaknesses of the narratives mentioned are ignored and all of them are accepted, the verdict of shedding human blood based on some narratives is against the principle of caution regarding human life.

Another renowned reason, i.e. the alleged consensus, is also insufficient

according to the results of the research, since on the one hand, the attitude of many early Imamiyah jurists to the problem is not clear, so that at best it can be claimed that there is no contradiction in the problem. On the other hand, the presence of the aforementioned traditions causes the consensus to face the prohibition of having documentation and loses its independent validity. Even if one does not accept the above reasoning, it can at least be said that it casts a kind of doubt on the issue, and with presence of doubt, the verdict is subject to the rule of abandoning the sentence (*darʾ al-ḥadd*).

Furthermore, to prove the argument of the jurists, it is not possible to consider the verdict of a claimant of prophecy as the punishment for corrupting on the land (*al-ifsād fī al-arḍ*), mentioned in the 33rd verse of Surah al-Māʾidah, because as it was stated, corrupting on the land is not an independent and distinct issue from *al-muḥārabah.*

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