

Persian Historians and the Utilization of Quranic Verses in Reporting the Destruction by the Rulers (A Case Study of Verse ۳۴, Surah An-Naml)

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Abstract

Verse 34 of Surah An-Naml is one of the verses that attracted the attention of Persian historians from the 8th to the 13th centuries AH, and was included in historical reports with an interpretation aligned with these historians' objectives. This paper addresses the question: "How have Persian historians utilized this verse in describing the destructive actions of invading and enemy rulers, or the actions of their favored and praised rulers?" Through a descriptive-analytical method, the paper explores this issue. The findings indicate that the differing interpretations of "the corruption of lands and the humiliation of the esteemed, arising from the entry of rulers," mentioned in the verse, have led some historians to consider this corruption and humiliation as divine will. They view the destructive actions of foreign and invading rulers as a predetermined and inevitable fate referred to in the Quran. Another group sees this corruption and humiliation as an unavoidable principle reminded by God, thus describing the actions of their favored and praised rulers as legitimate and acceptable. In both groups' interpretations, this corruption and humiliation are seen as the essence of the divine

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word and not merely the statement of the Queen of Sheba, applied to describe the actions of either invading foreign rulers or praised and favored rulers.

Keywords: Verse 34 An-Naml, Persian Historiography, Legitimization in History, Quran and History.

Introduction:

Persian historians utilized verse 34 of Surah An-Naml in their works with specific objectives arising from their perspectives and inclinations. This usage is particularly reflected in Persian sources from the 8th to the 13th centuries AH. The research problem of this study is to explore the objectives of Persian historians from the 8th to the 13th centuries AH in their application of this verse in their works and how they benefited from it. This research is based on the question of how these historians, accepting "the corruption of lands and the humiliation of people during the invasion of kings" as a definite and divine decree, applied verse 34 of Surah An-Naml and in what contexts.

Research Methodology:

Given the fundamental nature of the topic, this study uses a descriptive-analytical method. After collecting data and information from historical and exegetical sources of this period, the study attempts to provide scientific answers to the following two questions based on historical data:

- a) How was this verse used to describe the destructive actions of invading and hostile rulers?
- b) How did historians utilize this verse when describing the events related to their favored and praised rulers?

The selection of the 8th to 13th centuries AH as the time frame is due to the recording of this verse in the works of these centuries. Prior to this period (from the Seljuk era to the Ilkhanid era), this verse is scarcely mentioned in Persian works, except in the context of the stories of the prophets and the era of Solomon.

Research Findings:

According to the conducted research, the Persian historians under consideration used this verse in two ways, both to justify the actions of rulers and their destructive measures. The first use involves the application of verse 34 of Surah An-Naml in describ-



ing the destructive actions of invading rulers, where the destructive actions of unwanted and hostile rulers are depicted and justified. From this perspective, historical reports provide data indicating the permissibility of destruction upon the arrival of kings, leading historians to accept it as their fate and destiny, viewing this destruction and humiliation as an inevitable outcome of any ruler's invasion. This is seen, for instance, in the accounts of the notorious Mongol invasions and the resulting destruction.

The second use primarily involves historians who wrote under the orders or in favor of their preferred rulers. They used this verse as a tool to legitimize the actions of these rulers. In their works, these historians justified and legitimized the destructive and plundering actions of their favored rulers by referencing this verse and invoking divine authority. Historians such as Aqhsarai in *Musamarat al-Akhbar wa Musayarat al-Akhyar*, Hafiz-i Abru in *Zubdat al-Tawarikh*, Kamal al-Din Abdul-Razzaq Samarqandi in *Matla' as-Sa'dayn wa Majma' al-Bahrayn*, Sharaf al-Din Ali Yazdi in *Zafarnama*, Zahir al-Din Mar'ashi in *Tarikh-i Gilan wa Deylamestan*, Sirhindi in *Tarikh-i Mubarakshahi*, Asfuzari in *Ruzat al-Jannat fi Awsaf Madinat Herat*, Amiri in *Futuhāt-i Shahi*, Afushta'i Natanz in *Nawadir al-Akhbar fi Dhikr al-Akhyar*, Khworshah ibn Qubad al-Husseini in *Tarikh-i Ilchi Nizamshah*, Sayyid Muhammad Ma'sum Bukhari in *Tarikh-i Sind*, Raqam Samarqandi in *Tarikh-i Raqam*, and Mirza Mahdi Khan Astarabadi in *Durra-e Nadira* used this verse to justify the destructive actions of their favored rulers.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the Persian historians of the selected centuries used this verse in accordance with their viewpoints to consider the destructive actions of foreign and hostile rulers as divine destiny or to legitimize the undesirable actions of their favored rulers. Examining and confirming the use of Quranic verses by historians in line with their objectives and purposes was a general aim of this research, which focused on verse 34 of Surah An-Naml as a case study.

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