Analysis of Four Books on Qur’anic Sciences Written by Shaykh Abd Allah bnFoduye

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Abstract:-Shaykh ‘Abd Allah bnFoduye has numerous writings on various subjects in Islamic studies, but the area of this research is concentrated to the writings on ‘Ulum al-Qur’an (Qur’anic sciences), by Shaykh Abd Allah bnFoduye, the researchers will analyze some of his books on Qur’anic sciences, which include Al-Fara’id al-Jalilahwasa’it al-Fawa’id al-Jamilah Fi’Ulum al-Qur’an (Great things on the sciences of the Qur’an), Miftah al-Tafsir (The key of Tafsir) and Sulalat al-Miftah (summary key) Diya’ al-Ta’wil Fi Ma’an al-Tanzil (Light of explanation in the meaning of the Qur’an), Kifayat al-Dhu’fa.’ and Nail al-Sul min Tafsir al-Rasul. The researchers also discussed the importance of revealing Qur’an in seven letters. The analytical method is used when conducting this research.

Keywords: Analysis, Qur’anic Sciences, seven letters, and Shaykh Abd Allah BnFoduye.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Glorious Qur’an being full of sciences, which deals with direct, History, understanding and implementation of its teachings, ashab al-Nazul, the knowledge of abrogator and abrogated, (al-Nasikhwa al-Mansuhk) ‘Ilm al-Qira’at, ‘Ilm al-Tafsir ‘Ijaz al-Qur’an (Miraculousness of the Qur’an), al-Wahy (revelation) and numerous issues discussed in the Glorious Qur’an. It is therefore, pertinent to say that the Glorious Qur’an comprises everything as Allah stated in the Glorious Qur’an where He says:

And there is no creature on (or within) the earth or bird that flies with its wings except (that they are) communities like you. We have not neglected in the register (al-Lawh al-Mahfuth) or (Qur’an) a thing then unto their Lord they will be gathered (Qur’an, 6:38).

The researchers will start by analyzing the books one after the other.

The first book is al-Fara’id al-Jalilah; this book contains seven chapters and thirty six fusul (sections). In this book, the author discusses many things pertaining Qur’anic sciences. But the researchers will touch the chapters that were related much to their research in order not to go away from their area of discussion. In the first chapter of the book the author discussed manners of Qur’anic revelation and said:

It has been revealed in a bulk on a secured board (Lauh al-Mahfuz) from Heaven in the Glorious month of Ramadan, as gentle as desired. He taught Jibril (A.S) with His Blessings then he came and taught the Prophet (peace be upon him). He comes to him at times like the sound of a bell, and sometimes in the shape of a teacher. Sometimes he says it into his heart, at times he comes to him in his sleep (Foduye, 2013).

The above quotations shows that Shaykh ‘Abd Allah talks about how the Glorious Qur’an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W), and he discusses these issues in the same way as Imam Al-Suyuti discussed them, but Imam mentioned five ways in how the Qur’an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W), the first among them is, sometimes the Angel used to come to him as the sound of a bell, second one is, sometimes it comes to him in the shape of man and talk to him, third one is, sometimes he (the Angel) says it into his heart, (Divine inspiration) fourth one is sometimes he comes to him during his sleep, and fifth one is which Shaykh‘Abd Allah did not mentioned in his book (Al-Suyuti, 1967).

On the issue of revealing the Qur’an in seven letters, the Shaykh is referring to the Prophetic Hadith, where the Prophet said:

Indeed this Qur’an has been revealed on seven letters, so recite it in the way that is easier for you (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 2003).

There are various arguments with regard to the seven letters which the Qur’an was revealed according to the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him), but the majority were of the view that seven letters that the Prophet uttered were the seven different dialects of the Arabs, it is what Shaykh ‘Abd Allah even chose in these poems.

The scholars that said seven letters belong to seven dialects they relied on the saying of ‘Uthmanbn Affan (R.A), when he was ordered to write the Qur’an in the dialect of the Quraysh, because a lot of what was revealed is from the dialect of Quraysh (Al-Zurqani, n.d.).
II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF REVELATION OF THE QUR’AN IN SEVEN LETTERS

As for the benefits of the differences among the ways of recitation, there is a lot of importance in seven letters with which the Qur’an was revealed, some of the importance are as follows:

1. To make the recitation of the Qur’an easy and convenient to the Muslim Ummah.
2. To prove the miracle of the Qur’an with complete abridgement.
3. To prove with clear signs that the Qur’an is revealed from Allah, because, despite the mentioned differences they support each other in a fabulous and attractive style.
4. It is clear that Allah has assured or guaranteed the protection of His word (Qur’an) for Himself. This is yet another sign of the authenticity of the Qur’an, that makes knowledge of His religion in all places and times through pious scholars and others who memorized the Qur’an, it words, know it’s different recital ways, clarify its explanation, meaning and differentiate between the correct and authentic narrations and those which are in correct weak (Al-Zurqani, n.d).

He further mentioned the Makkan and Madinan Suwar (chapters) where he said;

The Makkan chapters are those revealed before migration, Madinan Surahs are those chapters revealed after migration (Foduye, 2013).

Here the Shaykh took the most popular view among the several views in the definition of Makki and Madani, by supporting that, the Makkan chapters are those revealed before Hijrah and Madinan chapters are those revealed after the Hijrah. Because there are two views according to Suyuti, one of them is Makkan chapters are those chapters which were revealed in Makkah and Madinan chapters are those chapters which were revealed in Madinah, the second saying is, the Makkan chapters are those chapters that were revealed talking about the people of Makkah and Madinan chapters are those chapters that were revealed talking about the people of Madinah.

When we come to the issue of ‘ilmal-Tajwid of the Qur’an, Shaykh ‘Abd Allah said:

Reciting it well is a teaching of the Messenger of Allah; this is a proof from what was said about Ubayybnka’ab. He who intends to read the al-Qur’an; he should recite it with a good voice. Do not read it like a cow chewing food, instead read it step by step and considering its meaning that is how it was revealed with instructions (Foduye, 2013).

The scholars that said seven letters means seven dialects relied on the saying of Caliph Uthman (R.A), when he ordered the Qur’an to be written in the dialect of Quraiysh, because a lot of what was revealed is from the dialect of Quraiysh (Zurqani, n.d).

The second book is Miftah al-Tafsir; the book contains ninety one chapters. In this book the author discusses many things concerning the Qur’anic sciences (‘Ulum al-Qur’an) and many other things. But here, the researchers will focus on the issues related to his research work. In this book the author discusses the issue of chapters which were revealed in Makkah and Madinah he said most of the long chapters of the Qur’an were Madinan, the chapters are Surah al-Baqarah, Ali Imran, Nisa’and Ma’idah, among others. He further discusses the revealed chapters in Madinah but it was Makk, for example Surah, al-Mumtaahinah it was revealed in Madinah but it is talking about the people of Makkah (Foduye, 2011). Also he brought an example of what was revealed in Makkah but is Madani, for instance where Allah ta’ala says:

O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and nations and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed Allah is all knowing and acquainted (Qur’an, 49:13).

The above verse was revealed in Makkah on the day of conquest of Makkah (Yuma al-Fath) but it is Madinan Surah (chapters) because it was revealed after the Hijrah (migration).

Also, on the issue of Makk and Madani chapters we can find whose Surah is Maki or Madani except some verses, for instance, Surah al-A’raf it is Makkyyah except this verse where Allah says:

And ask them about the town that was by the sea-when they transgressed in (the matter of) the Sabbath- when their fish came to them openly on their Sabbath day, and the day they had no Sabbath they did not come to them. Thus did we give them trial because they were defiantly disobedient (Qur’an 7:163).

The above verse is Madaniyah while the complete chapter is Makiyyah.

Also, in further example where is complete chapter Madaniyah, except one Ayah (verse), this occurred in Surah Al-Anfal where Allah says:

And (remember, O Muhammad), when those who disbelieved plotted against you to restrain you or kill you or evict you (from Makkah). But they plan. And Allah is the best of planners (Qur’an, 8:30).

Generally, the verses that were revealed in Makkah in the chapters of Madinah are numerous in the Glorious Qur’an;
likewise the verses that were revealed in Madinah in the chapters of Makkah are also much available in the Qur’an.

Furthermore, the author talked about verses that were revealed at home as well as while on a journey. The author said:

The verses that were revealed at home are openly numerous and second that was revealed while on a journey are also many in the Glorious Qur’an, like some verses in Surah al-Baqrah, al-Anfal, al-Hajj, al-Fath, al-Kautsar, al-Nisa’, al-Nahl, and al-Taubah among others (Foduye, 2011).

Here the author is trying to show that, the verses those were that revealed while at home are many and open, so no need to give any example. But the second one is verses that were revealed while on a journey, like the verse in Surah al-Baqarah where Allah says:

And fear a Day when you will be returned to Allah. Then every soul will be compensated for what it earned, and they will not be wronged (that is treated unjustly) (Qur’an 2:281).

The above verse was revealed at Mina in the year of last pilgrimage of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W), and also in the same Surah (chapter) in another verse Allah says:

And it is not righteousness to enter houses from the back, but righteousness is (in) one who fears Allah, and enter houses from their doors. And fear Allah that you may succeed (Qur’an 2:189).

Also in another chapter Allah (S.W.T) (says):

...This Day I have perfected for you your religion and completed my favour upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion… (Qur’an, 5:30).

Also in the same Surah Allah (S.W.T) says:

O Muhammad, announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message. And Allah will protect you from the people. Indeed, Allah does not guide the disbelieving people (Qur’an, 5:67).

Furthermore, in another verse were Allah (S.W.T) says:

They ask you, (O Muhammad), about the bounties (of war). Say “the (decision concerning) bounties is for Allah and the messenger”. So fear Allah and amend that which is between you and you obey Allah and His messenger, if you should be believers (Qur’an, 8:1).

The above verse was revealed on the battle of Badr.

Another verse is where Allah (S.W.T) says:

And if you punish (an enemy, O believers), punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed. But if you are patient— it is better for those who are patient (Qur’an, 16:126).

All the above quoted verses were revealed on a journey while the Prophet (S.A.W) was traveling either to a battle or to other issues like treaty of Hudaibiyyah.

The author of the book also discusses the issue of the verses that was revealed in the daytime and night time. But the researchers will bring the chapters and verses out in order to simplify it to the readers of this research work.

III. EXPLANATION OF WHAT WAS REVEALED AT NIGHT TIME

The author in his poem mentioned the beginning of Surah al-Hajj, where the Almighty Allah says:

“O Mankind, fear your Lord. Indeed, the convulsion of the (final) Hour is a terrible thing” (Qur’an 21:1).

The above verse was revealed in the night, and some said it was revealed when the Prophet (S.A.W) was on a journey. Other chapters are Surah al-Falaq, Surah al-Nas, and Surah al-Fath (Malam Bello naMalamBoyi, 2016).

IV. EXPLANATION OF WHAT WAS REVEALED IN THE DAY TIME

The verses that were revealed in the daytime were many, so there is no need to mention them all, for example this verse in Surah al-Nisa’ was revealed in the day time where Allah (S.W.T) says:

O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while you are intoxicated until you know what you are saying or in a state of Janabah, except those passing through (a place of prayer), until you have washed (your whole body). And if you are ill, or on a journey, or one of you comes from the place of relieving himself or you have contracted women and find no water, then seek clean earth and wipe over your faces and your hands (with it). Indeed, Allah is ever pardoning and forgiving (Qur’an 4:43).

The above verse indeed was revealed in between daytime and night, due to what was reported from Imam Muslim, from Aishah(R.A), she said: the time of Subh(morning prayer) prayer came, he seek for water(Prophet Muhammad) and did not get the water, then this verse was revealed (Muslim, 2003).
V. EXPLANATION OF WHAT WAS REVEALED IN THE SUMMER AND WINTER

The author of the book gives example of some verses that were revealed in summer and winter where he said:

Example of this is two verses that talks about a man or woman who leaves neither ascendants nor descendants, the evidence were proved in Sahih, the verse that talk about battle of Tabuk it is all Saifiyyah, like farewell Hajj, and verse that talk about battle of Khandaq and history of falsehood against Aisha (R.A) (Foduye, 2011).

In this quotation, the author is talking about what was revealed in the daytime and at night, example is from the two verses in Surah Al-Nisa’ where Allah (S.W.T) says:

And if a man or woman leaves neither ascendants nor descendants but has a brother or a sister, then for each one of them is a sixth. But if they are more than two, they share a third, after any bequest which was made or debt, as long as there is no detriment (caused). This is an ordinance from Allah, and Allah is all Knowing and for bearing (Qur’an, 4:12).

Also in the same Surah where the Almighty Allah says:

They request from you a (legal) ruling. Say “Allah gives you a ruling concerning one having neither descendants nor ascendants (as heirs)” ((Muslim, 2003).

Also the verses those were revealed in the battle of Tabuk all of them are in the summer session, like the saying of Almighty Allah in Surah al-Taubah where He says:

And among them is he who says, “Permit me (to remain at home) and do not put me to trial”. Unquestionably, into trial they have a fallen. And indeed, Hell will encompass the disbelievers (Qur’an, 9:49).

Then, after the example of some verses that were revealed in summer season, the verses that were revealed in the winter season will be cited here, like the saying of the author of the book where he mentioned that:

The verses of battle of Khandaq and the history of falsehood made to Aishah (R.A). We can understand from the above quotation that, the author is trying to show the verses that were revealed in the winter season, like what was revealed in the battle of Khandaq. In Surah al-Ahzab where Allah says:

O you who have believed, remember the favour of Allah upon you when armies came to (cattle) you and We sent upon them a wind and armies (of angel) you did not see. And ever is Allah, of what you do, seeing (Qur’an 33:9).

The above verse was revealed during excessive cold season. Moreover, the following verses in Surah al-Nur was revealed during the winter season, where Allah says:

Indeed, those who came with falsehood are group among you. Do not think it bad for you; rather, it is good for you for every person among them is what (punishment) he has earned from the sin, and he who took upon himself the greater portion thereof for him as great punishment that is Hellfire (Qur’an 24:1).

Shaykh ‘Abd Allah discusses the issue of al-Nasikhwa al-Mansukh. Before the researchers godeep into discussion of al-Nasikhwa al-Mansukh, he will explain the two concepts al-Nasikhha al-Wansukh. The Arabic words ‘al-Nasikh’ and ‘al-Mansukh’ are both derived from the same root word ‘al-Nasikh’ which carries different meanings such as ‘to abolish, to replace, to withdraw, to abrogate.’

The word al-Nasikh means the abrogator; while al-Mansukh (passive) means ‘the abrogated’. In technical language these terms refer to certain parts of the Qur’anic revelation, which have been ‘abrogated’ by others. Naturally the abrogated passage is the one called ‘al-Mansukh,’ while the abrogator is called al-Nasikh(Denffer, 1983).
Shaykh ‘Abd Allah bnFoduye said in this book Miftah al-Tafsir:

Al-Nasikhwa al-Mansukh sometimes used to come with the meaning of removing, substitution, declaration, alteration, abrogation will not come unless with commanding and forbidding, it is used to come with legal ruling and recitation together and it used to come only. Then there are some chapters with either al-Nasikh or al-Mansukh, and chapters with both al-Nasikh and al-Mansukh(Foduye, 2011).

The above quotation from this book, that is Miftah al-Tafsir by Shaykh ‘Abd Allah bnFoduye, will be explained and analysed by the researchers. He mentioned that al-Nasikhwa al-Mansukh used to come With the meaning of declaration or substitution. For example it comes with the meaning of declaration or eradication in Surah al-Hajj where Allah says:

And We did not send before you any Messenger or Prophet except that when he spoke or recited, Satan threw into it (some misunderstanding). But Allah abolishes that which Satan throws in; then Allah makes precise His verses. And Allah is knowing and wise (Qur’an, 22:52).

Then in the place where it comes with the meaning of substitution or changing, for example where Allah says:

And when We substitute a verse in place of a verse and Allah is most knowing of what He sends down- they say. “You (O Muhammad) are but an inventor (of lies). “But most of them do not know” (Qur’an 16:101).

Then, the author mentioned that, there are three kinds of al-Naskh in the Glorious Qur’an.

1. Abrogation of the recited (verse) together with the legal ruling.
2. Abrogation of the legal ruling without the recited (verse).
3. Abrogation of the recited (verse) without the legal ruling.

Here, one cannot understand these three categories clearly without citing examples; so, here the researcher will bring some examples of some verses of the above three categories of abrogation in order to make it clear to the reader, the examples are as follows:

For abrogation of the recited (verse) together with its legal ruling:

Aisha Allah be pleased with (her) reported that it had been revealed in the Glorious Qur’an that ten clear sucklings make the marriage unlawful, then it was abrogated (and substituted) by five sucklings and Allah’s apostle (may peace be upon him) died and it was before that time (found) in the Glorious Qur’an (and recited by the Muslims) (Muslim, 2003).

For abrogation of a legal ruling without the recited (verse):

Not lawful to you, (O Muhammad) are (any additional) women after (this), nor (is it) for you to exchange them for (other) wives, even if their beauty were to please you, except what your right hand possesses. And ever is Allah, over all things, observer (Qur’an 33:52).

For abrogation of the recited (verse) without the legal ruling:

‘Abdullahi bin Abbas reported that ‘Umar bin Khattab Sat on the pulpit of Allah’s messenger (S.A.W) and said: Verily Allah sent Muhammad (S.A.W) with true and he sent down the book upon him, and the verse of stoning was included in what was sent down to him. We recited it, retained it in our memory and understood it. Allah’s messenger (S.A.W) awarded the punishment of stoning to death (to the married adulterer and adulteress) and after him, we also awarded the punishment of stoning. I am afraid that with the lapse of time, the people (may forget it) and may say: we do not find the punishment of stoning in the book of Allah, and thus go astray by abandoning this duty prescribed by Allah. Stoning is a duty laid down in Allah’s book for married men and women who commit adultery when proof is established or if there is pregnancy or a confession (Muslim, 2003).

The punishment of stoning for adultery in respect of married persons has been retained in the Sunnah, while it is not included in the Qur’an.

The author mentioned chapters that have no abrogator and abrogated verses. The chapters are forty three in number, like Surah al-Fatihah, SurahYusuf, Surah Yasin, Surah Al-Hujrat, Surah Al-Rahman, Surah al-Hadid, Surah al-Saff, and Surah al-Jumu’ah among others.

The author mentioned chapters that have abrogator and abrogated verses. The chapters are twenty five in number, like Surah al-Baqarah, Surah al-Nisa’, Surah al-Ma’idah, Surah al-Shura, Surah al-Ahzab, Surah al-Waqia’ah among others (Foduye, 2011).

The author also mentioned the chapters those have abrogation only. The chapters are six in numbers, like Surah al-Fath,
The third book is Sulalat al-Miftah (Summary key); the book contains thirty five chapters. This is a summary of Miftah al-Tafsir; in this book the author discusses many things concerning the Qur’anic sciences (‘Ulum al-Qur’an) and so many issues. In this book he discusses the issue of revelation and chapters that were revealed in Makkah and Madinah as he discussed it in the Miftah al-Tafsir, but in this book he highlights more ways in which one can understand the chapters that were revealed in Makkah and Madinah.

But in this book, the Shaykh mentioned, the simple way one can understand the Makki Surahs is appearance of the word Kalla and history of A.S.S. and Satan, wherever these issues were found in a chapter it is a Makki Surah except Surah al-Baqarah. Furthermore, the Shaykh said all the chapters which have meaningless letters like Qaf, Hameem, Alif, Lam, Meem is Makkiah except two chapters Surah al-Baqarahand Ali Imran(Foduye, n. d.

Shaykh said that, every Surah which talks about hypocrites is recorded as Madani chapter except Surah al-Ankabut, also every chapter which talks about obligations deeds and punishment is recorded as Madani(Foduye, 2013).

In this book, he discusses the Huffaz al-Qur’an (memorizers) of the Qur’an from the time of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and their followers (Tabi’un). Here the author is trying to indicate the saying of the Prophet (S.A.W) in one Hadith where he said:

Take your Qur’an from these four famous people, Abdullahibn Mas’ud Salimibn Ma’aqil servant of Abi Khuzaijah, Mu’azbin Jabal and Ubayybin Ka’ab (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 2003).

Also in another Hadith of Huffaz al-Qur’an in the lifetime of the Prophet (S.A.W) are four: Abubin Darda,’Mu’azbin Jabal, Zaidbin Thabit and Abu Zayd (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 2003).

Moreover, from the Sahabah (companions) among the memorizers of the Qur’an there was, Abu Hurairah (AbdulRahmanbn Sakhar) Abdullahbn Abbas, and Abdullahibn Sa’ibbn Matalabi, all these three companions reported from UbayybinKa’ab (Foduye, n. d).

The fourth book is Diya’ al-Ta’wil Fi Ma’an al-Tanzil(light of explanation in the meaning of the Qur’an). This book is a Tafsir in which theShaykh discusses a lot of things.

By analyzing this book, the researcher will explain how the author wrote his book and the reasons why he wrote the book.

When the request of people was very heavy on him and it compelled him to write a Tafsir to them which they can enable them to understand the Book of Allah and depend onthe views of scholars where to do ‘Iráb (parse) and where there is need for parsing (’Irab) from, and reminding the people about popular recitations (Qira’at), and starting with the reading of Nafi’ with the narration of Warsh from him because it is our recitation in our side, and explanation of Ahkam al-Shar ‘iyaah (Islamic legal rules) with careful concern to Madhhab Imam Mallik (Maliaki school of thought) because it is our school of thought and reminding people about what concern ‘Ilm al-Balaqah (eloquence) then the Shaykh accepted this request seeking the lenience and reward from Allah and gave the title of the book as: Diya’ al-Ta’wil Fi Ma’an al-Tanzil (light of explanation in the meaning of the Qur’an) (Foduye, n. d).

Furthermore, he explains grammatical aspects (al-Nahwa),al-Taufhid, Jurisprudence, (al-Fiqh) recitations (al-Qira’at) and its kinds, reasons for revelations (ashab al-Nuzul), abrogator and abrogated (al-Nasikhwa al-Mansukh) among others. All the above knowledge (‘Ulum) were discussed in his Tafsir.

VI. CONCLUSION

The researchers commences by introduction and then analysed the books of the prominent Scholar ShaykhAbd AllahbnFoduye in which he manifested his understanding of ‘Ulum al-Qur’an (Qur’anic sciences), such as, the book of Al-Fara’i’d al- JilalihaWa Sa’i’t al-Fawa’i’d al-Jamilah Fi’Ulam al-Qur’an, Miftah al-Tafsir(The key of al-Tafsir), Sulalat al-Miftah(Summary key), Diya’ al-Ta’wil Fi Ma’an al-Tanzil(light of explanation in the meaning of the Qur’an), Diya’ al-Hukkamamong others, all the above books were written by Shaykh ‘Abd Allah bnFoduye based on the Qur’anic sciences where he intensively discusses this matter in details.

REFERENCES


