



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Functional Analysis for the Distortion Category in Human Life by Evaluating the Quran and Testaments Texts

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Abstract

SUBJECT AND OBJECTIVES: Throughout history, distortion of religious texts and sources has always been the tool of authoritarian rulers and those in power and wealth, who used it to achieve their goals and in order to keep people in ignorance, and this distortion continues to today in human life. Therefore, addressing the issue of distortion of religious texts in the Abrahamic religions (Islam, Judaism, Christianity) is an important issue that shows how authentic these texts are and can be referred to them.

METHOD AND FINDING: Due to this necessity of discussion, in the present study, an attempt was made with a qualitative approach such as Document review and content analysis and given its role in human life, to explain and examine the issue of distortion in the Abrahamic religions, explain the reasons that prove that the Quran is far from distorted.

CONCLUSION: The research findings indicated that distortion in the Holy Quran is not verbal possible; but in terms of spiritual, interpretation and esoteric interpretation of the Quran, like any other text, it is possible; at the same time, the issue of distortion in the Testaments refers to a further issue, given the human manipulation of sacred texts and the type of access to sacred texts. Accordingly, in the Testaments, forgery must be considered, and the issue is raised beyond distortion. The signs is that the original Torah and the Bible were manipulated by humans and throughout human life.

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Introduction

After the revelation of the Holy Quran, which included the teachings and generalities of guidance and the Shari'a, as well as the Bi'thah of the Holy Prophet of Islam who called people to that Shari'a, and caused the expansion of religious teachings, which gradually went beyond the Islamic and international borders. In the meantime, and due to the extent of last religion, one of the ways to confront the religion of Islam, called distortion (Tahrif), was proposed.

In this research, an attempt is made to answer this general question, which: Has the Holy Quran, which was presented to humanity by the Prophet Muhammad and performing its instructions has been considered the guarantor of the happiness and prosperity of all human beings in this world and the

hereafter, has been distorted like the Testaments throughout the history of human life?

Accordingly, in this study, first the distortion or immunity of the Holy Quran in the original Islamic sources is examined; this issue is then addressed in the Testament-the Jewish and Christian Bible.

Theoretical Foundations of Research

1. Lexicography of Distortion

The word distortion i.e. distortion is derived from the root "harf" meaning the side, corner and around of something. (*Ibn Faris, 1984, Vol. 2: 42*) In general, distortion is to incline, to take aside, to move away from one's position and to change (*Ibid: 43*) and in other words, to deviate and incline it in another direction. (*Mustafawi, 2009, Vol. 2: 199*)

According to a definition in this regard, the distortion is taken from “Taharruf” and “Ihtarafa”, which means deviated from it. Thus, distortion of the thing means restoring the shape and form of something; as in distortion of the pen, the meaning of shaving and deforming the pen is meant. (*Raghib Isfahani, 1992: 229*)

On the other hand, the “Muharruf” pen means a pen that is shaved in this way and has a crooked cross section; (*Khorramshahi, 1992: 86*) but distortion of the word means to put the word on a possible meaning; while it has two aspects and two meanings; (*Raghib Isfahani: 1992: 229*); in other words, put it in a corner of probability; so that it can be carried in two ways, which is to bear the explicit word; that is, after the meaning of that word was known, he

diverted it from its explicit meaning. (*Qurashi, 1992, Vol. 2: 121*)

The Holy Quran says:

“Do you then hope that they would believe in you, and a party from among them indeed used to hear the Word of Allah, then altered it after they had understood it, and they know (this)”
(*Al-Baqarah: 75*)

A group of them (the Jews) hear the word of God; then, after knowing and reasoning, they distort it from its rightful position. In other words, distortion in such cases is a change of meaning or interpretation of speech in a non-real meaning; but the place of speech is verbal or spiritual, in the sense that sometimes it is possible to change the concept and

meaning by changing the word or moving it; as Tabarsi writes about the following verse: Those who change words from their context... (Ref: *An-Nisa: 46*)

They interpret it on a concept other than what has been revealed, and change the attribute of the Prophet; therefore, the distorter distorted it in two ways:

- with incorrect interpretation
- with change and transformation. (*Tabarsi, 1993, Vol. 2: 121*)

Accordingly, word distortion or speech distortion means changing the meaning by using addition and reduction, changing and shifting the appearance of words or changing the meaning by misinterpretation. (*Javadi-Amoli, 2005: 17*)

In general, distortion can be examined in two terms: lexical and idiomatic; Also, the term distortion

includes verbal and spiritual distortion, (*Ma'refat, 2007: 11-14*) which is explained below.

2. Typology of Distortion

In a general division, distortion can be divided into the following two types:

A. Verbal Distortion

This distortion means interfering with the structure of the words and phrases of the Holy Quran, which Allameh Tabatabai considers as changing the position of the words, meaning the beginning and ending or deleting and adding the word. (*Tabatabai, 1997, Vol. 4: 364*)

The author of "Tafsir al-Manar" writes in a similar definition: The meaning of word distortion is to precede and end a word or to change one word into another word, or to hide it, or to increase or decrease the word. (*Rashid Rida, 1994, Vol. 6: 282*)

➤ **Types of Verbal Distortion**

There are different types of word distortion, one of which is as follows:

- Distortion of arabization or Harakat
- Distortion in words
- Distortion in verses
- Distortion through adding
- Distortion through deleting.
(*Khoei, 2009: 255*)

Also, according to another classification, the following types are expressed for verbal distortion:

- Local distortion
- Distortion in Quran recitation
- Distortion in the way words are pronounced
- Distortion with the word conversion
- Distortion through adding
- Distortion through deleting.
(*Ma'refat, 2007: 11-14*)

In general, in verbal distortion and its types, the

focus is on “distortion through deleting” (*Ibid, 2009, Vol. 1: 312*) and distortion through adding; of course, no one denies the possibility of adding letters or changing some of the movements in the Quran.

Also, there is a difference in the way of reciting some verses to the extent that the recitations have reached seven or ten types; (*Khorramshahi, 1992: 86*) but such a situation does not mean harming the immunity of the Holy Quran; however, a group of Akhbari narrators, the Shiite sect, such as the Muhaddith Noori, as well as a Sunni sect called “Hashwiyah”¹, consider this kind of distortion to be a real thing. (*Ibid: 88*)

1. This sect, which is one of the Sunni extremist groups, considers the intellect invalid and heresy. (*Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, 1984, Vol. 6: 374*) They turned to fabricate hadiths for supporting their false beliefs, and then considered such hadiths a means to reach their goal. (*Shooshtari, 1988: 109*)

Regarding distortion through adding, none of the Muslims, both Shiites and Sunnis don't believe in adding to the words or verses of the Holy Quran. *(Jafarian, 2011: 11)*

Of course, the addition of a word or words other than the Quran existed before the unification of the Masahif among the Masahif of the Ashab; but after the monotheism and unification of the Masahif and also the compilation of the Quran as it was popular among Muslims, this issue has not been raised. *(Khoei, 2009: 199)*

It is necessary to state that the Hashwiyah believe in distortion through adding; as narrated from Ibn Masud Sahabi, that Surah Al-Fatihah and Mu'awwazatayn are not part of the Quran and are not included in his special Mushaf, or Ajarida (a group of Khawarij) believe that

Surah Yusuf is not part of the Quran and it is not permissible for them to say such a love story is a part of divine revelation. *(Ma'refat, 2007: 22)*

Such a thing is while if one claims that in the current Mus'haf, non-Quranic passages and man-made words have been found and are hidden among its main verses and surahs, it means that man has been able to make a speech similar to the Holy Quran, which is indistinguishable from other verses in terms of structure and content; as a result, the challenge of the Quran has been collapsed and its miracle cannot be understood.

Therefore, in view of such a limitation, someone who is familiar with the principles and teachings of the Quran, does not consider the possibility of the literal

distortion of the Quran through adding some words or letters reasonable and does not accept it. (*Javadi Amoli, 2019: 20*)

B. Spiritual Distortion

This type of distortion means interpreting the opinion in an unreasonable way, or improper interpretation of the verses of the Quran in accordance with different views and opinions, which has occurred in the history of interpretation of the Quran by most theological and even jurisprudential schools. (*Khorramshahi, 1992: 86*)

In this type of distortion, it is tried to misinterpret the main concept and the intended purpose of the speaker and deviate it from the correct path and towards a concept that is on the margins of the main meaning. (*Khoei, 2009: 215*)

This kind of distortion that has taken place about the

Holy Quran is reflected in the Quran itself about the past book and has also been announced in the “Nahj al-Balaghah” of its occurrence in the time of Imam Ali and the future (*Al-Baqarah: 2; An-Nisa: 46*) and (*Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon 17*).

➤ Signs of Spiritual Distortion

Among the evidences that can be considered for the occurrence of spiritual distortion in the Holy Quran are the following:

- The repeated warning of the Holy Prophet about the danger of interpreting upon ones opinion; including the following famous narration:

“Whoever interprets the Quran according to his own opinion, has

*prepared himself
for the fire”.*

*(Saduq, 2006,
Vol. 2: 198)*

- The order of Imam Ali to Ibn Abbas Sahabi; when Imam sent him to talk to the Khawarij, told him:

“Do not argue with them by the Quran; because the Quran has different aspects. You say something and they say something else, in response and it cannot be concluded; but argue with them through tradition, since they will no longer escape the tradition-due to its intercession and frankness”.
(Nahj al-Balaghah, Letter 77)

- The frequency of claimants of interpretation based on the sensual desires of its commentators; also, Imam Baqir blamed Qatadah (one of the general commentators and one of the followers) for adopting the same method. *(Kuleini, 1986, Vol. 8: 485)*
- The difference of Muslims into seventy-three sects; most of these sects consider the base their beliefs on the verses of the Quran.

The result is that the interpretation upon ones opinion, in spite of its condemnation and its losses, cannot damage the credibility of the Quran; because it is considered something outside the identity of the Quran; therefore, the writers of the holy Quran are always ready to protect its supreme and vital knowledge. *(Javadi Amoli, 2019: 18-19)*

Evidences of the Immunity of the Holy Quran from Distortion

1. Reasons for the Holy Quran

Among the verses that explicitly indicate the soundness of the Holy Quran and its immunity throughout the history of human life from the past to the end of history, the following verses can be mentioned:

A. Verse of Protection

“Surely We have revealed the Reminder and We will most surely be its guardian”. (Al-Hejr: 9)

In this verse, God Almighty has spoken of His protection and has declared it with sentences that are full of emphasis.

This verse, which has been emphasized by our connected pronouns of Wi, the emphasis L, the repetition of “Inna”, the Khabar Ismiyyah and the precedence of the subject to

the object, in order to reject the denial and mockery of the opponents protects the expression of the truth and stability of the Quran in various forms and aspects from distortion, conversion, excess and loss.

In other words, the demons of jinn and humans cannot add any falsehood to it or diminish anything from truth; (*Hosseini Shah Abdul-Azimi, 1984, Vol. 7: 86; Fayz Kashani, 1995, Vol. 3: 102*) because in another verse, God Almighty says:

“Falsehood shall not come to it from before it nor from behind it; a revelation from the Wise, the Praised One”. (Fussilat: 42)

On the other hand, the word “dhikr” means the Holy Quran; because in the Quran, truth and falsehood, happiness and cruelty, good and evil, obligatory and forbidden, the world and the

hereafter and everything that needs to be mentioned are mentioned; in a way that human beings have been reminded of.

One of the evidences of this claim is a part of one of the Quranic verses, which says:

“And on the day when We will raise up in every people a witness against them from among themselves, and bring you as a witness against these-- and We have revealed the Book to you explaining clearly everything, and a guidance and mercy and good news for those who submit”. (An-Nahl: 89)

Since God in this verse, has not placed any restrictions on the preservation of the Quran, it becomes clear that the divine holy essence is the guardian of the Quran in every way; also, since God is an infinite deity;

therefore, the preservation of the Quran -in every way- will be endless. (*Najafi Khomeini, 2000, Vol. 9: 27*)

B. Verse of Null Denying

*“Surely those who disbelieve in the reminder when it comes to them, and most surely it is a Mighty Book * Falsehood shall not come to it from before it nor from behind it; a revelation from the Wise, the Praised One”. (Fussilat: 41-42)*

This verse, like the previous verse, states the argument for the non-distortion of the Holy Quran. In this verse, the word “book” is the same as the Quran, which is described by three descriptions: “Aziz”, “no false in it” and “revealed from a Wise God”. Accordingly, the first two descriptions, each as

follows point to the non-distortion of the Quran independently, because the word “Aziz” means invincible and impenetrable; while distortion is a kind of failure and permeability.

Also, the word false meaning the opposite of right, refers to something that is not stable and is prone to corruption and destruction; therefore, God says: “*There is no false in the Quran*”; Therefore, it denies any change in the Quran.

The third description also indicates that the Holy Quran cannot be distorted and changed; for it is sent down from God, the Wise and the Praised; whose deeds are purposeful; therefore, if the Quran is distorted, it is inconsistent with Wisdom of God. (*Najarzagadean, 2015: 24*)

C. Verse of Observation

*“The Knower of the unseen! so He does not reveal His secrets to any
* Except to him whom He chooses as a messenger; for surely He makes a guard to march before him and after him
* So that He may know that they have truly delivered the messages of their Lord, and He encompasses what is with them and He records the number of all things”.* (*Al-Jinn: 26-28*)

This verse, like the previous verse, states the argument for the non-distortion of the Holy Quran. The phrase “*for surely He makes a guard to march before him and after him*” indicates that the divine revelation from the moment it is issued from the source of revelation until it reaches the people and also through its

revelation until the recipient of the revelation, it is safe from any theft and change; but its immunity from the time of issuance until it reaches the Messenger of God, if there is no reason other than the phrase “*before him*”, this sentence is enough.

Also the reason for the immunity of divine revelation when receiving it from the angel of revelation is so that he knows him and does not err in receiving revelation, and also his immunity in preserving divine revelation is in such a way that He preserves it as it was revealed and its immunity in conveying to the people is immune from any kind of seizure due to the phrase “*So that He may know that they have truly delivered the messages of their Lord*”. (Tabatabai, 1997, Vol. 20: 57)

Therefore, the Holy Quran is under divine supervision and care from the stage of perception to the stage of communicating to all people

in all ages; therefore, the possibility of distortion in the Quran requires that this care has been done incompletely or outside of divine knowledge. It is impossible to assume such things about God the Wise. (Javadi Amoli, 2019: 73)

As a result, the Holy Quran has been under divine supervision and care from the stage of receiving it until it was communicated to the people by the Prophet throughout the mission of the divine prophets, and its immunity is guaranteed by God.

D. Verse of the Impossibility of Turning off the Divine Light

“They desire to put out the light of Allah with their mouths but Allah will perfect His light, though the unbelievers may be averse”. (As-Saff: 8)

This verse can be considered to prove the sanctity of the Holy

Quran from distortion; because God Almighty has introduced the Quran as “Light”. (*Ref: Al-Ma'idah: 15*)

On the other hand, the meaning of the verse indicates the will of the malevolent towards the Holy Quran, which is one of the most prominent examples of the will of the malefactors about light of Quran is destroying the Quran, which has been pursued in various ways.

At the same time, the Quran is the light that will illuminate the world transformed into another world even after the sun goes down; because the Hereafter, like the world, is clear with the truth of the Quran.

So this verse, on the one hand states that the enemies of the Quran have sought to distort the Quran with the desire to increase or decrease it, and on the other hand, it

proves that the demands arising from their desire will never be fulfilled; because God will protect his light the Holy Quran. (*Javadi Amoli, 2019: 7-69*)

2. Reasons for Hadiths

Regarding the non-distortion of the Holy Quran throughout the history of human life from the past to the end of history, we can refer to several hadiths from the Prophet and the Ahl al-Bayt, some of the most important of which are stated below:

A. Hadith “al-Thaqalayn”

The Holy Prophet of Islam says in a famous narration:

“I have left to precious things among you. If you hold them firmly, you will never be misled. They are the Book of Allah and my Family, Ahl al-Bayt. They do not separate

*from each other until they will come to me on the Hawd (of Paradise)”.
(Saduq, 1979, Vol. 1: 68)*

According to this noble hadith, adherence to the Quran and Ahl al-Bayt is considered obligatory; therefore, if the Quran is distorted, it is not possible to be sure that the Quran is a guide.

Allameh Tabatabai writes how to prove that this hadith has not been distorted: “Many news have been narrated from the Prophet, who refer to the Quran during seditions and problems, as well as the hadith of “al-Thaqalayn”, which has reached us through Shiites and Sunnis in succession; these two categories of news are the reason for the non-distortion of the Quran, because the matter of relying on a distorted book and denying misguidance to those

who cling to it are not compatible with each other.
(Tabatabai, 1997, Vol. 12: 107)

Ayatollah Javadi Amoli, in emphasizing this theme and in the context of the points that can be deduced from this hadith, believe:

- The Quran is Thiqal Akbar and this shows the high and important position of the Quran among the Islamic Ummah.
- Considering that the address of this hadith covers the entire Islamic Ummah until the Day of Judgment, it is a proof of the legitimacy and eternal health of the Quran; because a distorted book cannot be cited.
- Accompanying the Quran with Ahl al-Bayt until the Day of Resurrection and not separating them from each other

until they enter the Prophet in the pool of Kuthar means that the Quran retains its originality and legitimacy, and despite such a feature, there is no room for the possibility of distortion in it. (*Javadi Amoli, 2019: 98-99*)

Therefore, this hadith is a complete and conclusive proof on non-distortion of the Quran; as he proves, if the Quran is distorted, not only will the Quran be invalidated, but also the narrations of the Ahl al-Bayt cannot be relied upon; because according to this hadith, the Quran and Ahl al-Bayt are two related arguments, whose fall from the authority invalidates the other. (*Javan Arasteh, 2018: 320*)

B. Hadiths in Accordance with the Holy Quran

Other reasons for the soundness of the Quran and its non-distortion are the narrations that have introduced the Holy Quran as a measure of the validity of hadiths, to the extent that what is not in harmony with the Quran has been rejected. In this regard, the Holy Prophet of Islam says:

There is a truth for attaining any right that reveals that right, and to realize every right and truth, there is a light that guides it; so choose any hadiths that agrees with the Quran, and leave whatever disagrees with it. (*Kuleini, 1986, Vol. 1: 9*)

Accordingly, the extent and criterion of the accuracy and inaccuracy of narrations and hadiths is to agree with the Holy Quran; therefore, if the Quran has been distorted, it

cannot be the criterion and measure of the correctness and invalidity of narrations and hadiths; for the appearances of the Quran can be considered as evidence when, first, it is proved the verse, which is considered as a scale, belongs to Quran, and there is no possibility that the verse is other than God; Secondly, there is no possibility of deleting and abrogating the verses that are involved in the meaning and significance of the verses.

Therefore, such narrations indicates that according to the Infallible Imams, the Quran in the hands of Muslims is the same Quran that was revealed to the Messenger of God and no distortion has been made in it; otherwise, it could not be a reference for distinguishing between true and false narrations for Muslims. *(Taheri Khorramabadi, 2008: 129-130)*

In addition, doing so means invoking “no authority”, which is rationally ugly. *(Javadi Amoli, 2019: 102)*

C. Hadiths Denying Distortion

Many narrations have been narrated from the infallible Imams that have approved the soundness of the Quran from distortion, either emphatically or implicitly; among the following narrations narrated by Ali ibn Salem from his father that in response to his question about the Holy Quran, Imam Sadiq said:

“Lo! those who disbelieve in the Reminder when it cometh unto them (are guilty), for lo! it is an unassailable Scripture. falsehood cannot approach it, at present or in future, a [revelation gradually] sent down from One

all-wise, all-laudable”.
(Saduq, 1357: 224)

The question seems to be a doubt that has been raised in terms of increase and decrease in the Holy Quran; therefore, the answer of the Imam denies any change or distortion in the word of God. *(Taheri Khorramabadi, 2008: 135)*

3. Reasons for Historical

The concern of the Holy Prophet to preserve and record the Holy Quran is a historical fact; because when he received the revelation, he repeated the verses out of eagerness to learn them, and immediately after receiving the revelation, he called the scribes of the revelation and the revealed verses were written by them, and more than thirty of these scribes have been mentioned in historical documents.

In addition to encouraging Muslims to write the Holy Quran, the Prophet also encouraged them to memorize the Quran, and the issuance of dozens of narrations and the existence of hundreds of memorizers of the Quran during his lifetime and even after his death proves this claim.

It is also necessary to state that the interpretation and explanation of the verses has been one of the other efforts of the Prophet in preserving and protecting the Holy Quran.

On the other hand, in addition to the efforts of the Holy Prophet of Islam to memorize and record the Holy Quran, the deep efforts of Imam Ali in learning the interpretation of the revelation of the verses and the efforts of the Companions to preserve and sanctify this divine book, is remarkable. *(Javadi Amoli, 2019: 119-120)*

4. Reasons for Rational

The human intellect clearly states that the possibility of any change and transformation is far from the sacred realm of the Holy Quran; because it is a book that has been taken care of by a great and cultured nation since the first day, and it has always been considered sacred, and finally, it has been carefully and respectfully honored, and it has not been distorted.

On the other hand, the Holy Quran is the first reference of Muslims in all aspects of life from religious issues to political and social activities. (*Ma'refat, 2007: 125*)

This assumption is also accepted by all believers, that God Almighty created all beings, including man, for a wise purpose to achieve perfection.

Also, human perfection is realized in the light of free will and consciousness, and the scientific and internal capital of human existence is not enough to achieve that ultimate goal; therefore, it needs a special guide called revelation; in such a way that if this path of knowledge is not opened before man, the divine purpose will not be realized and this is against the wisdom of God.

Therefore, God Almighty, in order to achieve the purpose of creation in the context of human life, has always sent special guides with a set of insights and behavioral knowledge so that humanity can reach a level of readiness and intellectual maturity, who can accept the complete guidance plan and general plan of his life.

On the other hand, based on the completion of the

Shari'a and the cessation of revelation and the finality of prophecy, and given that the religion of Islam is the culmination of the Abrahamic religions and there will be no prophet or book after that, we are committed to the non-distortion of the Quran, which is the essence of the divine message; because the requirement of divine grace and wisdom in human destiny is that the last divine book of guidance will be protected from distortions, just as the reason for sending revelation is appropriate to maintain it. (*Saeedi Roshan, 2000: 201*)

The result is:

- God the Wise has sent the Quran to guide mankind.
- This book is the last heavenly book and its bringer is the last messenger of God.
- The Quran provides humans with a complete

plan of guidance and the general plan of human life, and its distortion causes humanity to go astray.

- This misguidance is incompatible with the divine essence of God and is contrary to the divine wisdom in guiding mankind; therefore, the non-distortion of the Quran is proved with the help of rational reasons. (*Shamkhi, 2011*)

5. Reason for Repetition

Another reason for the immunity of the Holy Quran from distortion is its repetition from previous generations to the present day.

In general, Muslims agree that the current Quran is a definite revelation and has been passed down from previous generations to the next generations, and this transmission has been done in

various forms, including memorizing the Quran, its continuous recitation, and writing.

Based on this repetition, Muslims believe that the current Mushaf has reached them from the time of the Holy Prophet until today, and despite such a repetition, there is no room for suspicion of distortion; (*Javadi Amoli, 2019: 106*) because the Quran is consistent in every word and letter.

Therefore, what is said in the context of distortion that such a word or sentence has been changed in the Quran, because it is not acceptable by narratives mentioned in this regard and is also contrary to the principle of the necessity of the repetition of the Quran, so it is rejected; (*Ma'refat, 2002: 449*) as many Shiite and Sunni scholars have accepted such a view on the text of the Holy Quran. (*Khoei, 2009: 123*)

6. Reason for the Miracle (I'jaz)

The miracle of the Quran has various dimensions, one of which, and perhaps the most important, is eloquence and rhetoric, which depend entirely on the word and its meaning.

On the other hand, the Holy Quran has challenged for its miracle and called the opponents to confront, [*Ref: An-Nisa: 82; Al-Isra: 88; Hud: 13and42; Yunus: 38*] that this group of verses with determination, confirms the revelation and transcendence of the appearance, interior, word and meaning of the Quran from human understanding. (*Javan Arasteh, 2018: 135*)

For this reason, this miracle contradicts any distortion; because distortion destroys the meanings of the Quran and disrupts the miraculous aspect of eloquence and rhetoric based on meanings and words; therefore, the

miracle of the Quran, for which it has been challenged, is correct as long as it preserves its totality and integrity. (*Ma'refat*, 2002: 116)

The result is that, given the current eloquence and rhetoric and the novel order of the Holy Quran, the possibility of any distortion is ruled out; because in this case, it loses its rhetorical and verbal miracle, which has always been considered by Muslim scholars. (*Ma'refat*, 2002: 450-453)

Distortion in the Testaments

Before examining, in order to be better acquainted with the Old and New Testaments, it is necessary to refer to an analytical explanation of the Testaments; because what is available are books that were written in later times and some of the teachings of the prophets are included in its contents. (*Ibid*: 351)

1. Distortion in the Old Testament

The Old Testament is a collection of 39 books, which are thematically divided into the following three sections:

- Historical section: Contains 17 books, the first five of which are called the Torah or Pentateuch.
- Wisdom, Prayers and Poetry Section: Contains 5 books.
- The section of the prophecies of the prophets: includes 17 books. (*Tawfiqi*, 2019: 50)

The history of writing these works dates back to the tenth century to the end of the second century BC, which was almost five centuries after the death of Prophet Moses. (*Ma'refat*, 2007: 382)

Accordingly, the Old Testament collection has been written over nine centuries

based on popular anecdotes; also, the foundation of the five journeys attributed to Prophet Moses was compiled around the tenth century BC, then in later times some theology and traditions of the priests were added to it, and of course the compilation of books has continued for centuries. (*Bucaille, 1978: 25-28*)

On the other hand, in ancient times, people believed that Prophet Moses wrote the Torah; but new biblical studies show that the question of the origin of the Torah's journey is more difficult than initially thought; because the Torah has been created for generations; in other words, at first there were narrations, which the Jewish people transmitted orally to each other, then these narrations were written in several collections, some of which were about history and some about the rulings.

Finally, in the fifth century BC, these collections were compiled into one book; however, there were many people who participated in this long and complex work and most of them have been forgotten by history. (*Shamkhi, 2011*)

In general, biblical scholars cite four basic sources for the Torah:

- Elohim
- Yahweh
- Kohen
- Book of Deuteronomy

This indicates that the present five passages of the Torah have been combined and written from four different sources at very distant times. (*Michelle, 2017: 32*)

Also one of the most famous critiques of the Torah, which proves that the author of the Torah is not a divine prophet, is put forward by Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), the Dutch

rationalist philosopher, who in his book the Theological-Political Treatise doubts about the evidence that the Torah is attributed to Prophet Moses; since he believes that the writing of the Torah must be years after Moses. (*Tawfiqi, 2019: 82*)

Therefore:

- The present Torah is not the book of Moses.
- This book was written in Canaan or Jerusalem, not in the time of Moses, when the Israelites dwelt in the wilderness.
- This book was written after the reign of David and before the prophecy of Ezekiel; that is, it was done about 500 years after the death of Moses. (*Zibaeinejad, 2017: 127*)

It is necessary to state that the content of the Old Testament is of the same

quality in the eyes of Muslim scholars; as Allameh Tabatabai writes in a general summary:

This Torah, which is valid among the Jews today, its document is not related to the time of Moses and its document was cut off in 50 years and leads to only one person and he is Ezra, whose character is unknown to us in the first place.

Secondly, we do not know what the quality of his information, accuracy and contemplation was, thirdly, how reliable he was in quoting it, and fourthly, where he got what he collected in the name of Asfār Torah, and what document he relied on to correct its mistakes. (*Tabatabai, 1997: 3 and 485*)

2. Distortion in the New Testament

A collection of New Testament books consisting of 27 books, which are thematically divided into the following four sections:

- The Gospels consists of the four Gospels: Gospel of Matthew, Gospel of Mark, Gospel of Luke and Gospel of John, written by the Apostles (companions and followers) of Jesus, in which they wrote the journey and words of the Prophet Jesus.
- Acts of the Apostles: Luke is the author of the third Gospel, which is written in the biography of the apostles, especially Paul the Apostle.
- Letters of the Apostles: Contains a large number of epistles or letters, many of which were

written by Paul to the early Christian groups.

- Kashf: This book promises the progress of Christianity, which is why it is so important to Christians; in other words, John, who according to Christians was a young apostle, describes his old age dream in this work. *(Tawfiqi, 2019: 115-125)*

Christian scholars generally agree that the purpose of these four writers was not to preserve the true life history of Jesus, but rather to propagate their religious beliefs; so they articulated what they found and gave themselves the right to change the content to suit their purpose; for this reason, the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke have changed much of what they have taken

from the Gospel of Mark, even the words of Christ. Therefore, this causes the Gospels to be considered unreliable in relation to the reports they give. (*Lufmark, 2006: 70*)

3. Summary of Distortions in the Testaments

From what has been passed down through history as the history of the Testament, it is concluded that the main source of the Testament has not been survived, and what is available is a subset of it, which is the translations and part of the religious teachings, which is included in the narration of historical events; therefore, it is not possible to accept that the nature of these works are heavenly and divine, but they are distorted and transformed by humans.

The Approach of the Holy Quran to the Issue of Distortion in the Testaments

Distortion means change, which according to Muslim scholars has taken place in the Testaments, and the authoritative proof of this claim is the verses of the Holy Quran, some of which are mentioned here:

- *“Do you then hope that they would believe in you, and a party from among them indeed used to hear the Word of Allah, then altered it after they had understood it, and they know (this)”*
(*Al-Baqarah: 75*)
- *“Woe, then, to those who write the book with their hands and then say: This is from Allah, so that they may take for it a small price; therefore woe to them*

for what their hands have written and woe to them for what they earn". (Al-Baqarah: 79)

- *"Most surely there is a party amongst those who distort the Book with their tongue that you may consider it to be (a part) of the Book, and they say, It is from Allah, while it is not from Allah, and they tell a lie against Allah whilst they know". (Al-Imran: 78)*
- *"Of those who are Jews (there are those who) alter words from their places and say: We have heard and we disobey and: Hear, may you not be made to hear! and: Raina, distorting (the word) with their tongues and taunting about religion; and if they had said*

(instead): We have heard and we obey, and hearken, and unzurra it would have been better for them and more upright; but Allah has cursed them on account of their unbelief, so they do not believe but a little". (An-Nisa: 46)

- *"But on account of their breaking their covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hard; they altered the words from their places and they neglected a portion of what they were reminded of; and you shall always discover treachery in them excepting a few of them; so pardon them and turn away; surely Allah loves those who do good (to others)". (Al-Ma'idah: 13)*

➤ *“O Messenger! let not those grieve you who strive together in hastening to unbelief from among those who say with their mouths: We believe, and their hearts do not believe, and from among those who are Jews; they are listeners for the sake of a lie, listeners for another people who have not come to you; they alter the words from their places, saying: If you are given this, take it, and if you are not given this, be cautious; and as for him whose temptation Allah desires, you cannot control anything for him with Allah. Those are they for whom Allah does not desire that He should purify their*

hearts; they shall have disgrace in this world, and they shall have a grievous chastisement in the hereafter”.
(Al-Ma'idah: 41)

After observing this group of verses, each of which, of course, in order to be understood more and better, needs to refer to the following interpretations, the following general results are obtained:

- Spiritual distortion has been found in both heavenly books-the Torah and the Bible.
- The Holy Quran accuses the Israelites of distortion in six verses.
- From verse 41 of Surah Mā'idah and with the help of the narrations that caused the revelation, it can be concluded that the Jewish people have distorted the word

of the Torah. (*Faryab, 2009: 139-148*)

Conclusion

Distortion in the view of religions and throughout the history of human life, is a multifaceted category that needs to be studied with regard to these dimensions; also in the religion of Islam and according to rational and narrative arguments, there is no possibility of verbal distortion in the Holy Quran; but spiritual distortion is possible through interpretation.

On the other hand, according to the historical documents and sound evidence of Western scholars, the Old Testament and the existing New Testament were not written by the divine prophets, the occurrence of change is a proven issue, which shows that what the Bible says in the Western world (Judaism and

Christianity) is far from the Torah and the original Bible sent to the two divine prophets; therefore, instead of distortion of the Testaments, given their humanity, they can be considered forged in comparison with the true Torah and Bible.

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