

THE  
ABROGATION  
ISSUE

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# THE ABROGATION ISSUE

## قضية النسخ

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

*In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful*



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# Preface

This book addresses the question of abrogation of verses in the Quran, a subject that has had its share of controversy. We approach the subject from a Muslim perspective, and we try to analyze all evidence objectively.

We are focused on one question only: *Are there abrogated verses in the Quranic script?* Such verses would be no longer binding for Muslims according to the definition of abrogation. The book is not concerned with other types of abrogation, where what is abrogated is not a verse in the Quranic script.

The book is organized into 12 chapters grouped in three parts. Part I has three chapters explaining the fundamentals of abrogation. Part II has five chapters discussing the various claims of abrogation of specific verses in the Quran. Part III has four chapters debating the principle of abrogated Quranic verses and analyzing its origins.

In addition, the book has extensive attachments. These include the list of all 432 claims of abrogation of Quranic verses in the literature that we surveyed. They also include the full text of all 83 authenticated narrations in that literature that are related to claims of abrogation of particular verses. A time line of pertinent scholars since the dawn of Islam until the present time is also included.

The intended readership for this book is broad, ranging from scholars to non-specialists who are interested in the subject. Because of this, we explain things from scratch that may be obvious to scholars. Non-specialists may find some parts of the book to be more studious (Chapter 9 for example), and may opt to navigate those parts in a more cursory fashion.

In researching the subject, we examined numerous books by bona fide Islamic scholars as well as other references. Their topics spanned abrogation, exegesis of the Quran, narrations and authentication, Islamic jurisprudence, Islamic history, other Islamic studies, and social science.

In the References section, we list the items that we cited (more than 200 references cited over 1500 times throughout the book). In the electronic copy of the book, we link each citation to the actual reference pages that were cited

so that the reader can verify the accuracy and the context of the citation. We also link each item in the References section to an image of its cover page. Readers of the printed book can access these resources in two online files ([aabedan.org](http://aabedan.org)).

We wrote the book in two corresponding versions, one in Arabic and one in English. Both versions have original writings; neither is just a translation of the other.

On a personal note, both co-authors of this book choose to remain anonymous. We respectfully ask everyone to honor our request for privacy, and we hope that the book will be judged on its own merits. We are grateful to those who helped us and to the reviewers of the draft manuscript for the time and effort they have selflessly put in to improve the book.

*Aabedan* (Two Worshipers)  
[pseudonym of the co-authors]

*Mecca - February 2025*



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- Side notes (large numbers appearing in the margin) refer to detailed comments that are included in Appendix [A.1](#) on page [311](#).

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## Part I

# The Fundamentals

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WE start with the fundamentals of what abrogation is and the role it plays in inferring the rulings of the Quran. We then set the stage for debating the evidence for and against abrogation, and outline the methodology that will be followed in the rest of the book.



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# Chapter 1

## What Is Abrogation?

Abrogation, a common translation of the Arabic word *naskh* (نَسَخ), is a significant issue in Islamic jurisprudence. To the uninitiated, abrogation may be an unknown or vague concept of little practical consequence. However, it is in fact of enormous consequence, both theologically and practically. In this chapter, we introduce the definition and background of abrogation before we delve into the full analysis of this notion in the rest of the book.

### 1.1 Example

What does abrogation of a verse in the Quran mean? Let us start with an example. The Quran states in verse 2:256 that “There is no compulsion in religion ...” [البقرة: ٢٥٦] ﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ...﴾. Some scholars contend that this has been abrogated. This would mean that “no compulsion in religion” is no longer a ruling that Muslims need to follow, notwithstanding the fact that the verse remains part of the Quran.

1

It is important to realize what abrogation actually entails. It does not mean that the abrogated ruling needs to be reconciled with other rulings that may also apply. Nor does it mean that this ruling should be adapted to the circumstances of a given situation. It means that this ruling has been totally *annulled*. It is not to be taken into consideration at all, regardless of the situation at hand.

Notice that we are not discussing the validity of this particular abrogation example. We are only explaining what it means for a ruling to be abrogated. In fact, the majority of scholars believe that this ruling is not abrogated. However, a notable minority believes that it is.

Clearly, scholars who disagree about whether a ruling is abrogated may reach vastly different conclusions in matters where this ruling would be applicable, since they would be basing their conclusions on different sets of rules. In this particular example, it is easy to see how reaching one conclusion versus another can have serious consequences in practice.

One may react to an abrogation claim with which one disagrees by rejecting the notion of abrogation altogether. However, these are two different, albeit related premises. It is possible that the notion of abrogation is valid, but a particular abrogation claim is not. Hence, there are two distinct questions to ask.

First, is the abrogation of some verses in the Quran a valid notion? If so, is a particular claim that a verse is abrogated a valid claim? The second question, applied to various claims, is the subject of Part II in this book. This sets the stage for discussing the first question in Part III. Why are we addressing the two questions in reverse order? This will become clear when we present our methodology in Chapter 3.

## 1.2 Origin of the Word

The Arabic word *naskh*<sup>1</sup> which is translated to ‘abrogation’ is explicitly mentioned in the Quran:

﴿ مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴾ [البقرة: ١٠٦]

[2:106] Whatever verse We may **abrogate** or cause to be forgotten, We bring better than it or similar to it. Did you not know that God is quite capable of everything?

This Quranic verse, which we will refer to as *the abrogation verse*, is where the concept of abrogation originated in Islamic jurisprudence, and where it got its keyword *naskh*. The above translation of the abrogation verse reflects the most common understanding of what the verse states.

Linguistically, the word *naskh* in Arabic has alternative meanings.<sup>2</sup> Some scholars have appealed to those alternative meanings as they interpreted the verse differently. There are other verses in the Quran that address the general notion of abrogation, but the above verse is the original source of the word.

<sup>1</sup>Words that are transliterated from Arabic, such as *naskh*, bear their Arabic meaning and will be written in italic font. Other Arabic words adopted in English dictionaries will be treated as English words.

<sup>2</sup>The word *aaya* (آية), which translates to ‘verse’, also has alternative meanings that will be discussed in detail in §9.3.

In addition to the different linguistic meanings of the word *naskh*, other technical meanings became associated with *naskh* as a theological term. The fellows<sup>3</sup> of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)<sup>4</sup> used the word *naskh* to refer to a ruling that *qualifies* another ruling, rather than abrogate it altogether, which is linguistically valid.

For instance, Ibn Abbas (RA)<sup>5</sup> used the word to mean that a ruling has made exceptions to, modifications of, or restrictions on another ruling. A case in point is when he commented on a passage in the Quran (verses 26:224-227) that warns against following the whims of poets as they wander in every direction and say what they do not do. God then makes an exception from that, citing those who are righteous believers. Ibn Abbas (RA) characterized this by saying “*then He abrogated from that and made an exception*” (فَنَسَخَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَاسْتَثْنَى) using the Arabic word *naskh* for abrogation (Al-Bukhari [37]).

It is clear that nothing in this passage was annulled that would justify using the term ‘abrogation’ in its technical meaning. Indeed, just the expression “*abrogated from that*”, which Ibn Abbas (RA) chose, shows that he sometimes used the term *naskh* to mean making an exception from something general.

The broad meaning of the word *naskh* was adopted by early Islamic scholars, most notably by the Abu-Hanifa school of thought (Zeid [206]). This created *semantic ambiguity* about what the key figures in the abrogation literature had meant when they used the word *naskh*. As we will see in Part II, this semantic ambiguity plays no small role in the ensuing controversy about whether a Quranic verse claimed abrogated actually is.

## 1.3 The Abrogation Doctrine

The subject of abrogation has a long history. Many dedicated books have been written about it, as can be seen in the bibliography on page 459. The subject is not restricted to abrogation of verses in the Quran, which is the focus of this book, nor has the notion always meant annulment of what is being ‘abrogated’.

In fact, abrogation (or more precisely, *naskh*) has at times been used as an umbrella device in the reconciliation of religious sources. In this book, we are addressing one specific tenet of abrogation, which also happens to be the most prevalent in the abrogation literature. We start here by encapsulating what that specific tenet is and refer to it as *the Abrogation Doctrine*<sup>6</sup> to distinguish it from other forms of abrogation.

<sup>3</sup>The fellows (الصَّحَابَة) are close contemporaries of the Prophet (PBUH).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>The acronym PBUH stands for ‘Peace be upon him’.

<sup>5</sup>‘RA’, Arabic shorthand for ‘May God be pleased with them’, is an honorary acronym for the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH).

<sup>6</sup>A term first introduced by Asad [130]. He called the subject ‘a doctrine of abrogation’.

3

The definition of the Abrogation Doctrine captures two issues; what abrogation of a verse in the Quran means, and how it is determined that a verse is abrogated. The latter part is an integral part of the doctrine since Islamic scholars have been unanimous that no authentic statement exists where God or His Messenger (PBUH) explicitly designated a verse in the Quranic script as abrogated. Therefore, other methods are used to make that determination.

#### The Abrogation Doctrine:

1. *There are verses in the Quranic script that have been abrogated. As such, there is no longer a mandate to follow them.*
2. *In the absence of explicit designation of such verses as abrogated by God or by the Prophet (PBUH), it is permissible to identify these verses through reasoning based on other evidence.*

The Abrogation Doctrine, as defined above, is the focus of this book. We do mention other types of abrogation in the discussions to come in order to clarify the issues and put the doctrine in context. However, *our one and only goal is to weigh the evidence for and against the Abrogation Doctrine, not any other type of abrogation.*

The above definition is only concerned with verses in the Quranic script (“بين دفتي المصحف” which translates to “between the two covers of the Quranic script”). The reason for this distinction is that there are reported narrations, however controversial their authenticity may be (Appendix A.7.1), about Quranic verses that had been eliminated during the life of the Prophet (PBUH). Since these verses, if they existed, have not made it to the Quranic script as the Prophet (PBUH) left it for us before his death, they do not fall under the purview of the Abrogation Doctrine which is our only subject.

As we see from the definition, the Abrogation Doctrine makes two distinct assertions. The first assertion is about the *existence* of abrogated verses in the Quranic script. The second assertion is about the *methodology* of identifying such verses. The first assertion is essential to the doctrine; if there are no abrogated verses in the first place, there is nothing to identify. However, if there *are* abrogated verses, then it is of paramount importance how to legitimately identify them since no verse has been designated as abrogated by God or by His Messenger (PBUH).

We are taking pains to pin down the notions accurately because we observed that some of the debates about abrogation, and some of the references to agreement or disagreement about it, suffer from mixing different notions or not being explicit about these notions. A case in point is that different types of abrogation are sometimes conflated together, thus allowing the evidence for

one type of abrogation to be used to argue for the validity of another type. Let's look at two examples.

1. The occurrence of abrogation across the Abrahamic religions is easy to establish. For instance, Jesus (PBUH) is quoted in the Quran saying:

﴿وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيِّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَلَا حِلَّ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ﴾  
[آل عمران : ٥٠] ...

[3:50] And [I have come] confirming what was before me of the Torah and to make lawful for you some of what was forbidden to you

...

which is a clear case of abrogation of previous rulings. In this case, the abrogated rulings belong to a previous religion.

2. The occurrence of abrogation among narrations of the Prophet (PBUH) is also easy to establish. For instance, there is a narration that quotes the Prophet (PBUH) saying<sup>7</sup> “I [Muhammad] had forbidden you from visiting the graves; now visit them” which is a clear case of abrogation of a previous ruling within the same religion.

4

Although these are compelling examples of abrogation, their object of abrogation is not a verse in the Quranic script, which is what the Abrogation Doctrine is about. If one type of abrogation has occurred, it doesn't mean that all types of abrogation have occurred. In particular, it doesn't mean that the Abrogation Doctrine as defined above is valid.

Throughout this book, we will refer to certain scholars as either *pro-abrogation* or *anti-abrogation*. By pro-abrogation, we mean someone who believes that the Abrogation Doctrine is valid. Similarly, anti-abrogation means someone who believes that the Abrogation Doctrine is not valid. Whether a person believes in other forms of abrogation, such as abrogation of previous scriptures or abrogation of Prophetic narrations, has no bearing on the terms pro-abrogation and anti-abrogation as used in this book.

#### point of interest

Most studies of abrogation include early sections about the different definitions and different types of abrogation. This book does not. The reason is that we are only addressing one notion of abrogation, that of a verse in the Quranic script whose ruling is no longer to be taken into consideration.

<sup>7</sup>This quote is part of a *hadith* (Prophetic narration) reported and authenticated by Muslim [189]. See side note 4 for details.

Why is the Abrogation Doctrine our exclusive focus? The reason is that the doctrine deals with the most revered source of jurisprudence in Islam. The Quran is believed to be the authentic word of God, letter for letter, by all sects and schools of thought in Islam. There is no disagreement about the text of the Quran as the Prophet (ﷺ) left it for us. Since the Abrogation Doctrine annuls certain verses in the Quran, the stakes are quite high.

## 1.4 Abrogation Claims

While the Abrogation Doctrine asserts that there are abrogated verses, it does not identify those verses. Indeed, the vast majority of scholars over the centuries agree that there are abrogated verses in the Quranic script, but when it comes to *which* verses are abrogated, there is vast disagreement. The reason for disagreement is that the methodology for determining abrogated verses is subjective. How is it subjective?

There is no verse in the Quranic script that has been designated as abrogated by God or by His Messenger (ﷺ), a criterion that would be objective. Instead, all claims of abrogation have relied on evidence other than explicit divine designation. As a result, there are hundreds of these claims and almost every book about abrogation has a different list of what the author considers to be the abrogated verses. *There is not a single verse* that is claimed to be abrogated on which all pro-abrogation scholars agree.<sup>8</sup>

How is a verse determined to be abrogated? The key part of the methodology is to argue that there is a conflict between two verses in the Quranic script such that they cannot be both operative, hence one of them must be abrogated. There is sometimes other evidence to corroborate the conflict-based argument, but conflict is the key ingredient in abrogation claims.

### point of interest

*Perceived* conflict is the basis for all abrogation claims found in the literature.

This is the main reason why there is such disagreement about which verses are abrogated. Any perceived conflict between verses depends on how the verses are interpreted, so one interpretation may highlight a conflict while another interpretation may reconcile the verses. The vast disagreement about

<sup>8</sup>This conclusion is based on tracking each claim across the abrogation literature. Scholars with different opinions on each of the common claims will be mentioned when that claim is discussed in Part II. Also, see side note 5.

which verses are abrogated is illustrated in Appendix A.2, where the list of abrogation claims and the number of supporters and opponents for each claim are tabulated.

Here is an example of disagreement about an abrogation claim based on whether a conflict is perceived. Before alcoholic beverages were prohibited by the Quran, this verse was revealed:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ ...﴾ [النساء: ٤٣]

[4:43] O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while you are intoxicated until you know what you are saying ...

Those who see a conflict argue that the above verse implies that alcoholic beverages are allowed, except that you should not drink them before prayer time. This would mean that this verse was abrogated when total prohibition was mandated by a later verse. Those who do not see a conflict argue that the above verse says nothing about whether alcoholic beverages are allowed. Rather, the verse is about *praying* while intoxicated, independently of the ruling on alcoholic beverages. This is one of the most famous abrogation claims in Islamic literature.<sup>9</sup>

The abrogation literature provides clear evidence that identifying which verses are abrogated is a matter of opinion. The differing opinions are stark, even among major scholars. Early on, [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#) included 247 abrogation claims in his book, approving some and dismissing others. [Al-Suyuti \[100\]](#) settled on 20 cases as valid abrogation claims and dismissed the rest saying “*claiming abrogation in other verses is not correct.*” [Waliyullah \[203\]](#) referred to Al-Suyuti’s claims but dismissed most of them, stating that “*abrogation is not indicated except in 5 verses.*” [Zeid \[206\]](#) also approved 5 claims only,<sup>10</sup> referring to them as “*the abrogation instances that are correct.*” However, Zeid’s 5 claims are different from Waliyullah’s 5 claims; they have only 2 verses in common.

These variations are typical among abrogation scholars because of the disparity in what they perceive as a real conflict between verses, and this shapes the way the Abrogation Doctrine as a whole is debated. To refute the doctrine, some anti-abrogation scholars analyze claims one by one and attempt to reconcile the verses, showing that there is no conflict that would warrant a claim of abrogation. Others argue against the legitimacy of the abrogation doctrine itself and the validity of its methodology.

<sup>9</sup>A detailed discussion of the claim is in §4.2.

<sup>10</sup>In an apparent take on Zeid’s use of the phrase “*abrogation in the Quran*” in the title of his book, [Al-Jabri \[55\]](#) used the phrase “*no abrogation in the Quran*” in the title of his subsequent book rebutting Zeid’s 5 claims.

Using a legal metaphor, the first group refutes each claim *in substance* by attacking its specific merits, while the second group attempts to refute all claims at once *in form*, by attacking the premise that gave rise to those claims in the first place. Most anti-abrogation books use a combination of both.

## 1.5 A Brief History

The history of the Abrogation Doctrine is elaborate; how it started, how it evolved, and the key figures in its time line.<sup>11</sup> Again, we are addressing abrogation of verses within the Quranic script, not other forms of abrogation. The doctrine's notion that a verse remains physically in the Quranic script, to be recited as part of the Quran but not to be followed, has its roots in an expression that was first coined decades after the death of the Prophet (PBUH). The expression

نَسَخَ الْحُكْمَ دُونَ التَّلَاوَةِ

(abrogation of the ruling but not of the recitation) is indeed the core of the Abrogation Doctrine. This expression does not appear in a single narration that dates back to the time of the Prophet (PBUH). The expression is based on an opinion attributed to the fellows of Ibn Masoud in the mid to late first *hijri* century.<sup>12</sup> It became a standard expression used by scholars who write about the Abrogation Doctrine.

The early days of the Abrogation Doctrine left us with no written documents. Writing books was not the norm at the time, so there is no contemporaneous written account of abrogation in the decades following the death of the Prophet (PBUH). Even after writing started, many of the first writings were subsequently lost (Zeid [206]). However, later books that survived often cited the earlier scholars, thus shedding light on their writings. What is clear is that the notion of abrogation was common in those early days, but it is also clear that the number of verses that were considered abrogated was limited.

Abrogation became a more structured and studied notion with the advent of major scholars in the second and third centuries of the Islamic era, starting with Imam<sup>13</sup> Abu-Hanifa who used abrogation as an analytic tool in the creation of his school of thought in Islamic jurisprudence. Later, Imam Al-Shafei, who is known for his discipline in Islamic scholarship, created a structure that restricts the scope of abrogation. The early book by Ibn Sallam [171] documents the abrogation claims up till that era, and their number remained relatively small.

<sup>11</sup>A more comprehensive time line of scholars is included in Appendix A.5.

<sup>12</sup>The Prophet (PBUH) died in the 11th year of the Islamic *hijri* calendar, so that calendar approximately corresponds to the time since his death.

<sup>13</sup>An honorary Arabic title that means scholarly leader.



Later on, two scholars on opposite sides of the issue made lasting contributions around the same time. [Al-Tabari](#) [107] provided detailed support for the Abrogation Doctrine in his seminal exegesis of the Quran. [Al-Asfahani](#) [21] was the first major scholar known to be openly anti-abrogation, dismissing all abrogation claims and opposing the Abrogation Doctrine altogether. Al-Asfahani's anti-abrogation stand did not hinder the Abrogation Doctrine at all. In the following century, [Al-Jassas](#) [57] criticized Al-Asfahani's views and helped establish abrogation as a full-fledged discipline.

During that era, a number of books dedicated to abrogation were written and the number of abrogation claims increased dramatically. This does not mean that verses *became* abrogated as time went by. The unanimous view of scholars is that whether a verse is abrogated is something that could not change after the death of the Prophet (ﷺ). The added claims were merely newly discovered abrogation cases, arrived at through analysis by scholars from the new era. The most notable addition to the roster of abrogated verses was more than a hundred verses about tolerance that were claimed to be abrogated by a single verse; the fifth verse in Chapter 9 of the Quran (سورة التوبة).<sup>14</sup>

In the next few centuries, a pushback against the explosion of abrogation claims started to take hold. [Al-Zahiri](#) [121] and Ibn Al-Hassar ([Hammad](#) [137]) raised the bar for accepting an abrogation claim. [Al-Suyuti](#) [100], who lived in the ninth *hijri* century, limited the number of abrogation claims to 20 verses and dismissed the rest as false claims.

#### point of interest

[Al-Suyuti](#) [100] wrote a poem more than 500 years ago summarizing his views about abrogation claims. He may not have realized it at the time, but his views profoundly changed the trajectory of abrogation in Islamic history, even though the main book that he wrote about the subject was lost and never recovered.

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The tendency to limit the number of abrogation claims continued after that, and centuries later [Waliyullah](#) [203] declared that there are only 5 verses that are abrogated. This trend continued until the modern era when a number of scholars started dismissing almost all abrogation claims and questioning the foundations of the Abrogation Doctrine. A notable minority of scholars over the last century have indeed opposed the Abrogation Doctrine altogether.

<sup>14</sup>Commonly referred to as the sword verse although 'sword' does not appear in it.

## 1.6 Does Religion Change?

The concept of abrogation often raises alarm bells. Any change within religion may seem inconsistent with the idea of divine revelation, since it may suggest that what needed to be changed had been imperfect. We will argue in this section that this is not the case.

We note that change in religion can happen through addition or subtraction, where a new ruling is mandated or an old ruling is eliminated. Let us take a closer look at each of these.

- **Mandating new rulings.** It is a matter of historical record that religious rulings in Islam were rolled out gradually during the life of the Prophet (PBUH). For instance, the fast during the month of Ramadan was mandated almost 15 years after the first revelation of the Quran. Many Muslims died during those years, including the Prophet's first wife Khadija (RA). This means that something as fundamental as the Ramadan fast was not part of Islam for the entire life of those Muslims, who are arguably among the most distinguished Muslims who walked the face of the earth.

The incremental addition of religious rulings during the time of revelation is logical. Gradual change is a practical approach that allows people to adjust to an entirely new way of life. Leaving entrenched old habits and customs, and embracing new concepts and rules, is a gradual, dynamic process. An entire book by [Al-Bahiyy](#) [25] is dedicated to tallying and analyzing the instances, and wisdom, of gradual legislation in Islam.

Not only was there a proper dose of new obligations to assume, but there was also a proper dose of spiritual support that early Muslims needed. They confronted a hostile society around them, and the gradual nature of the revelation helped make every newly revealed Quranic passage a source of comfort and reassurance for them. This role of gradual revelation is addressed in the Quran itself:

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً كَذَلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ وَرَتَّلْنَاهُ تَرْتِيلًا﴾ [الفرقان : ٣٢]

[25:32] And those who disbelieve say, 'If only the Quran was sent down upon him as one whole'. It is the way [We sent it] so that We may affirm your heart by it, and We have spaced it distinctly.

While the change through mandating new rulings is easy to understand as part of the delivery process of a new religion, the change through elimination is a more involved concept.

- **Eliminating old rulings.** The notion that any religious ruling would be

eliminated after it was instituted, which is what abrogation does, has been attacked as evidence of *Al-badaa* (البداء) or “appearance of a better idea” (derived from *bada lahu* بَدَا لَهُ which means ‘occurred to him’). The premise of *Al-badaa* is that if God abrogated a previous ruling that He had mandated, that would amount to a change of mind which obviously is not possible with the Divine. The issue of *Al-badaa* has been advanced by some in the anti-abrogation camp as an argument against the possibility of abrogation.

The assertion that abrogation amounts to a change of mind is readily refutable. Consider the narration of the Prophet (PBUH) mentioned earlier in this chapter where he says “*I [Muhammad] had forbidden you from visiting the graves; now visit them.*” Was this change of mind?

In this narration, the Prophet (PBUH) did not specify his reasons for making the change,<sup>15</sup> but scholars have argued convincingly about the reasons (Ibn Uthaymin [176]). Early Muslims came from a lifetime of idol worshiping and mythical rituals. It stands to logic that when they joined Islam, they needed to ‘detox’ from pre-Islamic habits.

Some of these habits were rituals over death and graves, and the command came to forbid them from visiting the graves lest they should fall back into old habits. When they became more settled in their new faith, the precaution was no longer needed and the command was lifted. This is an interpretation that shows that it is not a change of mind, but rather a change of circumstances that calls for different rulings.

It was not a change of mind either when Jesus (PBUH) allowed foods that had been forbidden before him (see page 7). Different nations could be tested for their obedience to God through different rules about which foods are allowed.

The change of circumstances is a common theme in the abrogation literature. If you look at the various claims of abrogation, scholars often invoked change of circumstances as the rationale for why abrogation took place.

#### point to ponder

While a change of circumstances may explain why abrogation would happen, it does not explain why a verse that was abrogated would remain in the Quranic script, *unlabeled*.

It is worth noting that *Al-badaa* was not only used as an argument by the anti-abrogation camp, but even more prominently by some foes of Islam who used abrogation as a point of attack. Those foes, perhaps inadvertently, may have contributed to the growth of the Abrogation Doctrine as Muslim scholars reacted to the attacks during a critical era in Islamic jurisprudence.

<sup>15</sup>Other versions of this narration give reasons for the new order, such as a reminder of death, but we chose to present the most authentic version.

A case in point is Al-Jassas, who is considered by some as a major figure in establishing the Abrogation Doctrine. Al-Jassas lived in Kufa,<sup>16</sup> Iraq, and belonged to Imam Abu-Hanifa's school of thought. Abrogation (or rather *naskh* in the more general sense) played a role in Abu-Hanifa's approach to jurisprudence. It was also in that era that persistent *Al-badaa* attacks on abrogation by non-Muslims took place. Al-Jassas and others reacted by adjusting the definition of abrogation to counter the idea of *Al-badaa*, and by vigorously supporting and consolidating the Abrogation Doctrine (Zeid [206]).

• **The complete religion.** The Abrogation Doctrine is concerned with the Quranic script as the Prophet (ﷺ) left it for us. At that point, the religion had already been sealed as the Quran itself declares,

﴿... الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا...﴾ [المائدة : ٣]

[5:3] ... Today I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion ...

While the rulings in the Quran will not change, the practical situations we encounter in life do change. Therefore, how these rulings apply to a given situation remains a dynamic process. Here are two examples,

1. Sometimes two different rulings would be applicable to a given situation. Depending on which ruling one applies, there would be a different course of action. In this case, the specifics of the situation may tip us in favor of one ruling over the other (الترجيح - preponderance). This does not mean that the other ruling is now abrogated. It is still a valid ruling that will be applicable in other situations.
2. Sometimes a ruling is contingent, which means that there are conditions upon which the ruling is predicated. Contingency (عِلَّةُ الْحُكْم - the basis for the ruling) implies that the ruling will go in and out of applicability depending on whether its conditions are met. When a contingent ruling is not applied, it is not because it was abrogated; it's because its contingency was not met.

It should be noted that preponderance, contingency, and other tools of jurisprudence recognize all Quranic rulings as valid when they deal with any situation, and then choose the rulings that best match that situation. Abrogation, on the other hand, fully eliminates certain Quranic rulings from consideration, regardless of the situation.

<sup>16</sup>A scholarly center of that era, located 100 miles south of Baghdad.

## 1.7 Approaching the Subject

We approach the subject of abrogation from a Muslim point of view, where the basic tenets of the religion are not in question. We take the Abrogation Doctrine as an important component of Islamic jurisprudence, one on which the majority of scholars agree. However, it is not part of the core Islamic belief, and as such it is subject to discussion. Indeed, many scholars both pro-abrogation and anti-abrogation have debated the subject in the past and continue to debate it even more vigorously in the modern era.

The debate about abrogation is fraught with sensitivities. It touches on ideological aspects in the religion, unlike other issues of jurisprudence that are more technical in nature. Scholars from each side of the debate have at times attacked the other side in very strong terms.

For example, pro-abrogation scholar [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#) refers to the Abrogation Doctrine in his exegesis by saying: “*Scholars would not do without its knowledge, and only the ignorant, stupid would deny it.*” [Al-Jabri \[54\]](#), who is anti-abrogation, refers to the Abrogation Doctrine as “*a farce among the biggest intellectual farces in the history of Quranic studies.*” Each side of the debate feels that they are defending the Quran, either by defending the verses about abrogation or by defending the verses that are claimed abrogated.

In researching the subject, we read every book about abrogation that we could access. Those books represent different eras, different views, different styles, and different qualities. Most are written by bona fide scholars. Throughout this book, we will present the evidence and the arguments that they offer. We will also present new evidence and new arguments, as well as rebuttals of arguments where appropriate.



After this overview, we move to presenting the case for and against the Abrogation Doctrine. As a first step, we need to establish which side of the debate has the burden of proof. This turns out to be an elaborate question, which we address in detail in the next chapter.

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## Chapter 2

# The Burden Of Proof

In order to properly weigh the evidence for and against the Abrogation Doctrine, we must first establish which side of the debate has the burden to prove its case. We are not talking about who is right and who is wrong. We are just establishing what it would take for each side to prevail in the debate. The burden of proof is an established concept in Islam. For example, in legal matters (Ibrahim [179]), the principle of “البينة على المدعي” (the substantiation is on the claimant) determines that the burden of proof in this case is on the prosecutor, not the defendant.

Which side of the abrogation debate has the burden of proof? While there are differing opinions among scholars about many aspects of abrogation, one aspect on which scholars from all sides of the debate agree is the high burden of proof that needs to be met in order to claim that a given verse in the Quran is abrogated. We will establish this fact here. The chapter will be heavy on quotes by various scholars so as not to leave doubt about the high burden of proof that has been agreed upon. After we establish this for individual claims, we will then move to discuss the burden of proof for the Abrogation Doctrine as a whole.

### 2.1 Burden for Individual Claims

Let us recall the main premise of the Abrogation Doctrine: *There are verses in the Quranic script that have been abrogated.* There are two main approaches for arguing in support of this premise. The first approach is to interpret statements in the Quran such as 2:106 “Whatever verse We may abrogate ...” as affirming the premise, independently of which verses happen to be abrogated. The second approach is to take an individual case of two verses and argue that

one abrogates the other, thus establishing the premise by example.

When we look at an individual abrogation claim, what level of evidence and reasoning is needed to prove that it is a valid claim? This is where the burden of proof comes in, and it needs to be set before the debate starts. It turns out that pro-abrogation scholars, who are the ones making the claims, have themselves set a very high burden of proof for individual abrogation claims, and have articulated that in no uncertain terms. We will quote a number of prominent pro-abrogation scholars describing the high burden throughout this section and the next two sections.

When one side of the debate concedes that the burden of proof is on them, as the pro-abrogation scholars have done in the case of individual abrogation claims, the other side can accept that standard and enforce it. The burden of proof, therefore, becomes a matter of stipulation that governs the debate for both sides.

Religious tradition has a principle similar to stipulation that is captured by the Quranic expression in verse 12:26 "... and a witness from her family testified ..." ﴿... وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا ...﴾ [يوسف: ٢٦]. The context is the story of Joseph (PBUH), when a woman falsely accused him of attacking her, and a member of her family set the criterion for deciding who is lying. When the criterion was applied, it showed that the woman was lying, and that conclusion had to be accepted since it was her side that set the standard. Similarly, the other side of the abrogation debate has the right to hold the pro-abrogation scholars to *the standard that they have themselves set* in terms of the burden of proof.

There is a good reason why scholars have accepted that there is a high burden for proving that a specific verse in the Quran is abrogated. A principle that is universally recognized in Islamic jurisprudence, e.g., by Abu-Hanifa (Al-Dabbusi [39]), is that certainty prevails "*unless the opposite becomes certain*" (مَا لَمْ يُتَيَقَّنْ بِخِلَافِهِ). There is an entire book (Al-Bahusseini [27]) dedicated to that principle and its manifestations, with quotes of support from prominent scholars throughout.

How does this principle apply to the abrogation of a Quranic verse? The authenticity and authority of Quranic verses are the highest in Islam. This necessitates the highest standard of confidence before one can overrule their authority, which is what abrogation does. That is the essence of the various quotes which we will now cite. The quotes in this section address that standard of confidence directly, whereas the quotes in the next two sections detail how the standard is applied to the specific evidence used in abrogation claims.

Let us start with prominent scholar Al-Zahiri [121] who is pro-abrogation. He states, as he discusses abrogation in the Quran, that "*it is unlawful for anyone to say about any of the commands: 'This is abrogated', except with crystal-clear proof* (بِرَهَانٍ جَلِيِّ), *since they are all required to be obeyed, and*



what we are certain about our obligation to obey is forbidden for us to go against [just] because someone said it is abrogated.” In the same paragraph, he goes on to elaborate on the ‘someone’ reference by naming some of the most revered and authoritative figures in Islamic history as examples.

Earlier in the book, Al-Zahiri [121] uses the word certainty (يقين) when he discusses what is needed to abrogate anything in the Quran. He then reiterates the underlying principle in his own words; “... what was established by certainty is not to be annulled by suspicions”, and requires “certainty of abrogation with no doubt in it” (يقين نسخ لا شك فيه), setting a remarkably high burden of proof.

A century earlier, Al-Nahhas [71] wrote one of the earliest, highly regarded references on abrogation. As he discussed different abrogation claims, approving some and objecting to others, he addressed the burden of proof to be applied. In one quote, he states “What has the possibility of not being abrogation cannot be said to be abrogating or abrogated except with evidentiary proof that mandates concession to it” (حُجَّةٌ يَجِبُ التَّسْلِيمُ لَهَا).”

Prominent scholar Ibn Taymia [172] has a similar view. He dismissed the possibility that a particular ruling has been abrogated saying “because abrogation is not to be resorted to except with certainty (إلا بيقين).” In this case, the object of abrogation was not at the level of a Quranic verse, yet certainty was the standard he required for invoking abrogation. All the more reason to apply this standard when dealing with the abrogation of a Quranic verse.

Modern scholars have also weighed in on the burden of proof. Al-Qaradawi [75], who is pro-abrogation but critical of the excessive use of the Abrogation Doctrine, addresses the burden of proof. He says “One of the pitfalls to mention here regarding the understanding of the Quran and its exegesis is the claim of abrogation of any of its verses, without a proof of certitude (برهان يقيني) that necessitates such abrogation.” Another pro-abrogation scholar, Al-Salih [85], put it in different words as he argued that non-abrogation should be the original assumption “unless an explicit evidence (دليل صريح) of abrogation is established, then there is no escape from taking it.”

#### p o i n t   t o   p o n d e r

Certainty is a pretty high standard; has this standard been actually applied to abrogation claims? We will leave this question for the reader to decide, claim by claim.

Coming from recognized scholars who are on the side of the Abrogation Doctrine, the above quotes attest to the high burden of proof that must be met to claim that a given verse in the Quran is abrogated. Let us now look at

the methods that pro-abrogation scholars used to prove these claims in order to see how the burden of proof is applied.

There are two specific methods that scholars use in arguing an abrogation claim: (a) showing irreconcilable conflict that necessitates abrogation, and (b) citing authoritative narrations that support the claim. We will discuss these methods in the next two sections and see how the burden of proof manifests itself in each of them.

## 2.2 Irreconcilable Conflict

The first method of proving an abrogation claim is to argue that the verses in question present an irreconcilable conflict that can only be resolved by invoking abrogation. Every abrogation claim goes through arguments and counter-arguments about such conflict. However, the burden of proof is on those who argue that there is a conflict that cannot be reconciled, and scholars have specifically articulated how high that burden is.

A case in point is Zeid [206], the most recognized modern scholar of abrogation who studied the opinions of pro-abrogation scholars old and new. His conclusion in the case of conflict-based abrogation is that unless each side of the conflict is “*an opposite to the other and cannot coexist with it*” (نقيضاً للآخر) (لا يمكن أن يوجد معه), there is no place for abrogation. In another passage, he articulates as a condition for abrogation that the two rulings set by the verses “*cannot be combined and acted upon jointly in some facet*” (بوجه من الوجوه),” citing a number of respected pro-abrogation scholars as concurring with him. For instance, Al-Amidi [18] includes as a prerequisite for a text to abrogate another that the two texts “*conflict with each other in every facet*” (أن يتعارضوا) (من كل وجه).

### point of interest

What is the standard for declaring ‘conflict in every facet’? Al-Shafei [93], a scholarly leader who founded one of the main schools of thought in Islamic jurisprudence, set a formidable standard that “*the two narrations have nothing but difference*” (لم يحتمل الحديثان) (إلا الاختلاف) exemplifying that with the switch in the direction of prayers from Jerusalem to Mecca. It is an example of two rulings that cannot be reconciled to any middle ground by any logic.

We have already quoted Al-Nahhas about the high burden of proof for individual claims. In another quote (Al-Nahhas [71]), he articulates the burden in terms of conflict reconciliation. He states that “*abrogation is only invoked*

where the meaning cannot be correct without it (لا يصحُّ المعنى إلا به) as he cites possible interpretations of a verse that refute its abrogation claim.

Other scholars agree in strong terms. Al-Zurqani, who is pro-abrogation, states that the conflict in question has to be “a real conflict with no way of avoiding it by reconciling the two through any facet of interpretation” (أي وجه) (Al-Zurqani [128]). Farghali, who is also pro-abrogation, asserts that a claim of abrogation cannot be made unless there is no reconciliation of the conflict “from any view and with any interpretation” (بأي صورة وبأي تأويل) after approvingly citing similar burden-of-proof statements by earlier scholars (Farghali [136]).

What this means is that, in choosing between a possible interpretation that substantiates the conflict versus a possible interpretation that reconciles the conflict, we do not just choose the more plausible of the two interpretations. We take the side of reconciliation. Indeed, “*employing both pieces of evidence has priority over relegating one of them*” (إعمال الدليلين أولى من إهمال أحدهما) which is an established juristic rule (e.g., Al-Isnawi [52]) that illustrates how the burden of proof gives reconciliation the priority.

#### point to ponder

Prominent scholar Ibn Taymia has an interesting angle on perceived conflicts between verses. Discussing some abrogation claims, he commented that what is abrogated is not the verse, but what someone *thinks* the verse means (Ibn Taymia [172]).

A case in point in reconciliation is an abrogation claim that gained traction for a while before being dismissed by a number of scholars based on a possible reconciliation argument. The Quran says in verse 3:102 “watch out for God as He ought to be watched” ﴿... اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ ...﴾ [آل عمران : ١٠٢] and it says in verse 64:16 “So watch out for God as much as you can” ﴿فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ﴾ [التغابن : ١٦]. On face value, there is a conflict between the two commands, with the second command being less strict than the first. This was the basis for the claim that the second verse abrogated the first.

The conflict results from a possible interpretation of the verses, but there is another interpretation put forward by the scholars who reject the abrogation claim.<sup>1</sup> They argue, with evidence from the Quran itself, that God never asks us to do what is beyond our capacity, so for us ‘as He ought to be watched’ is synonymous with ‘as much as you can’. While you may find the interpretation as a conflict more convincing than this reconciliation, the latter is a viable interpretation based on Quranic principles. Because of the burden of proof, that was enough for a majority of scholars to dismiss this abrogation claim.

<sup>1</sup>The claim will be discussed in detail in §3.4.

## 2.3 Authoritative Narration

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The second method of proving an abrogation claim is to cite an authoritative narration that directly supports the claim. This is a manifestation of the *conveyance* (*alnaql* - النقل) approach to jurisprudence which bases its rulings on statements by authoritative figures, as opposed to inferring the rulings through *reasoning* (*al'aql*, literally “the mind” - العقل). By the very nature of religion, conveyance from the Quran and from the Prophet (PBUH) is of course the fundamental source of jurisprudence in Islam. Conveyance from other key figures is also taken very seriously.

The narrations we are addressing here are narrations that make a direct statement about a Quranic verse being abrogated. These narrations come from fellows of the Prophet (PBUH), most often from Ibn Abbas (RA), and are often cited as corroborating evidence to support an abrogation claim.

Once again, there is no ‘direct evidence’ for any abrogation claim in terms of authentic Prophetic narrations or Quranic statements that explicitly designate a verse in the Quran as abrogated (Asad [130]).<sup>2</sup> However, the narrations from the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) are taken quite seriously since those fellows have the advantage of proximity to events during the life of the Prophet (PBUH), and can shed light on the interpretation of Quranic verses and Prophetic traditions that are associated with those events.

Nonetheless, the level of authority of narrations from the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) is a matter of debate among scholars. Since we are now discussing the burden of proof rather than the merits of the case, we are going to focus on two objective questions about these narrations that relate to the burden of proof.

1. How certain do we need to be that the narration is authentic?
2. How certain do we need to be about the meaning of the narration?

These questions are independent of the authority of the person who is being quoted. In simple words, we are asking “did he actually say that?” and “are we sure about what he meant?” Using technical terminology, the first question deals with *uncertainty in sourcing* and the second question deals with *uncertainty in significance*, two terms coined by Islamic jurists of old, and adopted by all subsequent generations of scholars. Let us discuss these uncertainties in detail and weigh them against the burden of proof for individual abrogation claims.

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<sup>2</sup>In the extensive literature we surveyed, no scholar has challenged this specific statement. Also see side note 3.

### 2.3.1 Uncertainty in Sourcing

Islamic jurists have a term for thinly sourced narrations, i.e., narrations that have been conveyed to us through only one or two sources.<sup>3</sup> They call them *singles* (*aahad* - آحاد). In terms of reliability, ‘singles’ are universally considered “uncertain in sourcing” (ظَنِّي الورد).<sup>4</sup> This classification is in contrast with the “certain in sourcing” (قَطْعِي الورد) classification, enjoyed by all verses in the Quran for example.

Statements asserting that narrations of ‘singles’ are uncertain in sourcing can be found in almost any book on Islamic *Foundations of Deduction* (أصول الفقه). For example, [Khallaf \[183\]](#) contrasts the certainty level of different types of narrations, stating that ‘singles’ are uncertain in sourcing. When these books discuss uncertainty in sourcing, they usually address narrations that quote the Prophet (PBUH) rather than narrations that quote other figures. Since the discussion here is only about sourcing, what matters to us is who narrated the quote rather than who is being quoted.

It does stand to logic that a ‘singles’ narration would not be certain because of the possibility of “error and forgetfulness, even while trusting (the narrators)” as [Al-Suyuti \[101\]](#) puts it while he weighs different views about the reliability of ‘singles’. While this quote was about ‘singles’ narrations in general and not abrogation, Al-Suyuti happens to be a major pro-abrogation scholar who is among the most cited on the subject. His quote doesn’t mean that all ‘singles’ narrations are to be ignored. In fact, these narrations are a major source in Islamic jurisprudence. Only their role in proving an abrogation claim is being addressed here.

Here is an example. Prominent pro-abrogation scholar [Ibn Al-Arabi \[144\]](#) states that “reports of ‘singles’ do not abrogate the Quran” in the context of a narration that suggests abrogation of a verse. This is particularly notable since the narration in question quotes two people including Aisha (RA), the wife of the Prophet (PBUH).

Almost all narrations by the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) that support an individual abrogation claim are ‘singles’, as shown in [Appendix A.3](#). Some of these are more reliable than others in terms of the chain of narrators that reported them, but they are still ‘singles’, hence uncertain in sourcing.

The uncertainty of ‘singles’ is reflected in quotes by pro-abrogation scholars. For instance, [Al-Jassas \[56\]](#), who is considered one of the founders of the Abrogation Doctrine, concludes that “abrogating a Quranic ruling ... using

<sup>3</sup>Some scholars consider a narration thinly sourced even if it has more than 2 sources. However, we are taking the conservative view here to be on the safe side.

<sup>4</sup>A more direct translation would be ‘suspicious’ rather than ‘uncertain’, but ‘suspicious’ has a stronger connotation of doubt than the Arabic adjective bears. The verb form ‘I suspect’, however, would be a perfect translation of the Arabic counterpart ‘أُظَنّ’.

9 the report of a ‘single’ is not allowed”.<sup>5</sup> Pro-abrogation scholar and prolific exegete Makki [184] states that “*it is forbidden to abrogate the Quran with a ‘singles’ report*” (مُنِعَ نسخ القرآن بخبر الأحاد). Al-Baydawi [30] makes a similar statement, reasoning that “*the decisive is not set aside by suspicion*” (القاطع لا (يُدْفَعُ بالظن).

Some scholars have stated that there is unanimity about this issue. Al-Juwaini [59] asserts that “*scholars are unanimous that what is established with certainty would not be abrogated by something uncertain* (الثابت قطعاً لا يُنسخه (مظنون), so the Quran would not be abrogated by a report narrated by ‘singles.’” The same conclusion is reached by Al-Shatibi [95] who states that “*investigators are unanimous that the report of a single does not abrogate the Quran* (خبر الواحد لا ينسخ القرآن)”. Al-Shatibi elaborates the reason for that; “*because it would eliminate the certain using the uncertain* (رُفِعَ للمقطوع به بالمظنون)”. This conclusion is universally acknowledged by pro- and anti-abrogation scholars alike.<sup>6</sup>

We note that the above quotes address two different types of narration. The first type is a narration that *supports* an abrogation claim, such as that addressed by Ibn Al-Arabi. The second type is about a Prophetic narration that is *itself* claimed to abrogate a verse.<sup>7</sup> However, both types are included here insofar as they establish how uncertainty in sourcing measures up in the context of abrogating a Quranic verse. These quotes are about sourcing only, as they address ‘singles’ narration independently of who is quoted or what the quote says. Sourcing is the only point we are addressing here.

#### point of interest

Among the narrations by the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH), how many are certain in sourcing that support an abrogation claim? As detailed in Appendix A.3, even if we adopt the weakest standard for certainty that is set by the scholars, only two out of 83 narrations are.

### 2.3.2 Uncertainty in Significance

Even if the sourcing of a narration is certain, and the authority of the person who is quoted in the narration is not in dispute, there is still the question of what the wording of the narration actually implies. A narration is con-

<sup>5</sup>In Islamic juristic literature, “report of a single” is synonymous with “singles narration” (Khallaf [183]).

<sup>6</sup>We discuss a subtle point about the impact of sourcing on abrogation in side note 9.

<sup>7</sup>The notion that a Prophetic narration can abrogate a Quranic verse is controversial, and will be discussed in Appendix A.7.

sidered “*uncertain in significance*” (ظَنِّي الدَّلَالَة) if the implied meaning is in doubt. Whether a particular narration has this uncertainty (as opposed to being “*certain in significance*” - قَطْعِي الدَّلَالَة) is something that can be argued on a case-by-case basis.

However, for narrations that use the word *naskh*, there is a common source of uncertainty in significance. The uncertainty comes from the use of the word *naskh* by early Muslims to mean things other than abrogation. Since this is a recurring issue in narrations about abrogation, we discuss the issue here and underline the resulting uncertainty with scholarly quotes, again from the pro-abrogation side.

Indeed, narrations that involve the word *naskh* are not necessarily talking about abrogation. We alluded to this semantic ambiguity on page 5. The ambiguity created flexibility for early Muslims to use the word *naskh* in describing different relationships between the rulings of two verses, such as making an exception to a ruling or putting a qualifying condition on it. There is overwhelming evidence that this ambiguity was prevalent at the time most of the key abrogation narrations originated, and that led to this ambiguity being recognized by the major pro-abrogation scholars. Here are some of their quotes.

Zeid spent more than 40 pages of his book surveying and analyzing the linguistic evolution of the word *naskh* over Islamic history. He concluded that narrations that use the word *naskh* in the broader sense of the word cannot be used to prove abrogation claims which are based on a narrower definition of the word. He gave an example (Zeid [206]):

“...it is not of scholarly fidelity at all to quote a narration by Ibn Abbas (RA) - or anyone else - in which he states that a verse did *naskh* to another although there is no relation between the two verses other than one being an exception from the other, then use that to deduce the *naskh* of one verse by the other in the sense that has later become the conventional definition of abrogation.”

Other pro-abrogation scholars concur. Based on diligent reading<sup>8</sup> of narrations from the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) and from later followers, Waliyullah [203] lists different ways in which the word *naskh* has been employed in these narrations. His list includes specializing a general ruling, pointing to a meaning that was not apparent, or correcting a misunderstanding. Speaking about earlier Muslims, he laments that “*their scope of abrogation got broader*” (اتَّسَعَتْ دَائِرَةُ النِّسْخِ عِنْدَهُمْ) which resulted in hundreds of abrogation claims.

<sup>8</sup>This means a careful survey of the literature (الاستقراء), formally defined as “reading of parts and ruling based on them about a whole that includes them” (Zuhair [207]).

Al-Shatibi [95] provides his own list of meanings for which early Muslims used the word *naskh*. His list includes restricting the absolute, elucidating the ambiguous, and specializing the general.

In his famous book, Ibn Taymia [172] also agrees, saying “*the decisive statement is that the word naskh is cursory, as the predecessors used it in what is thought the verse implies, whether it is generality, absoluteness, or something else* (عُموم أو إطلاق أو غير ذلك).” In another spot, he mentions “*specializing the general and restricting the absolute*” (تخصيص العام وتقييد المطلق) as examples of meanings of *naskh* as used by the predecessors (Ibn Taymia [172]).

Early in his book, Ibn Al-Qayyim [150] contrasts the meanings of *naskh* used by different generations of Islamic scholars. He starts by stating that the later generations use the word to describe “*lifting the ruling in its entirety*” (رَفْعُ الْحُكْمِ بِجَمْلَتِهِ). He enumerates the meanings used by the older generations, including the use of *naskh* to mean exception, description, and conditioning; saying that “*if you look carefully at what they said, you find uncountable instances* (ما لا يُحْصَى) *of it.*” Al-Qurtubi [80], a staunch pro-abrogation scholar, states in his famous exegesis of the Quran that “*early Muslims call specialization naskh using a broader sense [of the word] and as a figure of speech* (تَوْشِعاً)”:

None of these alternative meanings constitutes actual abrogation, i.e., annulment of what is claimed to be abrogated. Therefore, every time the word *naskh* appears in a narration that supports an abrogation claim, it should be assessed carefully for the potential uncertainty in significance.

#### point of interest

Worth repeating: Narrations that involve the word *naskh* are not necessarily talking about abrogation.

Let us recap what we have established so far in this chapter. Person A makes a claim that a particular verse in the Quranic script is abrogated. Person B asserts that it is not abrogated. Under this scenario, A has an obligation to prove that his claim is valid in a way that rises to the level of certainty. B only needs to show that A has failed to meet that obligation.

The obligation applies whether the evidence is conflict-based or narration-based. If the evidence presented does not rise to the level of certainty needed to abrogate a Quranic verse, the abrogation claim must be rejected. This burden of proof is stipulated by pro- and anti-abrogation scholars alike. We will refer to this burden when we discuss individual abrogation claims in Part II, so let us pinpoint the highlights of the burden.



**Burden of Proof for every Abrogation Claim:**

The burden to prove that a given verse in the Quranic script is abrogated rests solely on the claimant of abrogation. Even pro-abrogation scholars have conceded that this burden of proof rises to the level of *certainty*. To refute an abrogation claim, all one needs to do is to show that this high burden of proof has not been met. In particular,

- To refute a conflict-based abrogation claim, all it takes is to present a viable way to reconcile the perceived conflict between the verses. *It is not necessary* to show that such reconciliation is more plausible than the irreconcilability arguments.
- To refute a narration-based abrogation claim, both the uncertainty in sourcing and the uncertainty in significance of the narration should be weighed against the certainty of a Quranic verse.

## 2.4 Burden for the General Doctrine

So far in this chapter, we have addressed the high burden of proof for individual abrogation claims. Both sides of the abrogation debate agree to that burden, thus establishing it as the uncontested standard for the debate. However, this applies only to individual claims that a specific Quranic verse is abrogated, not to the Abrogation Doctrine in general, namely to the principle that verses in the Quranic script could be abrogated.

Neither side of the abrogation debate explicitly addressed the burden of proof for the general doctrine in the literature we surveyed. Certainly, neither side conceded that the burden of proof is on them like the pro-abrogation side did in the case of individual abrogation claims. Each side argued forcefully that their case was compelling, but without touching on the question of burden of proof.

In the absence of a clear burden of proof for the general doctrine, the burden for individual claims can help clarify the situation. The two burdens are not the same, but they are related in the following sense. If a single abrogation claim was successfully proved, this would validate the Abrogation Doctrine as a whole even if all other claims were disproved. Similarly, if all individual abrogation claims failed to overcome their agreed burden of proof, that would render the Abrogation Doctrine moot as no one would be able to set aside any verse in the Quran by claiming that it is abrogated.

Given the large number of abrogation claims, it may seem improbable that *all* of them can be shown to be invalid. However, the vast majority of these

claims were based on weak arguments that are easily debunked, a fact that is recognized by pro- and anti-abrogation scholars alike. The number of claims with any merit is quite limited as we will see in Part II.

By exhaustively debating all individual abrogation claims, one by one, we have a way of settling the question of the general Abrogation Doctrine using the rules that were established for debating individual claims. Debating the claims is also a less polarizing approach. Each abrogation claim has been discussed by different scholars with less fervor than the general doctrine has, and each has supporters and opponents even among advocates of the doctrine.

If we refute the Abrogation Doctrine by refuting all abrogation claims, this does not mean that other evidence about the doctrine can be ignored. That evidence raises legitimate questions that need to be resolved. For instance, why was abrogation mentioned in the Quran in the first place if there are no abrogated verses? Also, how could so many respected pro-abrogation scholars all reach the wrong conclusion? These key questions will be addressed in detail in Part III. To summarize,

#### **Burden of Proof for the general Abrogation Doctrine:**

Unlike the case of individual abrogation claims, the burden of proof for the **Abrogation Doctrine** at large has not been stipulated by the two sides of the debate. However, there is a way to use the burden of proof for individual abrogation claims as a vehicle to settle the case for the general doctrine:

- If a single abrogation claim is proved, this automatically proves the Abrogation Doctrine.
- If all abrogation claims are refuted, this automatically renders the Abrogation Doctrine moot.
- If the Abrogation Doctrine is rendered moot by refuting all abrogation claims, that would call for an examination of the arguments that support the doctrine in light of these findings.



The burden of proof for individual abrogation claims that we established in this chapter, as well as its role in debating the Abrogation Doctrine as a whole, delineate the methodology that we will use in the rest of the book. In the next chapter, we address this methodology in detail.

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## Chapter 3

# The Methodology

Now that the burden of proof has been established, we move on to defining the methodology that uses this burden of proof to argue the case for and against abrogation. As we have seen, there are two distinct but complementary components to the abrogation debate; arguing for and against the Abrogation Doctrine in general, and arguing for and against individual abrogation claims. The methodology spells out how these two components will be handled.

We will start by presenting the overall methodology in the first section. Then, we will go into the implementation details in the rest of the chapter. These details pertain to how the different abrogation claims will be debated in Part II before we move to debating the Abrogation Doctrine as a whole in Part III.

### 3.1 Overall Methodology

In debating the case for and against the Abrogation Doctrine, we will address individual abrogation claims before we address the general doctrine. There is a reason for this approach. The burden of proof for individual claims is one of the rare points of agreement between pro- and anti-abrogation scholars alike as we have seen in Chapter 2. This sets a clear criterion for weighing the arguments for and against each abrogation claim. In light of the findings about individual abrogation claims, we can then discuss the general Abrogation Doctrine from a solid ground.

Other authors have adopted this approach of debating the abrogation claims directly, e.g., Al-Khodari [65] and Al-Ghali [43]. The approach has an advantage of clarity; each abrogation claim is its own focused case. The

evidence for and against an individual claim is easier to scrutinize, and the criterion for weighing the evidence is agreed upon per the burden of proof. Individual claims are also less polarizing than the debate about the overall Abrogation Doctrine. Each claim has its proponents and opponents, and there has been less fervor in disagreement about any individual claim.

Starting with individual abrogation claims can be cast in terms of the two ‘stages’ of belief in abrogation that are often mentioned in the literature. The first stage is that abrogation is *conceptually possible* (جائز عقلاً), meaning that it does not contradict any basic tenet of the faith. The second stage is that abrogation *actually occurred* (واقع سمعاً).

Individual abrogation claims belong to the second stage, the actual occurrence of abrogation. It is also the stage that establishes the Abrogation Doctrine since the doctrine asserts that there are abrogated verses in the Quranic script. M. Al-Ghazali [46] emphasizes this point by advocating “*actual tallying*” of abrogation claims rather than “*theoretical debate*” about whether abrogation has occurred.

The tallying of abrogation claims has led to highly varying results across the literature. Some scholars approved hundreds of claims, and others approved very few claims. Hasaballah [139], a respected modern scholar,<sup>1</sup> ended up approving only one abrogation claim and was equivocal about two others.

It is a matter of historical record that there is not a single abrogation claim that is supported by all pro-abrogation scholars,<sup>2</sup> a notable fact that is not highlighted in the literature;

### Key Point



Collectively (but not individually), pro-abrogation scholars have dismissed all abrogation claims.

This brings us to the transition from discussing individual abrogation claims to discussing the Abrogation Doctrine as a whole. In Chapter 2, we showed how the transition would be clear-cut. If a single abrogation claim was proved, this would prove the validity of the Abrogation Doctrine as a whole. If, on the other hand, all abrogation claims were refuted, the doctrine’s core assertion that “*there are verses in the Quranic script that have been abrogated*” would be voided.

<sup>1</sup>Hasaballah was on the Ph.D. examination committee of Zeid’s seminal dissertation about abrogation, and was one of 3 scholars reverently acknowledged by him (Zeid [206]).

<sup>2</sup>As we detail in side note 5, if you consider just four pro-abrogation scholars: Waliyullah [203], Zeid [206], Al-Nahhas [71], and Al-Isnawi [52], there are no abrogation claims that they all approve.

In practice, however, the transition is more complex in the case where none of the abrogation claims is proved. There is other evidence, outside of individual abrogation claims, that scholars use to substantiate their belief in the Abrogation Doctrine. The evidence includes Quranic passages that talk about abrogation. If all abrogation claims are refuted, how do we come to terms with the rest of this evidence? Part III in this book presents a comprehensive treatment of this question.

In summary, the backbone of our methodology will be the validation or refutation of individual abrogation claims, one at a time. Before we delve into the implementation details of this methodology, we find it necessary to address two general observations about the abrogation debate, namely bias and conflation. These observations impact our discussion of the individual abrogation claims and the Abrogation Doctrine as a whole.

### 3.1.1 Bias and Conflation

When a weighty subject like abrogation is debated, it is natural for both sides to be biased toward their viewpoint. Sometimes, this bias affects how they present their case. Some may avoid evidence that would undermine their case, and some may present conflated evidence that does not stand to scrutiny. While we will strive to avoid these pitfalls, some aspects of bias and conflation are worth highlighting.

- **Bias.** There are two aspects where our presentation may appear to have a bias. The first is when we present a refutation of an abrogation claim based on reconciling the two verses in the claim. In doing that, we will be citing and elaborating the interpretations that reconcile the verses, but not as much the interpretations that substantiate a conflict. There is a specific reason for selectivity in this case: the burden of proof is not symmetric as we established in Chapter 2;

#### Key Point



The agreed burden of proof means that viable interpretations that reconcile a conflict are sufficient to refute an abrogation claim, while viable interpretations that substantiate the conflict are not sufficient to validate the claim.

Therefore, we will focus on the reconciling side of the argument in our methodology.

The second aspect where our presentation may appear to have a bias is

when we quote the opinions of different scholars about individual abrogation claims. Scholarly opinions about a claim are ‘expert testimony’ type of evidence. Such evidence is not sufficient to prove or disprove the claim; it only raises doubt about the other side of the argument. Doubt, as it turns out, plays different roles in validating or refuting an abrogation claim. Why is that?

Once more, the reason is that the burden of proof is not symmetric. Reasonable doubt is sufficient to refute a claim, but not sufficient to validate it. Therefore, we may quote a scholar when he opposes a given claim, even though he supports other claims. It is not that we consider the same scholar to be right when he opposes a claim, and wrong when he supports it. Rather, his opposition may affect the conclusion whereas his support does not.

This lopsided treatment is not a manifestation of bias, but rather a consequence of the burden of proof, a burden that is sanctioned by the pro-abrogation scholars themselves. This observation will figure prominently in Part II where we discuss individual abrogation claims since the burden of proof applies to them. The next observation about conflation relates to Part III where we discuss the Abrogation Doctrine as a whole.

- **Conflation.** When we defined the Abrogation Doctrine in §1.3, we emphasized the fact that its scope is limited to *abrogated verses in the Quranic script*. We also pointed out that this type of abrogation is but one part of a wider theological debate about abrogation in general.

The discussion of whether abrogation has occurred sometimes mixes different types. In particular, statements that establish that other types of abrogation have occurred are sometimes treated as if they were proof of abrogation of verses within the Quranic script. Here are some examples of this kind of conflation.

4 We already saw an example of a Prophetic narration that lifted the prohibition of visiting the graves. However, this is not relevant to the Abrogation Doctrine because that prohibition had been enacted by the Prophet (PBUH) and not through a Quranic verse. Therefore, this does not prove or disprove that Quranic verses have been abrogated.

We also saw an example of abrogation that took place between different scriptures, where Jesus (PBUH) allowed things that had been forbidden before him. More generally, the consensus of scholars<sup>3</sup> is that the Bible was abrogated by the Quran. However, this is not relevant to the Abrogation Doctrine (Nada [190]). Whether previous scriptures were abrogated does not prove or disprove that Quranic verses have been abrogated.

There is also clear evidence that Quranic verses abrogated practices that

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<sup>3</sup>Some scholars consider the Bible abrogated only in part, as we will discuss in §9.3.2.

preceded them that were not mandated through the Quran itself. A famous example is Verse 2:144 which mandates that Muslims face the Sacrosanct Mosque in Mecca in their prayers.

Before that verse was revealed, Muslims faced Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem when they prayed. That was not because of Quranic instruction, but rather by example of what the Prophet (PBUH) did. Therefore, this case did not involve abrogating a Quranic verse, so it is not relevant to the Abrogation Doctrine. Whether Quranic verses abrogated rulings outside the Quran does not prove or disprove that Quranic verses themselves have been abrogated.

Another type of abrogation, which is mentioned in narrations that are uncertain in sourcing (Appendix A.7.1), involves previously revealed verses that were allegedly abrogated and eliminated from the Quran altogether.<sup>4</sup> Whether these verses existed has no imprint in the Quranic script as the Prophet (PBUH) left it for us, so they do not prove or disprove the Abrogation Doctrine. The doctrine is only concerned with verses “between the two covers of the Quranic script” (بين دفتي المصحف).

The conflation of different notions does a disservice to scholarship, creating ambiguous statements and opening the door for unfounded conclusions. When we discuss the Abrogation Doctrine, which we do as the exclusive topic of this book, the evidence should be about that doctrine, not about any other type of abrogation.

## 3.2 Sorting out Abrogation Claims

In this section, we start discussing the implementation details of our methodology. These details pertain to how the different abrogation claims will be debated in Part II. There are hundreds of abrogation claims in the literature (see Appendix A.2). They can be divided into different groups according to their fame, merit, subject matter, or other criteria.

We divided the claims mainly according to their fame, which is measured by their prominence in the literature and the number of scholars who discussed them. Famous claims in general have merit that warrants detailed discussion, but their levels of merit are not uniform. In our view, some less famous claims have more merit than some famous ones.

The most famous claims will be discussed starting from this chapter and in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. These claims include the ‘big 3’ which are the three most supported claims in the abrogation literature. They also include the

<sup>4</sup>These are categorized as cases of “abrogation of ruling and recitation” or “abrogation of the recitation, but not the ruling” in the abrogation literature. The Abrogation Doctrine itself deals with “abrogation of the ruling, but not the recitation” as we discussed in §1.5.

“sword verse” claims which impact hundreds of verses but have been largely dismissed in the literature for centuries now. Al-Suyuti’s list of 20 widely referenced claims is also included.

Among all 432 abrogation claims in the literature we surveyed, we identified 10 claims that warrant the most detailed and judicious discussion. We will address these 10 claims first, each in its own section from §3.4 through §6.1.

For each of the 10 claims, we will go through the evidence and the arguments for and against it in detail. We will focus on specific arguments that reconcile the perceived conflict, and we will cite the opinions of scholars about the claim. As an example, we will illustrate this methodology by debating one famous claim in complete detail in §3.4 later in this chapter.

The next group of abrogation claims have less merit, and they are covered in §6.2 through §7.8. These claims cover a wide variety of topics, from fighting, to foods, to marriage, to criminal law, to forgivable sins.

After that, we are left with weaker claims, which are the vast majority of abrogation claims found in the literature we surveyed. Chapter 8 covers all of them. Most of them can be summarily dismissed because they violate what pro-abrogation scholars have called *conditions for abrogation* (شروط النسخ). These conditions are applicable in so many abrogation claims that we opted to organize them as ‘validation rules’ that we establish in the next section §3.3, and then cite repeatedly as we address various abrogation claims throughout the book.

Finally, among weaker claims, there are numerous frivolous claims that are included in §8.3 just for completeness. There is no reason in these claims to consider abrogation. Some of them did not even cite an abrogating verse (Ibn Al-Jawzi [147]), and some did not cite a rationale for the claim. Some use labored methods such as breaking up a sentence to claim abrogation. Here is an example mentioned by Ibn Salama [170] about this Quranic passage:

﴿إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ۖ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ﴾ [العصر: ٢-٣]

[103:2-3] Indeed, mankind is lingering in a loss • except those who have faith, do righteous deeds, counsel each other with the truth, and counsel each other with patience.

He claimed that the second part that specifies the exception abrogated the first part, notwithstanding that it is a simple exception made within the same sentence.

Scholars often didn’t bother discussing frivolous claims, and sometimes mockingly dismissed them. For example, Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] addressed such



claims by saying “*I avoided mentioning verses that were claimed abrogated in writings that do not accomplish other than wasting time most excessively.*”

In the next two sections, we go into the implementation details of the methodology as it applies to different types of claims. First, we will articulate the rules that can be quickly applied to dismiss weak claims. Then, we will demonstrate the discussion template that will be used in debating meritorious claims.

### 3.3 Rule-Based Methodology

The main reason for having a rule-based methodology in the abrogation debate is that, outside of the limited number of meritorious claims, the majority of abrogation claims can be refuted in a straightforward manner. These claims naturally fall into a small number of categories. All the claims within each category can be refuted using essentially the same argument.

Addressing a category of abrogation claims *en masse* is not a novel approach. Pro-abrogation scholars themselves have developed tools for that. They set conditions that abrogation claims cannot violate (شروط النسخ), and used these conditions to dismiss whole categories of claims (Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] and Zeid [206], among others).<sup>5</sup>

We will refer to these conditions as *validation rules*. Their main utility is to avoid repetition when we discuss weaker claims that are similar. We can just invoke the relevant validation rule in each case instead of repeating the same argument. The rules will also be used as a shorthand for explaining the opinions of different scholars when they refute a claim.

Roughly speaking, validation rules fall into two categories, some are based on reconciliation and some are based on principle. The rules based on reconciliation identify typical ways where a conflict between two verses is perceived when in fact the verses complement, rather than annul, each other. The rules based on principle reflect violations of fundamental theological principles that the abrogation claim would entail. We will give examples of Quranic verses for each rule.

The legitimacy of the rules based on reconciliation is a direct consequence of the ‘irreconcilable conflict’ requirement on abrogation claims that we discussed in §2.2. In that section, we quoted the scholars who support this requirement, so we will not repeat the quotes here. We will, however, quote scholars who support the rules based on principle, since those present new concepts that we have not yet covered.

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<sup>5</sup>Some of the conditions have less support from pro-abrogation scholars, so they will not be mentioned here or used for refutation to be on the safe side.

### 3.3.1 Rules Based on Reconciliation

All abrogation claims have an element of perceived conflict that the claimant could not reconcile. In many of these claims, reconciliation is possible and sometimes straightforward. Reconciliation has priority over conflict because of the burden of proof (§2.2). While reconcilability depends on the specifics of the verses in question, certain themes of obvious reconcilability recur in many abrogation claims and can be articulated as litmus tests that can immediately refute the claims. Here is the first one.

**Rule 1 : Elaboration**

*If one verse is an elaboration of the other verse, that is not abrogation.*

This validation rule is an antidote to the conflation of the broad meaning of the word *naskh* with the strict definition of abrogation,<sup>6</sup> which resulted in scores of abrogation claims. The rule is phrased in different ways by pro-abrogation scholars, e.g., Waliyullah [203], and it covers a lot of territory. An example of the methods for elaboration of text (وسائل البيان) is detailing a brief (تفصيل المجمل). Another example is specifying a generality (تخصيص العام) by specifying to whom it does not apply (exception - الاستثناء), when or where it may not be followed (license - الرخصة), or itemizing options for doing it (alternatives - البدائل). The following two verses provide an illustration.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوتِكُمْ حَتَّى تَسْتَأْذِنُوا وَتُسَلِّمُوا  
عَلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ﴾ [النور: ٢٧]

[24:27] O you who have believed, do not enter houses other than your own houses until you ascertain welcome and greet their inhabitants. That is best for you, so that hopefully you remember.

which talks about the etiquette of entering other people's homes, was claimed to be abrogated by a subsequent verse

﴿لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ مَسْكُونَةٍ فِيهَا مَتَاعٌ لَّكُمْ  
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا تَكْتُمُونَ﴾ [النور: ٢٩]

[24:29] There is no blame upon you for entering houses that are not inhabited, in which there is utility for you. And God knows what you reveal and what you conceal.

<sup>6</sup>Some elaboration methods were referred to as 'partial abrogation' (نسخ جزئي) by the Abu-Hanifa school of thought (Zeid [206]).

This is an obvious case where the elaboration rule applies. If a home has been abandoned, there is no longer a requirement to ask for permission to enter if the need arises. This elaborates the command in the first verse by making a logical exception to the requirement of asking for permission. It does not mean that the mandate of the first verse is gone; we still have to ask permission before we enter any home that is not abandoned. As you would expect, the majority of scholars agree with this reasoning, rejecting the abrogation claim.

You can see from this example the reason elaboration is not abrogation; it is because the elaborated ruling is not annulled. It is detailed, explained, specified, etc., but *it still contributes to the overall ruling* which is now comprised of the union of the two verses.

Despite this obvious fact, many scholars made abrogation claims where it is clear that one verse just elaborates another. As we discussed in §2.3.2, these scholars were probably using the broader meanings of the word *naskh*, not abrogation *per se*. We are only addressing abrogation in this book (see the definition of the Abrogation Doctrine on page 6), so any claim that does not involve actual abrogation is of no concern to this book.

The next validation rule is an obvious one. Nonetheless, some of the claims that it refutes have gained traction in the literature.

**Rule 2 : Sameness**

*If the two verses speak of two different subjects, circumstances, or people, that is not abrogation.*

There is no conflict between such verses. Their rulings are either distinct, where the subjects are unrelated, or complementary, where the subjects are related but dealt with differently. However, there is a surprising number of abrogation claims that fail such a simple rule, making it necessary to include it as an explicit rule. Scholars have used this rule in refuting abrogation claims, e.g., Waliyullah [203], without formally stating it as a rule, perhaps because it is so obvious. Here is an example. The verse,

﴿فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَمَا أَنْتَ بِمَلُومٍ﴾ [الذاريات : ٥٤]

[51:54] So leave them, [O Muhammad], for you are not to be blamed.

which talks about how to deal with those who offensively deny the religion,<sup>7</sup> is claimed to be abrogated by the verse that follows it,

<sup>7</sup>This interpretation is based on the context which is determined by the two preceding verses 51:52-53.

﴿وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرَ تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ [الذاريات : ٥٥]

[51:55] And remind, for indeed, the reminder benefits the believers.

which prescribes a different way of dealing, except that it is dealing with a different group altogether, namely the believers as opposed to the disbelievers handled by the first verse. The majority of scholars duly reject this abrogation claim that violates the sameness rule.

The next two rules deal with situations where there is nothing to reconcile in the first place. This happens when a verse has already set constraints on itself, so there is no conflict when another verse is compatible with those constraints.

**Rule 3 : Temporariness**

*If a verse indicates that its ruling is temporary, and another verse replaces that ruling, that is not abrogation.*

This rule is applied in [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#) and [Zeid \[206\]](#) to an example that illustrates the point:

﴿... فَأَعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ ...﴾ [البقرة : ١٠٩]

[2:109] ... So, excuse and pardon until God brings His command ...

The word ‘until’ makes it clear that the command may change later. The new command would not be an abrogation of the first one, because the first command has already anticipated it. Indeed, God subsequently revealed a number of verses directing the Muslims to fight back instead. For example,

﴿أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلِمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ﴾ [الحج : ٣٩]

[22:39] Those who have been fought are given permission [to fight back] for they have been wronged, and God is certainly capable of making them prevail.

The command to endure hostility was not abrogated by the command to fight back because the former was explicitly temporary until God mandates otherwise. Exegetes have postulated that the reason God did not allow Muslims initially to fight back was that they were too weak. When Muslims became stronger, God allowed them to fight back.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Under this interpretation, verse 2:109 may become applicable again if Muslims become weak in a different era. The refutation of its abrogation in this case would be based on a different validation rule (Rule 4).

While this validation rule refutes the claim of abrogation based on the expiration of a time constraint, the next rule deals with a different type of constraint.

**Rule 4 : Contingency**

*If a verse specifies a contingency for its ruling, and another verse has a conflicting ruling but without this contingency, that is not abrogation.*

This rule is commonly applied in the literature, dating back to [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#). What is a contingency (عِلَّةُ الْحُكْمِ)? It is a condition for carrying out a command. As long as the contingency exists, the command is to be carried out. If the contingency is no more, so is the command no more. If the contingency comes back, so does the command.<sup>9</sup> An example of a contingent command is,

﴿لَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ﴾ [الْمُتَّحَنَةِ : ٨]

[60:8] God does not forbid you from those who did not fight you in the religion and did not evict you from your homes that you be good to them and be equitable with them. God loves the equitable.

﴿إِنَّمَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَاهَرُوا عَلَى إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَنْ تَوَلَّوْهُمْ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ﴾ [الْمُتَّحَنَةِ : ٩]

[60:9] Rather, God forbids you from those who fought you in the religion, evicted you from your homes, and supported those who did - that you ally with them. He who allies with them - then those are the wrongdoers.

These two verses make it clear that the prohibition from forming alliances with some non-Muslims is only for those non-Muslims who are hostile and militant against Muslims. For all others, Muslims are encouraged to be cordial and equitable. The contingency here is hostility. Verse 60:8 shows what happens when the contingency is not there, and verse 60:9 shows what happens when it is.

This validation rule would refute the claim of abrogation involving such contingency since there is patently no conflict between the two verses. If the

<sup>9</sup>This principle is captured by the expression “the ruling goes around with its contingency, in affirmation as well as in negation.” (الحكم يدور مع علته ثبوتاً ونفياً)

contingency is there, the contingent ruling applies. If the contingency is not there, the other ruling applies.

### 3.3.2 Rules Based on Principle

There are situations where an abrogation claim can be summarily dismissed without having to go through a reconciliation effort. This happens when claiming abrogation would violate a fundamental principle in the religion. We will present two validation rules which capture such a situation.

#### Rule 5 : Facts

*If the verse is a statement of fact, it cannot be abrogated.*

This rule is widely supported by pro-abrogation scholars. Here is an example.

﴿ إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ﴾ [المزمل : ٥]

[73:5] Indeed, We will cast upon you [Muhammad] a weighty utterance.<sup>10</sup>

There is no command here, just a statement about what will happen. This verse would not be subject to abrogation. The reason is that abrogation in this case would mean that the statement has become untrue, and that is not a possibility for a statement made by God. Because of this point, some scholars have been adamant in their support of this rule. [Al-Nahhas \[71\]](#) goes as far as doubting the faith of those who disagree with it.

This rule is also among the oldest validation rules in the literature, appearing in early books such as the exegesis by [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#). Nonetheless, there are dissenters. The book by [Ibn Salama \[170\]](#) is one of the early dedicated books on abrogation, and it states that the above verse 73:5 is abrogated, a claim that is overwhelmingly rejected.

Verses that tell stories of the past, or relate historical events, are likewise statements of fact and cannot be abrogated. For instance,

﴿ قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً قَالَ آيَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمَزًا ﴾  
[آل عمران : ٤١]

[3:41] [Zachariah] said, "Lord, give me a sign." [God] said, "Your sign is that you will not speak to people for three days except by gesturing."

<sup>10</sup>The utterance is understood to be the Quranic revelation.

This verse cannot be abrogated because the event of Zachariah’s three-day silence has already happened. While this may be obvious, verse 3:41 was actually claimed abrogated. The majority, however, disagreed. We discuss this claim briefly on page 186.

It is important to differentiate between purely declarative statements, and statements that are structured as declarative but semantically carry a command. This occurs in many languages, and Arabic grammar allows it as well. For instance, the statement

﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٥٦]

[2:256] “There is no compulsion in religion ...”

signifies a command “do not compel people in matters of religion.” Therefore, Rule 5 would not properly apply to this case. The verse was claimed to be abrogated by a minority, and the claim was refuted using methods other than this validation rule.

1

The next rule is self-evident and widely accepted;

**Rule 6 : Chronology**

*An abrogated verse must have been revealed earlier than the verse that abrogated it.*

Despite its simplicity and clear logic, this rule is difficult to validate or invalidate in some cases. The Quranic script is not ordered according to the chronology of revelation. In fact, that chronology is not completely known.

Here is what is known about the chronology. For Quranic chapters, their order of revelation is mostly known based on historical events such as the immigration from Mecca to Medina (see Appendix A.6). For verses within a chapter, the order of revelation is mostly the same as the order in the Quranic script (Daruza [135]), with some of the exceptions related to us by narrations that indicate a different order. Unfortunately, most of these narrations are uncertain in sourcing.

Notwithstanding this uncertainty, the chronology rule is a rule of principle, and a majority of pro-abrogation scholars have acknowledged it. In fact, Al-Zahiri [121] further requires that the chronology in a claim of abrogation be known without doubt.

### 3.4 Analysis-Based Methodology - (3:102)

As we have seen, rule-based methodology is sufficient for refuting weaker abrogation claims. In this section, we illustrate the main, analysis-based methodology that deals with meritorious abrogation claims. We will do that through an example of a famous claim about religious piety. As we discuss the claim, we will point out the different steps of the methodology in boxed commentary.

First, we specify the verses (abrogated and abrogating) involved in the claim. Only the parts pertaining to the abrogation claim are quoted. A straightforward translation of these parts is included and may be elaborated later as we discuss the claim. We also cite some key figures who made or supported the claim,<sup>11</sup> in chronological order. (Step A)

#### A) The claim:

The following verse,

﴿... اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ ...﴾ [آل عمران : ١٠٢]

[3:102] ... watch out for God as He ought to be watched ...

has been claimed to be abrogated by the verse:

﴿فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ ...﴾ [التغابن : ١٦]

[64:16] So watch out for God as much as you can ...

This claim is supported by a number of early Muslims as reported in [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#), and by many scholars including [Al-Sadusi \[84\]](#), [Al-Andalusi \[19\]](#), [Ibn Salama \[170\]](#), [Al-Suyuti \[100\]](#), and [Al-Karmi \[60\]](#).

Next, we explain the apparent conflict between the verses that gave rise to the claim. Pinpointing a conflict is the basis for considering an abrogation claim meritorious. (Step B)

#### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The basis for the claim of abrogation is a perceived conflict between the command in the first verse to watch out for God as He ought to be watched, which is a very high standard if at all attainable, and the command in the

<sup>11</sup>Appendix [A.2](#) tabulates the number of scholars for and against each abrogation claim in the literature that we surveyed.



second verse to watch out for Him as much as we can. The annulment of the mandate of the first command, which is the basis for claiming abrogation, is inferred from the fact that following the second command which came later would be sufficient, therefore we do not have to follow the first command.

Next, we present reconciliation arguments for the two verses in order to refute the abrogation claim. Often, more than one interpretation is presented starting from the most plausible in our view. Possible rebuttals of those interpretations are included where appropriate. (Step C)

### C) Reconciliation arguments:

There are several viable interpretations that reconcile the two verses, thus showing that there is no actual conflict and refuting the abrogation claim. The first interpretation, which is widely mentioned in the literature, is that “as much as you can” is in fact synonymous with “as He ought to be watched” (Makki [184]). This view is based on a broad Islamic principle that is established in another verse:

﴿لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٦]

[2:286] God does not charge a soul except [that within] its capacity

...

so “as He ought to be watched” cannot be more than “as much as you can.” As Mostafa [186] phrases it, this is an example of “*clarifying the enigmatic*” where “as much as you can” clarifies what “as He ought to be watched” means.

Some have rebutted this interpretation by claiming that verse 2:286 itself is abrogated. However, this is not possible since verse 2:286 is a statement of fact, so it cannot be abrogated by verse 3:102<sup>12</sup> or by any other verse for that matter, according to the Facts validation rule. This leaves only the possibility that the verses need to be considered in conjunction, so the reconciliation argument is justified.

A second argument that reconciles the verses is advocated by Waliyullah [203]. It contends that the mandate in verse 3:102 is about matters of faith, while the mandate in verse 64:16 is about acts of worship. This interpretation is supported by what the verses say after their piety mandate. Verse 3:102 continues to say “and do not die except as Muslims” so it stands to logic that this is about faith. Verse 64:16 continues to say “and listen and obey, and spend [in the way of God]” [التَّائِبِينَ : ١٦] ﴿... وَاسْمَعُوا وَأَطِيعُوا وَأَنْفِقُوا ...﴾ so it stands to logic that this is about actions.

<sup>12</sup>In addition, such abrogation claim would violate the Chronology validation rule since verse 2:286 comes before verse 3:102 in the recognized order of revelation.

The fact that these are two different facets of piety eliminates the perceived conflict. [Al-Arid \[20\]](#) reports that Al-Shazli, a respected scholar of the 7th *hijri* Century, presented the same interpretation.

**A third argument** also proclaims that the two verses address different facets of piety, where the first verse addresses the *quality* while the second verse addresses the *quantity*. What does that mean? Let us look at the specific wording used in verse 3:102 and its context to understand the meaning.

- **The wording.** Some linguistic aspects of the Arabic words used in verse 3:102 need to be highlighted. The word اتَّقُوا (*ittaqu*, translated to ‘watch out for’) and its conjugations are among the more elaborate words in the Arabic vocabulary. The noun تَقْوَى - *taqwa* can be translated to ‘watching out [for God]’ or ‘piety’, among other translations. The word that qualifies the ‘piety’ in the verse is حَقٌّ - *haqq* which means ‘true’, so the part that is translated to “as He ought to be watched” can also be translated to “according to His true piety” more literally.

Furthermore, the word used for piety in the verse is not the straight noun تَقْوَى - *taqwa*, but a singular version of it: تُقَاة - *tuqah*, which means a piety or a type of piety.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, the translation of the verse can be further refined to “watch out for God in the true way He is to be watched.”

- **The context.** What is the “true way” of piety mandated by verse 3:102? The context of the verse sheds some light. Here are the preceding two verses, together with the complete verse translated according to the above linguistic analysis.

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَطِيعُوا فَرِيقًا مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ يَرُدُّوكُمْ  
بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ كَافِرِينَ ﴾ [آل عمران : ١٠٠]

[3:100] O you who have believed, if you obey some of those who were given Scripture [before you], they would turn you back, after your belief, [to being] unbelievers.

﴿ وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ وَأَنْتُمْ تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ وَفِيكُمْ رَسُولُهُ  
وَمَنْ يَعْتَصِم بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ هُدِيَ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴾ [آل عمران : ١٠١]

[3:101] And how could you disbelieve while the verses of God are being recited to you, and among you is His Messenger? And

<sup>13</sup>The classical dictionary *Lisan Al-Arab* (لسان العرب) mentions that تُقَاة - *tuqah* is a singular of تُقَى - *tuqa* ([Ibn Manzur \[168\]](#)). The word تُقَى - *tuqa* is synonymous with تَقْوَى - *taqwa* (the straight noun for piety) according to *Al-Sihah* (الصِّحَاح), another classical dictionary ([Al-Jawhari \[58\]](#)).

whoever holds firmly to God has [indeed] been guided to a straight path.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾  
[آل عمران : ١٠٢]

[3:102] O you who have believed, watch out for God in the true way He is to be watched and do not die except as Muslims.

Verses 3:100 and 3:101 warn Muslims not to obey followers of previous scriptures, but instead to rely on God's Messenger and God's verses. The conclusion comes in 3:102 that Muslims should watch out for God in the true way He is to be watched and not die except as Muslims. Given this strong context, "the true way He is to be watched" would be referring to the *Islamic* way.

- **Piety in Islam.** How is the Islamic way of piety different from the piety in other religions? Some groups in Christianity believe that they will not be punished in the Hereafter once they accept Christ (РБУН) as their savior. It is therefore likely that the way they watch out for God will be different from those who believe that they will be held accountable in the Hereafter, which Islam teaches.

Another difference comes from some groups in Judaism who do not fully believe in life after death. It is, therefore, likely that the way they watch out for God is to the extent that He affects them in this life. In Islam, the extent encompasses both this life and the Hereafter, which calls for a different way of piety.

[Al-Arid \[20\]](#) points out another difference between Islam and previous religions in their view of piety which further substantiates our interpretation. He addresses monasticism (الرهبانية), a religious discipline of piety championed by Christians which, according to a number of Islamic scholars including [Ibn Taymia \[173\]](#), Muslims are not allowed to practice.

Monasticism is highly demanding and fits the image of dedicated religiosity, so it seems like a higher level of piety that would be commendable to attain, but verse 3:102 stresses to Muslims that the true piety God wants from them is to be practiced differently; in the way Islam details.

The conclusion of this discussion is that verse 3:102 specifies a 'quality' by mandating the nature of piety that Islam prescribes. This interpretation fits the exact wording and the context of the verse. Verse 64:16, on the other hand, specifies a 'quantity' by mandating that Muslims should strive for that piety *as much as they can*. There is no conflict between the two mandates since they are talking about different facets of piety, and this lack of conflict invalidates the abrogation claim.

One final remark. We have presented different interpretations that reconcile the two verses. All it takes is one of them to hold in order to refute the abrogation claim. Having more than one interpretation can only strengthen the case against abrogation, since one viable reconciliatory interpretation is sufficient, regardless of all other interpretations.

Next, we present corroborating evidence related to the abrogation claim. Often, it is in the form of narrations from highly regarded figures about the claim. Rebuttal arguments will also be included as appropriate. (Step **D**)

#### **D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:**

There are narrations, including one from Ibn Abbas (RA), which report that when verse 3:102 was revealed, Muslims perceived the mandate in it as unattainable, and that verse 64:16 came as a follow-up to that reaction. [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#) reports some of these narrations, but also reports a different narration stating that Ibn Abbas (RA) opposed the abrogation claim. The authenticity of all of these narrations is not clear. A similar story supporting the abrogation claim, with more elaborate details, is mentioned in [Al-Andalusi \[19\]](#) without any attribution.

As to the circumstances surrounding the revelation of verse 3:102 (together with the 2 verses before it and the one after it), a story is reported about an attempt to break the unity of Muslims that was foiled when these verses were revealed ([Al-Wahidi \[116\]](#)). However, the story does not bear on the abrogation claim itself one way or the other.

Next, we give examples of scholars who did not approve the abrogation claim, mostly from the pro-abrogation camp. They will be grouped according to the basis of their conclusion. The basis will be briefly described, often by citing a corresponding validation rule. (Step **E**)

#### **E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:**

As “expert testimony” that this abrogation claim should be dismissed, we are going to cite some of the scholars who accepted one of the reconciliation arguments that we presented in Step **C**. To accept that the verses can be reconciled is to reject the abrogation claim.

[Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#), [Makki \[184\]](#), [Al-Nahhas \[71\]](#), [Al-Khodari \[64\]](#), [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#), [Al-Zurqani \[128\]](#), [Nada \[190\]](#), and [Al-Zalmi \[123\]](#) opposed the claim, arguing that the two verses are saying the same thing (first argument in Step **C** above).

Zeid [206] and Shula [199] opposed the claim based on the Elaboration validation rule; one verse elaborates the other.

Waliyullah [203], and Al-Shazli according to Al-Arid [20], opposed the claim based on the Sameness validation rule; the two verses are dealing with different subjects to begin with.

Finally, we highlight the main reconciliatory interpretation, and possibly other points of the case, and state our conclusion about the validity of the abrogation claim. (Step F)

### **F) Conclusion:**

Based on the above interpretations of the two verses of this abrogation claim that reconcile the perceived conflict, one way to summarize what the verses say is:

Watch out for God to the best of your ability, and God will recognize that as the way He ought to be watched since He never asks for anything beyond your ability.

This reconciliation is enough to refute the abrogation claim according to the established burden of proof.



With both tools of our methodology in place, the detailed analysis of §3.4 and the validation rules of §3.3, we are ready to methodically address the vast body of abrogation claims in Part II.

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## Part II

# The Claims

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OUR study of the abrogation literature has revealed 432 abrogation claims that have been made over the centuries. The vast majority are easily refutable. Our focus will be on the meritorious claims. We will carefully evaluate them one by one against the **burden of proof** that was established in Chapter 2.

We covered the first meritorious claim as an example in §3.4 and will cover nine more in the next three chapters. After that, we will address the rest of the claims. A number of them have some merit, and we will analyze them as well. The vast majority have been regarded as weak or even frivolous, and we include them just for completeness.



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## Chapter 4

# Famous Claims

In this chapter, we discuss five abrogation claims that are ubiquitously mentioned in the literature. They are claims of great interest and have been studied by a large number of scholars. They seem to have merit, are sometimes cited as proof of the Abrogation Doctrine, or have otherwise an important bearing on the tenor of this book.

### 4.1 Widow's Residence (2:240)

We start with a claim that had gained significant traction in the early centuries of Islam despite being readily refutable as many scholars have later concluded, including Ibn Taymia and Ibn Kathir.<sup>1</sup> This is a particularly impactful claim as it affects the livelihood of a person at a difficult juncture, namely a widow in the aftermath of losing her husband.

#### A) The claim:

The following verse,

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لِأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَتَاعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنْ مَعْرُوفٍ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾ [البقرة: ٢٤٠]

[2:240] And those who decease among you and leave wives behind - a will for their wives: provision for a year without eviction. But if they leave [of their own accord], then there is no violation on your

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<sup>1</sup>See details in Step E.

part in what they do with themselves of proper norms. And God is mighty and wise.

is claimed to be abrogated by

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ﴾ [البقرة : ٢٣٤]

[2:234] And those who decease among you and leave wives behind - they, [the wives, shall] wait observantly for four months and ten [days]. And when they have reached their term, then there is no violation on your part in what they do with themselves within proper norms. And God is keenly aware of what you do.

It is also claimed to be abrogated by other verses, most often verse 4:12 that specifies the inheritance shares of widows and widowers. With very few exceptions, early Muslim scholars approved this claim, e.g. [Ibn Sallam](#) [171], [Al-Nahhas](#) [71], [Ibn Salama](#) [170], [Al-Baghdadi](#) [24], and [Makki](#) [184]. Most exegetes, including [Al-Tabari](#) [107], approved the claim as well. Some later scholars such as [Al-Suyuti](#) [100] and [Waliyullah](#) [203] also approved it, and some even used it as an example that illustrates the validity of the Abrogation Doctrine, e.g., [Farghali](#) [136].

## B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The grace period (عِدَّة) of a widow is the time when she needs to abstain from marrying again. The perceived conflict is based on interpreting verse 2:240 as setting the grace period to one year whereas verse 2:234 sets it to four months and ten days. Another perceived conflict is with the inheritance verse 4:12 which sets a specific share of the husband's estate for the widow, whereas verse 2:240 gives her a separate allotment of one year's provision.

## C) Reconciliation arguments:

One aspect that may have propelled this abrogation claim is the striking similarity in the wording of the two verses. Both 2:234 and 2:240 start with the exact same words (وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا (And those who decease among you and leave wives behind)). Later on, they use almost identical words:

فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ (then there is no violation on your part in what they do with themselves within proper norms) in verse 2:234, and

فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنَ الْمَعْرُوفِ (then there is no violation on your part in what they do with themselves of proper norms) in verse 2:240.

This may have put the spotlight on the salient difference between the two verses, namely the length of time they specify; one specifies four months and ten days and the other specifies a year, thus giving the appearance of conflict.

However, there is another salient difference between the two verses that removes any conflict: *the subject matter*. As Al-Khodari [64] asserts, “whoever looks at the two verses sees that they are of different subjects” (الناظر إلى الآيتين (يراهما مختلفي الموضوع). Verse 2:234 addresses an obligation on the widow (to wait observantly through the grace period) and verse 2:240 addresses an obligation on the husband's estate (to provide for the widow and not evict her from the residence), which is a right for the widow not an obligation on her.

Therefore, there is no conflict between the different time frames in the verses. One time frame is for the grace period by which she is obligated, and the other is for the right of residence to which she is entitled but not obligated.

As Qutb [191] states it, “So this decides a right for her that she can use if she wants, and that decides a duty on her that she cannot escape” (فهذه تقرر حقاً) (لها إن شاءت استعمالته، وتلك تقرر حقاً عليها لا مفر منه). Abu-Zahra [6] states that one verse is about a duty on the woman and the subject of the other is a right for her, commenting that this is “crystal clear from the text” (واضح بيّن من النص).

The contexts of the two verses also support this dichotomy of right versus duty, as Al-Ghali [43] points out. Verse 2:234 is followed by other duties pertaining to respecting the grace period in verse 2:235, while verse 2:240 is followed by other rights of provision for women from their husbands in verse 2:241, using the same word *متاع* (provision) used in verse 2:240.

This reconciliation has been adopted by many other scholars. It is based on the explicit instructions of the verses, and it is so straightforward that it may raise the question of why a conflict was perceived in the first place. The perception may be attributable to some narrations that are related to the two verses, and to the historical context of pre-Islamic practices concerning widows.

We will address these aspects in detail in Step **D**, but as far as reconciling what the two verses explicitly state, there is no conflict that needs reconciliation. As Zeid [206] notes, “and as it is intuitive that the right would not conflict with the duty, a verse that determines the right would not conflict with a verse that determines the duty” (وكما أن من البدهي أن الحق لا يعارض الواجب) (ـ) فإن من البدهي ألا تتعارض آية تقرر الحق مع آية تقرر الواجب.

**A second argument** reconciles verse 2:240 with the inheritance verse 4:12 that specifies what the widow would inherit from her husband's estate,

﴿... وَلَهُنَّ الرُّبُعُ مِمَّا تَرَكْتُمْ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ

فَلَهُنَّ الثُّمُنُ مِمَّا تَرَكْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ تُوصُونَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ ... ﴿النساء : ١٢﴾

[4:12] ... And for [the wives] is one fourth of what you left if you do not have a child. But if you have a child, then for them is an eighth of what you left, after any bequest you make or debt ...

which has also been claimed to abrogate verse 2:240. There is clearly no conflict between providing residence for the widow for a year and giving her a share of the estate after that. Zeid [206] puzzles: “*where is the conflict between inheritance and the right of residence and support?*” (أي تعارض بين الميراث وحق السكنى والنفقة?).

- Perhaps the perceived conflict is with a related Prophetic narration, not with the verses themselves. The narration in question states that there is no bequest for an heir.<sup>2</sup> Those who see a conflict may view the provision for the widow's residence as a bequest for her, contradicting that she is a stated heir in verse 4:12. Without going into the authenticity of this narration or the question of whether a Prophetic narration can abrogate the Quran, let us reconcile what the narration says with what verses 2:240 and 4:12 say.

The first facet of reconciliation is that the full statement of the narration says: “*God has given everyone who has a right their right, so there is no bequest for an heir.*” Al-Tabari [107] and many others have concluded that the widow's residence in verse 2:240 is a mandated right by God for the widow, not an option for the husband to bequeath or not. Given that, why would the God-given right of residence for the widow be excluded from the scope of “*God has given everyone who has a right their right*” in the above narration?

The residence is not “*a bequest for an heir*” which would mean that the husband opted for it; it is a direct command from God that leaves no choice for the husband. Therefore, there is no conflict between honoring the residence requirement of verse 2:240 and abiding by the Prophetic narration.

The perceived conflict with the narration may have been the result of semantic ambiguity. The Arabic word وصية is used in both the verse and the narration.<sup>3</sup> The word can mean ‘instruction’ which is how it is used in the verse, and can mean ‘bequest’ which is how it is used in the narration. The fact that it is the same word, appearing in an imperative sense in the verse and a prohibitive sense (لا وصية) in the narration, may have given an impression of conflict even though the two uses have different meanings.

- This leads us to the second facet of reconciliation. The bequest that the narration restricts has its origins in verse 4:12. Per the verse, the shares are to be divided “*after any bequest you make or debt*”. The narration restricts

<sup>2</sup>Reported by Al-Tirmizi [113] and belatedly authenticated by Al-Albani [13] but found inauthentic by several scholars, such as Ibn Al-Arabi [144].

<sup>3</sup>The semantic ambiguity of the word وصية plays a role in another abrogation claim in §6.1.

one of the two (bequest) but not the other (debt). This raises an interesting question. Does the mandatory nature of the widow's residence make it fall under 'debt' rather than 'bequest'? If so, it would not fall under the purview of the narration, so there would be no conflict to contend with in the first place. Let us explore this facet.

The word 'debt' (دَيْن) is not restricted to borrowed money. It applies to financial obligations in general. One example is the husband's dowry to his wife which is broken into two parts, one part paid to her at the beginning of the marriage and the other part paid later. If the man dies before paying the second part, it is taken from his estate and given to the widow (Ibn Taymia [172]) before any other division of the estate is administered. This is clearly a financial obligation rather than returning borrowed money since the man certainly did not borrow that money from his wife.

Al-Qurtubi [80] gives another example of 'debt' in the specific context of interpreting "after any bequest you make or debt". He reports that Al-Shafei opined that other financial obligations related to religious duties should be taken from the estate as part of the 'debt' before distribution of the shares start, *"it's imperative to take that from his capital, and this is apparent at the outset, because it is a right among the rights, so it has to be fulfilled on his behalf after death"* (وجب أخذ ذلك من رأس ماله، وهذا ظاهر ببادئ الرأي، لأنه حق) (من الحقوق، فيلزم أدائه عنه بعد الموت).

The residence has something else in common with the debt category that it does not have with the bequest category. The allowance for debt in verse 4:12 has no upper limit; it may consume all the estate, while the allowance for bequests is limited to one-third of the estate.<sup>4</sup> The widow's residence is similar to debt in that it also has no upper limit; the cost of residence may consume part of the estate or may consume the entire estate, depending on how big the estate is.

To summarize, the reconciliation here is that the widow's residence is a God-given right not an optional bequest. If it is to be categorized, it would fall under the debt allowance of verse 4:12. Therefore, it would not infringe on the *"no bequest for an heir"* restriction of the Prophetic narration if this was in fact the reason for claiming abrogation.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

Given the straightforward reconciliation of verses 2:234 and 2:240, the entire case for the abrogation claim hinges on the availability of further evidence. Such evidence should be compelling enough to overcome, all by itself, the burden of proof needed for the abrogation of a Quranic verse that we established in §2.1. Zeid [206], who rejected this abrogation claim, focused his refutation

<sup>4</sup>The basis for this limitation is another Prophetic narration, authenticated by Muslim [189].

arguments on such evidence. We will follow in his footsteps.

The evidence consists of narrations by key figures related to the claim, as well as accounts of pre-Islamic customs of mourning. As we will see, the evidence is not uniformly supportive of the abrogation claim; some of it is in fact *against* the claim and some of it does not favor either side. The evidence is also conflicting in terms of other details not directly related to the abrogation question. We will discuss each piece of evidence in detail given the critical role it plays in this particular abrogation claim.

- Narrations by the Prophet (PBUH)

These narrations have often been cited in the discussion of this abrogation claim. The words of the Prophet (PBUH) do not mention abrogation, but they are related to issues that verses 2:234 and 2:240 address.

In the first narration (Al-Bukhari [35]), the Prophet (PBUH) instructs a woman to have her widowed daughter stick to observing the mourning rites for four months and ten days, then mentions that mourning in pre-Islamic customs used to be for one year. This puts the Islamic mourning period in perspective, as a lightening of a burden. It also elaborates verse 2:234 in that the grace period is also a mourning period.<sup>5</sup>

Al-Qurtubi [80] refers to this Prophetic narration as the tipping point for his siding with the abrogation claim. Maybe he viewed the reference to ‘one year’ in the narration as related to the year of residence provided for the widow by verse 2:240, although the words of the Prophet (PBUH) explicitly referred to the year of mourning “*in pre-Islamic era*” (في الجاهلية).

In the second narration (Al-Tirmizi [113]), a woman tells the Prophet (PBUH) that her husband was killed and she was left in the home by herself, then asks if she can move to her family’s home instead. The Prophet (PBUH) instructs her to “*stay where you are until the mandated term is reached*” (امكثي مكانك). The term is understood to be the four months and ten days, <sup>6</sup> so the narration is elaborating verse 2:234 by requiring the grace period to be spent at the husband’s home.<sup>7</sup>

Nonetheless, Al-Tabari [107] uses this Prophetic narration to tip the balance in favor of the abrogation of verse 2:240. Maybe he viewed forbidding the widow from moving out of her husband’s home until the grace period of four months and ten days is over as contradicting her freedom to move out

<sup>5</sup> Al-Basri is reported to dismiss the mourning rites altogether (Al-Nahhas [71]).

<sup>6</sup> “*Until the mandated term is reached*” (حتى يبلغ الكتاب أجله) in the narration are words from the verse that follows verse 2:234 which fixed the four months and ten days period.

<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that the rating of this Prophetic narration by Al-Tirmizi is a degree below authentic (حسن صحيح), and that there is a narration by Ibn Abbas (RA) stating that the widow can spend her grace period wherever she wants (narration # 26 in Appendix A.3).

during the year's residence which is inferred from verse 2:240. This is also how [Al-Zurqani \[128\]](#) viewed it.

[Zeid \[206\]](#) rejects this view. Indeed, verse 2:240 does not address the conditions under which the widow can move out of her husband's home during the year's residence. It only addresses the obligation of the estate to provide for her by ending this obligation *should she move out*. This is perfectly compatible with further specification of the conditions for moving out, e.g., she cannot move out during her grace period of four months and ten days, but she can freely move out after that, forfeiting the rest of her support within the remaining seven months and twenty days of the year. As we will see shortly, a narration by Mujahid says as much.

In the third Prophetic narration that is cited by [Al-Wahidi \[116\]](#) as the circumstance of revelation of verse 2:240, the narrator mentions that a man who immigrated to Medina died and left a wife, parents, and children behind. When this was conveyed to the Prophet (PBUH), he gave the man's estate to the parents and children but not to the wife according to the norms of the time, but ordered them to provide for her from the estate for a year. This narration is not authentic, as pointed out by the verifier of Al-Wahidi's book. Authenticity aside, let us look at how the narration may impact the abrogation argument.

The only aspect that could be relevant to the abrogation of verse 2:240 would be in connection with the inheritance verse 4:12, not with the grace-period verse 2:234. The ruling of the Prophet (PBUH) in this narration came before the inheritance rules of verse 4:12 were revealed,<sup>8</sup> so he followed the existing norms of dividing the estate, which did not include a share for the widow. However, he ordered the year's provision for the widow out of the estate, presumably in response to the command in verse 2:240 since Al-Wahidi cites the narration as a circumstance for the revelation of the verse.

Now, this narration has been used in the context of arguing that the inheritance verse 4:12 abrogated the right to a year's residence (e.g., [Al-Khazen \[62\]](#)). The idea is that verse 4:12 gives the widow a specific share of the estate, whereas the narration shows that there was no share for her before. However, the verse does not say that this share is given *in lieu of* the year's residence that verse 2:240 mandates. It just gave her the share and did not order taking away anything else. Perhaps taking away the residence came up by invoking the “no bequest for an heir” rule? If so, this angle was addressed in detail in Step C above.

- Order of Revelation of the two verses

For verse 2:234 to abrogate verse 2:240 as postulated by the claim, it must have been revealed later (the [Chronology](#) validation rule). [Al-Zahiri \[121\]](#) re-

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<sup>8</sup>See Appendix A.6 for the order of revelation of Quranic chapters.

quires the chronology to be without doubt for an abrogation claim to stand. What is the evidence that verse 2:234 was revealed after 2:240, notwithstanding that it appears earlier in the Quranic script?

Almost all scholars who approve this claim and raise the chronology question contend that the order in the Quranic script is not necessarily the same as the order of revelation. This is certainly true, but it does not prove the assertion that *in this particular case*, the two verses in question were revealed in the opposite order of where they appear in the Quranic script.

No evidence was provided for this assertion in the extensive literature we surveyed unless the abrogation claim itself is taken as evidence, which would make it a circular argument. Makki [184] raised doubts that 2:240 was revealed before 2:234 even as he conceded the abrogation claim. Ibn Al-Arabi [145] included the opposite view that verse 2:240 is the one that abrogated verse 2:234.

Adding to the uncertainty, there is a narration that quotes both Mujahid and Ibn Abbas (RA) that implies the opposite order of revelation. The part by Mujahid rejects the abrogation claim altogether, and the part by Ibn Abbas (RA) makes the opposite claim of abrogation; that verse 2:240 abrogated verse 2:234, not the other way around. This narration was authenticated by Al-Bukhari [35], even though there are some reservations about the narrating chain which we will address when we discuss the narration shortly.

Another narration, also authenticated by Al-Bukhari [35] reports the reaction of Uthman (RA) to a remark about this abrogation claim. In one version, it is not clear which of the two verses abrogates the other. In another version, the abrogated verse is specified as verse 2:240, but the narrator equivocates his account by saying “*or something like that*” (أو نحو هذا). Zeid [206] comments about this narration by identifying the abrogated verse as 2:234 and the abrogating verse as verse 2:240, then uses the narration to challenge the claimed chronology.

The conclusion is that there is no proof that the order of revelation that is necessary for the abrogation claim holds, and there is more than one reason to suspect the reverse; that the verse claimed abrogated was revealed after the verse that is claimed to abrogate it.

- The narration by Uthman (RA)

We have just mentioned two versions of this narration (Al-Bukhari [35]). In one version, Ibn Al-Zubair (RA) was asking Uthman (RA), who as Caliph had commissioned a comprehensive transcription of the Quran, why he still included verse 2:240 even though it was abrogated. Uthman (RA) responded that he would not change anything from its place.

The question by Ibn Al-Zubair (RA) shows that his opinion is that verse



2:240 is abrogated. However, he was not asking Uthman (RA) about the abrogation aspect; he was asking him why he did not remove the verse from the Quranic script. The answer by Uthman (RA) did not address the abrogation aspect one way or the other; he only emphasized that he would not change anything in the Quranic script from the way the Prophet (PBUH) left it for us. His answer could not have been “no, that verse is not abrogated” even if that was his view, since this would suggest that if it were abrogated, he would remove it from the Quranic script as Ibn Al-Zubair (RA) was asking.

Therefore, as far as evidence for the abrogation claim of verse 2:240 is concerned, we have the opinion of Ibn Al-Zubair (RA) to consider. [Al-Zurqani \[128\]](#) and many other scholars have repeatedly emphasized that an opinion that a verse is abrogated, even by a fellow of the Prophet (PBUH), does not establish that the verse is abrogated. An opinion cannot overrule the authority of the Quran.

- *The narration by Mujahid*

A narration by Mujahid (see narrations [26](#) and [27](#) in Appendix A.3) goes against this abrogation claim by reconciling the two verses in a way that is compatible with the argument presented in Step C. It states that the two verses mandate a grace period for four months and ten days followed by an additional allowance for residence for seven months and twenty days, thus completing the year that is mentioned in verse 2:240.

The narration was authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#). There is a question about whether Ibn Abi-Najeeh, the narrator that reported from Mujahid, is giving a first-hand account.<sup>9</sup> There is another narration and commentary bundled with Mujahid's narration in the same listing in [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#), and these additional parts were conveyed by Ataa Al-Khorasani who has been criticized as a narrator. However, this has no bearing on the part narrated from Mujahid since the narration chain for that does not include Al-Khorasani.

The narration by Mujahid is acknowledged by most authors who wrote about this abrogation claim, but they have mixed views about it. For example, [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#) describes this narration as “*authentic, proved*” (صحيح ثابت) as he defends it against doubts about its authenticity, but he sides with the abrogation view and refers to the same narration two paragraphs later as “*anomalous, deserted narration*” (رواية شاذة مهجورة).

- *Other narrations*

There are other narrations expressing opinions by early Muslims about this abrogation claim ([Al-Tabari \[107\]](#)). Some of the narrations attributed

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<sup>9</sup>According to Ibn Hibban, everyone who quoted Mujahid in matters of exegesis took those quotes from the writings of Al-Qasim Ibn Abi-Bazza, the scholar who did hear Mujahid directly ([Ibn Hajar \[159\]](#)).

to Ibn Abbas (RA) support the abrogation claim, but other narrations also attributed to him assert that verse 2:240 is the *abrogating* verse not the abrogated verse. Additional narrations assert different issues such as allowing the grace period to be observed anywhere, not just at the husband's home.

There are also conflicts between the narrations by other early Muslims. While most of them support the abrogation claim, some only support abrogation by the inheritance verse, not by verse 2:234. Some of them link the abrogation question to pre-Islamic customs about widows that continued in the early days of Islam. All of these narrations are singles, with varying authenticity levels. Seldom do they include the reasoning behind their conclusions; they just state their opinion summarily.

In closing, we went through the evidence that is often cited for and against the abrogation of verse 2:240. Given how straightforward the reconciliation argument of the verses was in Step C, a very compelling evidence was needed to prove abrogation. The evidence needs to surmount the certainty of a Quranic verse, following the principle 'ما ثبت باليقين لا يزول إلا باليقين' (what was established with certainty cannot be eliminated except with certainty).

The given evidence would not even remotely achieve such level. The inevitable conclusion here is described by the simple words of Zeid [206] as he concludes his discussion of verses 2:234 and 2:240, "so there is no way to claim that one of them is abrogated by the other" (فلا مجال لادعاء أن إحداهما منسوخة) (بالأخرى).

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

Here are some of the major pro-abrogation scholars who did not approve the abrogation claim of verse 2:240.

Mujahid, a fellow of Ibn Abbas (RA), is the earliest major scholar who is reported to have rejected this abrogation claim. As we mentioned, a narration authenticated by Al-Bukhari [35] reports that Mujahid interpreted the two verses as mandating a grace period for four months and ten days followed by an additional allowance for residence for seven months and twenty days (see narrations 26 and 27 in Appendix A.3), thus completing the year that is mentioned in verse 2:240.

Al-Razi [83] agreed with the opinion of Al-Asfahani who rejected the claim, describing this opinion as "extremely correct" (في غاية الصحة).

Ibn Taymia did not approve this claim according to his student Ibn Kathir<sup>10</sup> who expressed the same opinion (Ibn Kathir [163]); there is no abrogation because verse 2:234 is about obligations of the widow whereas verse 2:240 is

<sup>10</sup>We could not find a written account of this opinion in Ibn Taymia's writings, but Ibn Kathir conveyed the opinion in his own writings.

about obligations of the husband's estate, as we elaborated in Step C.

Many modern pro-abrogation scholars have rejected this abrogation claim based on the same right-versus-duty argument of Step C, e.g., Zeid [206], Al-Arid [20], and Hamza [138]. Ibn Uthaymin [177] presents both the abrogation view and the reconciliation view without taking sides, while Al-Shaarawi [92] presents the reconciliation view as a forgone conclusion without even mentioning abrogation as an alternative.

#### F) Conclusion:

There is no conflict between verses 2:234 and 2:240, nor with verse 4:12. Together, they say to Muslims:

A Widow has an obligation to wait in observance after the death of her husband for four months and ten days. She also has a right to residence and support for a full year, taken from her husband's estate before it is distributed among the heirs. She cannot be evicted during the year, but what she does of her own accord, within proper norms, after her obligation is done is not a violation on the part of anyone involved.

Nothing in the wording of the three verses prevents this reconciliation. Abrogation was claimed here without its core ingredient, an irreconcilable conflict.

#### 4.1.1 Impact of an Abrogation Claim

The claim that verse 2:240 is abrogated is a vivid example of the real-life impact an abrogation claim can have. The prevailing opinion of scholars was in favor of this abrogation claim in the early centuries of Islam. This means that for centuries, widows were denied the right to live in their late husband's home for the year specified in the Quran based on the belief that this right has been abrogated.

While other abrogation claims had their impact, none had both the traction and the personal impact that this claim had. For instance, the claim that "There is no compulsion in religion ..." [البقرة : ٢٥٦] ﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ...﴾ is abrogated could potentially have serious, widespread impact. However, this claim did not gain traction so the impact was limited to fringe groups. By contrast, the claim that verse 2:240 was abrogated was mainstream, almost a forgone conclusion.

It is fair to say that from a point on in Islamic history, this abrogation claim has been thoroughly debunked. Perhaps the stature of Ibn Taymia and Ibn Kathir is what turned the tide against it and made future scholars

reexamine the evidence more carefully. The evidence had been there all the time. The obvious reconciliation of the verses was spelled out by Mujahid in the first century of Islam and has been cited by numerous authors ever since.

However, the recovery from this claim came too late for the Muslim widows who had been deprived of their God-given right to shelter, based *merely* on this abrogation claim. This was happening even as the abrogation claimants fully acknowledged that verse 2:240 granted the widows the right not to be evicted. Let us look at some of their quotes.

- After a lengthy analysis of all that was said about verse 2:240, [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) concludes the discussion by interpreting the closing of the verse “and God is mighty and wise” (وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ) by saying “and God is mighty in His revenge on whoever disobeys His command and prohibition” (والله عزير في انتقامه ممن خالف أمره ونهيه). He goes on to list examples of such disobedience and includes “and evicting [the widows] before the year is over” (وإخراجهن قبل انقضاء الحول).
- [Al-Ghornati \[47\]](#) comments that the closing of the verse “shows prevalence and supremacy over whoever prevented the execution of the will for the mentioned support, or evicted [the widows] when they didn’t want to leave” (إظهار للغلبة والقهر لمن منع من إنفاذ الوصية بالتمتع المذكور، أو أخرجهن). (وهن لا يخترن الخروج).
- [Ibn Adel \[143\]](#) also comments on the “God is mighty” closing, saying that it implies “threat against whoever deviates from the line of this revelation, through evicting the woman when she does not want to leave” (الوعيد بالنسبة لمن خالف الحد في هذه النازلة، في إخراج المرأة، وهي لا تريد الخروج).

Nonetheless, eviction was the rule for centuries. A great injustice was done in the name of this abrogation claim; widows were deprived of the relief that God gave them to get back on their feet after losing their husbands. The relief was taken away by this one claim. While Muslims have recovered from the claim itself, the injustice that the claim has caused cannot be reversed.

## 4.2 Intoxication and Prayer (4:43)

In spite of it being one of the most famous abrogation claims in the literature, this claim did not make it to the celebrated list of 20 claims by Al-Suyuti (see §6.3). It did make it to Zeid’s shorter list as the last of his 5 approved

claims.<sup>11</sup>

### A) The claim:

The following verse,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَى حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ ...﴾ [النساء: ٤٣]

[4:43] O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while you are intoxicated until you know what you are saying, ...

has been claimed to be abrogated by the verse:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾ [المائدة: ٩٠]

[5:90] O you who have believed, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, stone altars (a sacrificial ritual to idols), and divining arrows (a wagering ritual) are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may prosper.

This claim is supported by many scholars, including Ibn Abbas (RA) as reported by [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#) who also approved the claim, [Al-Zuhri \[127\]](#), [Ibn Salama \[170\]](#), [Makki \[184\]](#), [Al-Nahhas \[71\]](#), and [Zeid \[206\]](#). A related verse (2:219) is also claimed to be abrogated by verse 5:90, but with less support from scholars. We will address verse 2:219 when we analyze evidence pertaining to this claim in Step **D** below.

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The basis for the claim of abrogation is that while the first verse prohibits prayer for someone who is drunk, the second verse prohibits alcoholic drinks altogether. The perceived conflict comes from the inference that the first verse permits alcoholic drinks as long as they don't interfere with the prayers, while the second verse annuls such permission with its blanket prohibition.

### C) Reconciliation arguments:

Verse 4:43 commands Muslims not to approach prayer while intoxicated. No one has claimed that this command has been annulled in the sense that we

<sup>11</sup>[Zeid \[206\]](#) has an uncharacteristically brief discussion of this claim, only two paragraphs after more than 30 pages discussing the other 4 claims he approved. Interestingly, [Burton \[134\]](#) cites an earlier version of Zeid's work (1963) and states that only 4 claims were approved there, not including this claim.

are now allowed to approach prayer while intoxicated. The claim of abrogation is largely based on one of two views:

1. That the command not to approach prayer while intoxicated implies that alcoholic beverages would be otherwise allowed, namely as long as they do not interfere with prayers, and this allowance was abrogated by the prohibition in verse 5:90.
2. That the command not to approach prayer while intoxicated was rendered moot by the prohibition of alcohol in verse 5:90, so it was abrogated in that sense.

We will present arguments against both views. Let us start with the first.

What was the situation before verse 4:43 was revealed? Alcoholic beverages were permitted unconditionally. This permission did not come from a juristic ruling, but it came from the absence of any juristic ruling prohibiting alcohol. An established principle in Islamic jurisprudence is *default allowance* (البراءة الأصلية); if something has not been forbidden, then it is implicitly allowed (Khallaf [183]). Indeed, early Muslims drank alcohol freely.

When verse 4:43 was revealed, it did not address what was already allowed by default except for prohibiting Muslims from praying while intoxicated, which had not been prohibited before. If an inference was made that drinking was allowed outside of prayer times, that allowance was not something that the verse stated, but a continuation of the default allowance that preceded the verse.

- However, some have argued that the existing allowance was ‘ratified’ by verse 4:43, i.e., the verse provided a *juristic ruling* that allows for drinking outside prayer times. The basis for this argument is *inference by contrast* (مفهوم المخالفة), the notion that if something was forbidden for a stated condition, then one could infer that outside that condition it is allowed as a matter of juristic ruling, not just through default allowance. Based on this view, they argued that verse 5:90 abrogated the inferred ruling of 4:43 that drinking is allowed outside prayer times.

Is inference by contrast a binding juristic principle? It is not, according to Al-Jassas [56] and scholars of the Abu-Hanifa school of thought as well as A. Al-Ghazali [45], Al-Zahiri [121], Al-Amidi [18], and Abu-Zahra [6], among others. It is easy to see why. Consider the verse

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا الرِّبَا أَضْعَافًا مُضَاعَفَةً ...﴾ [آل عمران: ١٣٠]

[3:103] O you who have believed, do not consume usury, doubled and multiplied ...

which forbids Muslims from practicing usury, but with the qualification “doubled and multiplied”.

If inference by contrast was a valid juristic principle, it would mean that this verse provides a juristic ruling that allows practicing usury as long as it is a small amount, not “doubled and multiplied”. This conclusion is patently not true. Indeed, emphasizing a grievous aspect of bad conduct, such as practicing usury in an excessive way or being drunk at the sacred time of prayers, does not create a blanket permission to practice the bad conduct under less grievous conditions.

Some advocates of the use of inference by contrast as a juristic principle employ examples to support their view where the inference they make can be deduced from the status quo, not from a new juristic ruling that changes the status quo. Thus, while the ruling they deduce may be valid, the basis for it is not. As [Al-Amidi \[18\]](#) phrases it, “*The disagreement is about attributing the negation in what was not mentioned to what the text signifies rather than to the pre-existing negation* (فإن النزاع إنما وقع في إسناد النفي في محل السكوت إلى دليل). (الخطاب، لا إلى النفي الأصلي).”

A claim of abrogation critically depends on where the basis of the ruling lies; if the basis is the status quo, not the verse that is claimed abrogated, then the abrogation claim is misplaced. In the case of verse 4:43, it is undeniable that alcoholic beverages had been permitted by default allowance as the status quo prior to the verse.

Inference by contrast is not only problematic as a juristic principle, but it is also misapplied here. The command in the verse is “do not approach prayer while intoxicated”, not “do not get intoxicated at prayer time”. If it were the latter, the inference by contrast would be that you can get intoxicated outside of prayer time, which is what the abrogation view contends. The inference by contrast of the actual command in the verse would be “approach activities other than the prayer while intoxicated” or “approach the prayer while not intoxicated.”<sup>12</sup> Neither of these would have a bearing on the act of getting intoxicated itself.

• This brings into focus an important fact; the command in verse 4:43 is about prayer, not about intoxication. This can be seen from the continuation of the verse which mentions another situation where praying is disallowed,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّىٰ تَغْتَسِلُوا ...﴾ [النساء : ٤٣]

<sup>12</sup>The verb that is translated to ‘approach’ is a conjugation of *يَقْرُب* - *قَرَّبَ* which is a transitive verb that means to approach, attempt, or engage with. A closely related intransitive verb *يَقْرُب* - *قَرَّبَ* means to get close.

[4:43] O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while you are intoxicated until you know what you are saying, nor while you are sullied (by copulation) unless you are on the road, until you have bathed ...

The verse thus specifies two situations under which prayers are not allowed (موانع الصلاة), as highlighted by Al-Maraghi [69]. One situation is being drunk and the other is being sullied. If a Muslim is in either of these two situations, prayer is not allowed. The verse also spells out the conditions for being re-allowed to pray. In the case of being drunk, the condition is knowing what one is saying (sobriety) while in the case of being sullied, the condition is bathing (cleanliness).

There is nothing *in the verse* that addresses the legitimacy of the activities that led to being drunk or being sullied. For example, being sullied could be the result of legitimate sexual activities with one's spouse, or could be the result of forbidden activities. Permissibility of the activities, or lack thereof, is not what the verse is about. It is permissibility of praying in these conditions that the verse is addressing.

In summary, the first view that supports this abrogation claim is based on a juristic principle of inference by contrast that is not valid, and that is misapplied even if it were valid. This is a far cry from the standard needed to claim abrogation, namely the certainty of a conflict between two verses that cannot be reconciled in any way except by annulling one of the verses. There is no conflict here in the first place, and the view that creates a conflict uses an invalid inference, and applies it incorrectly, thus manufacturing a conflict that does not exist.

**A second argument** to reconcile the two verses addresses the other view of claiming abrogation, that obeying the prohibition of drinking alcohol in verse 5:90 renders the command in verse 4:43 moot since no one will approach prayer while drunk if they would not drink in the first place. We will show that this view is flawed.

A simple question shows that verse 4:43 is needed until this very day: *Are there Muslims who drink alcohol?* They certainly should not, but this is not the question. The question is are there Muslims who fail to observe the prohibition of alcohol? The answer is undeniably yes; there have been, there are, and there will be Muslims who drink alcohol. This statement is not to condone such behavior, but to admit an undeniable reality. Hopefully, those Muslims will repent and stop drinking, but this is not the issue here. The issue is that Muslims who drink *exist*.

Next question: If a Muslim who drinks gets drunk in private and it's prayer time, is he allowed to pray? Again, we are not condoning this behavior, but this situation has undoubtedly occurred and will continue to occur in real life. We are just asking a simple question: is he allowed to pray? Yes or no? The



answer is no *because of verse 4:43*.

It may be uncomfortable to ask questions that involve disobediences that we don't want to happen in the first place. However, this is an integral part of religious rulings. For instance, not fasting in Ramadan while one has no excuse is a serious offense. Nonetheless, we still ask what should a Muslim do in this situation, and there is a ready answer in terms of expiation. What to do when there is disobedience is not an encouragement of disobedience. It's an admission of reality. If we don't admit it, it doesn't disappear as a result; it just leaves us not knowing what to do in this situation.

The sensitivity around discussing alcoholic drinks may have also clouded our understanding of the principle established in verse 4:43, which is that we need to know what we are saying when we pray. This principle is repeated in other rulings. The prophet (PBUH) said *"If one of you drowns during prayer, let him sleep until he knows what he is reciting"* (إِذَا نَعَسَ أَحَدُكُمْ فِي الصَّلَاةِ فَلْيَنَمْ، (حَتَّى يَعْلَمَ مَا يَقْرَأُ)).<sup>13</sup> [Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#) considers 'not knowing what one is saying' as the best definition of being intoxicated.

A related situation deals with intoxication that does not involve alcohol ([Al-Ghali \[43\]](#)). If a Muslim goes under anesthesia for a surgery and remains drowsy for a while after the surgery, is he allowed to do the prayer in this condition? The answer is no because of the command in verse 4:43. A command that is to be followed is by definition not abrogated.

We have thus presented two arguments refuting the two views for claiming abrogation of verse 4:43. They are straightforward arguments, so why did this claim gain traction? Perhaps one of the factors that persuaded scholars to support this claim was the story about how the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) reacted to verses 4:43 and 5:90, as well as related verse 2:219. This is a worthwhile point that we will cover in the next step.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

The evidence used to substantiate the claim that verse 4:43 was abrogated by verse 5:90 is centered around the story of the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) as they dealt with the subject of alcoholic beverages before the blanket prohibition came in verse 5:90. The story involves key figures such as Umar (RA) and Ali (RA), and is supported by a number of narrations of varying authenticity. There are enough reliable components of the story ([Al-Mazini \[70\]](#)) to vouch for its authenticity as a whole. The question here is whether the story does support the abrogation claim.

The crux of the story is that the Fellows (RA) had struggled with the question of drinking alcohol as it was apparent to them that it was not a good practice, but the religion did not outright forbid it so they continued the

<sup>13</sup>Narrated by Anas (RA) and rated authentic (صحيح) by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

habit of drinking that predated Islam. Umar (RA) in particular had doubts and kept approaching the Prophet (PBUH) for clarification.

In succession, Quranic verses were revealed that denigrated, then restricted, then prohibited alcoholic beverages. The story is a vivid example of gradual legislation that provides a practical way of reversing entrenched habits, as we discussed in §1.6. The only question relevant to abrogation is whether this gradual legislation involved *annulment of Quranic verses*. This is what we will address here.

Chronologically, the first verse came before verse 4:43 and addressed the appropriateness of alcoholic beverages without mandating any specific action,

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَفْعِهِمَا ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢١٩]

[2:219] They ask you about intoxicants and gambling. Say, "In them is great sin and [yet, some] benefits for people. But their sin is bigger than their benefit." ...

This was the first direct indication that intoxicants were questionable from a religious point of view, but the verse stopped short of restricting them. Verse 2:219 is sometimes included with verse 4:43 as being abrogated by the prohibition of alcohol in verse 5:90. The rationale for abrogation, in this case, is that the prohibition of something conflicts with it having benefits, which verse 2:219 states. However, having benefits is a statement of fact so it is not subject to abrogation (the **Facts** validation rule). There is also nothing contradictory about prohibiting something that has more harm than good. As expected, the abrogation claim of verse 2:219 has less traction than that of verse 4:43.

Verse 4:43 was revealed some time after verse 2:219, and it provided the first religious restriction on alcohol. The practical impact of verse 4:43 was that Muslims avoided drinking unless it did not interfere with prayer times. This is a logical step for someone who wants to continue drinking without violating the new religious ruling. It is perhaps this practice that gave rise to the assertion that verse 4:43 allowed drinking outside of prayer times *as a matter of ruling*.

There was no such ruling in the verse; the Fellows (RA) did not start drinking after verse 4:43 was revealed; they *continued* drinking after it was revealed. The verse did not rule that drinking is allowed; it just did not rule that it is disallowed, so the default allowance continued to be what the Fellows (RA) followed.

Later on, verse 5:90 was revealed and prohibited alcohol altogether. It was a relief for many Muslims, especially Umar (RA), who have been struggling

with the issue and yearned for a decisive ruling about it. The key issue for the abrogation question is that the verses before verse 5:90 remained intact; the statement of fact about the benefits and the sin of intoxicants remains valid, and the prohibition of prayer while intoxicated remains in force.

Finally, there is one piece of evidence pertaining to this abrogation claim that is worth addressing. [Abu-Dawoud \[3\]](#) reports a narration by Ibn Abbas (RA) that states that verses 4:43 and 2:219 were abrogated (using the word *naskh*) by verse 5:90. The authenticity of the narration was judged to be sound, though one narrator in the chain was criticized.<sup>14</sup> Even if authentic, the word *naskh* has been repeatedly used by Ibn Abbas (RA) to refer to general adjustments rather than actual annulment, and the fact that verse 2:219 is included by him as abrogated when it is a statement of fact corroborates that *naskh* here was not meant as abrogation.

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

Here are some of the major pro-abrogation scholars who did not approve the abrogation claim of verse 4:43.

[Al-Razi \[83\]](#) did not approve this claim based on rejecting inference by contrast as a juristic principle, as outlined in the first reconciliation argument above.

[Ibn Al-Arabi \[144\]](#) rejected this claim based on the fact that the prayer continues to be prohibited in case of intoxication, as outlined in the second reconciliation argument above.

[Al-Ghornati \[47\]](#) goes further by stating that the majority opinion of scholars is that verse 4:43 is not abrogated (مُحْكَمَةٌ عِنْدَ الْجُمْهُورِ).<sup>15</sup>

[Al-Suyuti \[100\]](#) approved a list of abrogation claims that excluded this claim and stated that “*claiming abrogation in other verses is not correct.*” [Al-Zurqani \[128\]](#) rejected abrogation claims outside Al-Suyuti’s list (and even rejected some within the list), thus rejecting this claim.

#### F) Conclusion:

The reconciliation of verses 4:43 and 5:90 is straightforward since the perceived conflict is based on an indirect inference rather than conflicting words that need to be reconciled. Put together, the parts about alcoholic beverages in the two verses, which are the subject of the abrogation claim, say to

<sup>14</sup>Narration number 3672. The narrator in the chain that was criticized is Ali ibn Al-Hussein Ibn Waqid (علي بن الحسين بن واقد). More on him in Appendix A.3.

<sup>15</sup>The use of the word مُحْكَمٌ (secure or taut) to mean not abrogated is standard in the literature.

Muslims:

Alcoholic beverages are prohibited. If someone becomes intoxicated by violating this prohibition or by other means, they are forbidden from doing the prayer until they know what they are saying.

This straightforward reconciliation would refute the abrogation claim even if the burden of proof for abrogation was not as high as it is. With the high burden of proof, there is no doubt left.

### 4.3 Fasting Exemption (2:184)

This is one of only three abrogation claims that are mentioned in narrations which are considered certain in sourcing as we demonstrate in Appendix A.3. Ironically, this claim has one set of narrations that supports it and another set that rejects it (see page 360). The claim is about exemptions from the fasting requirement in Ramadan, so it impacts the practical life of Muslims. It addresses the question of what Muslims can do if they find hardship in observing the Ramadan fast.

#### A) The claim:

In verse 2:184, one of the exemptions from the fasting requirement, other than being sick or traveling, deals with endurance,

﴿... فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

[2:184] ... So whoever among you is ill or on a journey - then [substitute] an equal number of other days. And upon those who would endure [the fast] - a ransom of feeding a poor person ...

This endurance exemption is claimed to be abrogated by the following verse which mandates fasting in the month of Ramadan with exemptions for the sick and traveling, but with no mention of other exemptions.

﴿... فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٥]

[2:185] ... So whoever attains the month [of Ramadan], he is to fast it; and whoever is ill or on a journey - then [substitute] an equal number of other days ....

This claim is supported by a narration attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) (see narrations 8 and 12 in Appendix A.3). Many scholars support the claim, including Al-Nahhas [71], Ibn Salama [170], Makki [184], Ibn Al-Jawzi [147], Al-Karmi [60], and Al-Suyuti [100].

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The perceived conflict is that verse 2:185 mandates fasting in Ramadan and mentions exemptions from fasting that were also mentioned in verse 2:184, but it does not mention the exemption for “those who would endure [the fast]”<sup>16</sup> that was included in verse 2:184, thus implying that this exemption is no longer allowed.

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### C) Reconciliation arguments:

There is a logical reason why the endurance exemption is mentioned in verse 2:184, but not mentioned in verse 2:185. The reason becomes apparent when we look more closely at the two verses. Verse 2:184 is addressing the *duty* to fast. Verse 2:185 is addressing the *timing* of the fast. Therefore, verse 2:184 lists exemptions related to this duty, while verse 2:185 only lists exemptions related to the timing aspect. Here is the context of the first verse,

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾ أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ... ﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٣-١٨٤]

[2:183-184] O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you so that you may become pious - a limited number of days, so whoever among you is ill or on a journey - then [substitute] an equal number of other days. And upon those who would endure [the fast] - a ransom of feeding a poor person ...

Here, the duty of fasting is instituted on Muslims like it was instituted on their predecessors in previous scripture, without specifying the exact timing of the fast. Al-Qurtubi [80] addresses what the clause “as it was decreed upon those before you” refers to, and presents several views that it refers to the duty to fast. Ibn Ashur [153] concurs, saying that it establishes the original duty of fasting, not the details.

Therefore, what we know from these verses is that we are required to fast certain days that are not yet specified. Given that, the relevant exemptions

<sup>16</sup>Details about what ‘endure’ means in this exemption are discussed in side note 14.

here correspond to the difficulty of fasting at all, and also the temporary difficulty of fasting on particular days. These are precisely what the exemptions in verse 2:184 address, which include the endurance exemption *for the difficulty of fasting at all*.

In contrast, verse 2:185 addresses only the timing of the fast and exemptions from that timing, now that the duty has been established;

﴿ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَى  
وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ  
مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ... ﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٥]

[2:185] ... The month of Ramadan in which the Quran was revealed, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criteria - so whoever attains [that] month, he is to fast it; and whoever is ill or on a journey - then [substitute] an equal number of other days ...

The verse tells us when to fast, so the relevant exemptions are those related to the temporary difficulties in fasting at that particular time, such as being ill or on a journey where fasting can be postponed. An exemption that addresses the difficulty of fasting in general is not relevant to the timing, *since fasting will remain difficult even if it is postponed*.

This is the reason why the verse states the exemptions of being sick or traveling. These exemptions only postpone the fast and hence are related to its timing. The endurance exemption is related to the difficulty of fasting in general, so it need not be repeated here. It remains a valid exemption from the duty, not the timing.

The structure of the two verses also supports this contrast between duty and timing. The object in verses 2:183-184 is the fast itself (كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ) while the object in verse 2:185 is Ramadan (شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ ... فَلْيَصُمْهُ), which is the timing.

A second argument is put forward by Zeid [206]. He interprets 'endure' in verse 2:184 as implying a hardship, then notes that verse 2:185 which is claimed to be the abrogating verse states that

﴿ ... يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ ... ﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٥]

[2:185] ... God wants ease for you, and does not want hardship for you ...

which does not mesh with abrogating an exemption for hardship, namely the endurance exemption. Indeed, this point may outweigh the fact that the en-

duration exemption is not repeated<sup>17</sup> in verse 2:185. After all, other exemptions to fasting are also absent from the verse but are indisputably valid. For example, women do not fast during their menstrual period. This condition is not mentioned in verse 2:185, but it is universally accepted as a valid exemption by Islamic scholars.

These are the two main reconciliation arguments. Most of the other arguments in the literature focus on the meaning of ‘would endure’ in verse 2:184, which we will address in the next step.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

Al-Tabari [107] cites an opinion by a number of scholars that the endurance exemption in verse 2:184 was valid for the elderly while they can fast then it was abrogated (the word he used is *naskh*) except if they are unable to fast; “then that ruling that was for them before the abrogation would be at that point confirmed for them as it was” (فيكون ذلك الحكم الذي كان لهما قبل النسخ ثابتاً) (لهما حينئذ بحاله).

It is clear that the word *naskh* is not used here in the sense of abrogation since the statement is that the ruling is still valid in some cases. Similar discussions appear in numerous books, and there are narrations from key personalities about what the endurance exemption encompasses, so their focus is on the scope of the endurance exemption rather than its annulment.

There is indeed subtlety in interpreting the word ‘endure’ here. It is clear that enduring something implies that it can be done. It is also clear that the word has the connotation of difficulty in doing it. This applies to the original Arabic word يُطيق as well (Al-Khatib [61]), which can also be translated to ‘bear’ or ‘withstand’.

The different interpretations of the word, all the way to inferring that it actually means ‘cannot endure’, led Asad [130] to describe some of these interpretations as “conflicting and sometimes highly laboured”. Because this is the clear focus of many discussions of the abrogation claim, we will address it notwithstanding that it has no direct bearing on the abrogation question itself.<sup>18</sup>

Unlike prayers where one can pray while sitting or even lying down if one becomes weaker, fasting is binary; you either fast or you don’t. If you become weaker, you cannot fast for a shorter period or partially fast but drink water for example.

<sup>17</sup>Another situation where exemptions are not repeated but remain valid is discussed in side note 15.

<sup>18</sup>The meaning of ‘endure’ has no bearing on the abrogation claim because the claim is about whether the ‘endure’ exemption was abrogated, regardless of what that exactly entails. See side note 14 for a detailed discussion.

Therefore, the personal judgment that fasting has become too much of a hardship is agonizing for a pious Muslim, since it means no fasting at all. This is a bigger leap of faith than partial easing of a duty. The choice of the word ‘endure’ rather than outright ‘incapable’ allows a pious Muslim to break the fast in good conscience when the burden becomes really heavy for them. However, it is not an open license. The allowance is balanced by the closing sentence in verse 2:184 after the endurance exemption is given:

﴿... وَأَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

[2:184] ... But to fast is best for you, if you only knew.

thus giving pious Muslims a good reason to try to fast and not abuse the license. As [Al-Khatib \[61\]](#) phrases it, “*This is what holds the balance from tilting toward breaking the fast for those with excuses*”.

Finally, some scholars have cited historical events as evidence to support this abrogation claim. They point out that there was a change over time in how early Muslims fasted, and they associate this change with the transition from verse 2:184 to verse 2:185. Historically, fasting was optional for Muslims when it was initially assigned,<sup>19</sup> then became required when it moved to Ramadan. While this may be true, the historical timing of the old and new fast does not match the timing of revelation of verses 2:184-185.

In one account, the old fast had started seventeen months before the new fast ([Al-Baghawi \[23\]](#)). Verses 2:184-185 are consecutive in revelation, with no evidence that there was nearly a sufficient time gap between them. [Ibn Ashur \[153\]](#) spells out the time line in detail, making it clear that verse 2:184 could not have instituted the old fast. Therefore, using the optional nature of the old fast to support the claim that verse 2:184 was abrogated is inconsistent with the historical time line. Ibn Ashur also asserts that the majority of scholars see the “limited number of days” (أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ) mentioned in verse 2:184 as a reference to Ramadan, not to the old fast. Other scholars concur, e.g., [Al-Maraghi \[69\]](#).

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

A number of prominent pro-abrogation scholars did not approve this claim. For example, [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#) concludes that there is no abrogation, citing a narration by Ibn Abbas (RA) saying “*it is not abrogated*” (ليست بمنسوخة), which was authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

[Waliyullah \[203\]](#) rejects the abrogation claim based on a different interpretation. He asserts that the object of ‘endure’ in verse 2:184 is not the fast, but

<sup>19</sup>Fasting was observed for three days each month as well as on the 10th day of *Muharram*, the first month of the *hijri* calendar.



the ability to feed a poor person. [Asad \[130\]](#) concurs. This is linguistically possible since the object of ‘endure’ is not explicit in the verse. Waliyullah concludes that what is referred to is *zakat-ul-fitr*, the charity given by Muslims before the end of Ramadan.

[Zeid \[206\]](#) rejects the claim based mainly on the ‘ease not hardship’ statement in verse 2:185 that we discussed in the second reconciliation argument of Step C. The same point about ease and hardship was mentioned by other scholars as well. [Al-Arid \[20\]](#) also rejects the claim citing the opinions of a number of scholars.

### F) Conclusion:

The reconciliation of verses 2:184 and 2:185 is based on explaining why the endurance exemption from fasting was not repeated while still being valid. The two verses together say to Muslims:

Fasting is required of Muslims during Ramadan. Those who are sick or traveling may postpone the fast to other days, and those who suffer hardship in fasting may feed a poor person instead.

## 4.4 Debauchery Penalty (4:15-16)

This claim has legal consequences as it pertains to punitive measures for acts of debauchery. It is one of the more widely accepted claims by pro-abrogation scholars. Outside of the verses in the claim, there are narrations and traditions of varying authenticity that also deal with debauchery. Trying to put these different pieces together has significantly affected how scholars approached this abrogation claim.

### A) The claim:

Verses 4:15-16, which specify punitive measures for what they refer to as the ‘abhorrent act’ (الفاحشة),

﴿وَاللَّاتِي يَأْتِينَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ فَاسْتَشْهَدُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةً مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ شَهِدُوا فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ فِي الْبُيُوتِ حَتَّى يَتَوَفَّاهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ أَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا ۖ وَاللَّذَانِ يَأْتِيَانِهَا مِنْكُمْ فَأَذُوهُمَا فَإِنْ تَابَا وَأَصْلَحَا فَأَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا﴾ [النساء: ١٥-١٦]

[4:15-16] Those among your women who engage in the abhorrent act, seek testimony against them from four [witnesses] among you,

and if they testify, confine them (the guilty women) in the homes until death recalls them or God makes for them a way out • And the two (masculine) who engage in it (abhorrent act) among you, hurt them both. But if they repent and correct themselves, leave them alone. Indeed, God is ever Accepting of repentance and Merciful.

are claimed to be abrogated by verse 24:2, which specifies the penalty for fornication,<sup>20</sup>

﴿الزَّانِيَةُ وَالزَّانِي فَاجْلِدُوا كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا مِائَةَ جَلْدَةٍ ...﴾ [النور: ٢]

[24:2] The fornicating woman and the fornicating man - flog each of them a hundred lashes ...

This claim has been supported by many scholars over the centuries, e.g., Al-Nahhas [71], Al-Thaalabi [110], Al-Baghawi [23], Ibn Al-Jawzi [147], Ibn Kathir [163], Al-Maqdesi [68], and Ibn Ashur [153], but there is a wide variety in their opinions and in the specifics of what exactly abrogated what. The claim is one of only five claims that Zeid [206] approved.

## B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The perceived conflict is based on the assumption that the abhorrent act that verses 4:15-16 refer to is fornication (between a man and a woman, that is). This would create a conflict with verse 24:2 which specifies a different penalty for fornication.

## C) Reconciliation arguments:

Reconciling the verses of this abrogation claim is quite straightforward. The clearest interpretation of the verses *based on their own wording* shows no conflict at all. The perceived conflict stems from other evidence outside of the verses themselves that scholars sought to reconcile with what the verses say. Because of this, we will divide the discussion into two parts. In this step, we will present the interpretation that reconciles the verses. In the next step, we will turn to the other evidence and discuss it in detail.

The reconciliation hinges on whether the word *الْفَاحِشَةُ* (abhorrent act) in verse 4:15 could be referring to an offense other than fornication. If it could, the reconciliation would be immediate as verse 24:2 explicitly addresses fornication only.

<sup>20</sup>The Arabic word *الزُّنَى* that we are translating to 'fornication' denotes illegitimate heterosexual intercourse, including adultery. We are using 'fornication' for simplicity only.

## point to ponder

What if fornication is also a legitimate interpretation of the abhorrent act in verses 4:15-16? Given two possible interpretations, the burden of proof for abrogation claims (§2.2) mandates that the reconciliatory interpretation prevails, even if the other interpretation is also possible.

The first observation is that the word **الْفَاحِشَةُ** (abhorrent act) is used for meanings other than fornication in the Quran itself. Most notably, it is used to describe homosexual acts:

﴿وَلَوْ طَا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾ إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ ﴿٨١﴾﴾  
[الأعراف : ٨٠-٨١]

[7:80-81] And Lot when he said to his people, “Do you commit **the abhorrent act**? No one has preceded you with it in the worlds. Indeed, you engage with men desirously, instead of women, withal you are a transgressing people.”

Notice that the verse spells out *engaging desirously with the same gender instead of the opposite gender*, leaving no doubt that the highlighted word is being used to refer to homosexual acts. This is identically the same word in verses 4:15-16, mentioned explicitly in verse 4:15 then referenced again in verse 4:16 (يَأْتِيَانَهَا - engage in it).

- With this in mind, is the rest of the wording in verses 4:15-16 consistent with the offense in question being homosexual acts? It is not only consistent but quite befitting. This is far more than what is needed for reconciliation given the burden of proof for abrogation claims. Let us go through the wording in detail.

Verse 4:15 unambiguously talks about women. All the pronouns used are feminine. Therefore, the offense being addressed is one committed by women. It is therefore possible that this is about female homosexual acts. Not the only possibility, but *a possibility*.

Although the offense in question is committed by women, it is conceivable that it is committed *with* men (fornication), and the verse is just addressing how women who are involved in that offense should be dealt with. However, the wording of verse 4:16 goes against that possibility. Here is why.

The reason is that verse 4:16, which talks about the same offense (يَأْتِيَانَهَا - engage in it), uses the pronoun **اللَّذَانِ** to refer to its subjects. This masculine

pronoun denotes two people, either two males or one male and one female. If the offense referred to in 4:15 is fornication, then the pronoun in 4:16 must be referring to one man and one woman. If, on the other hand, the offense is about homosexual acts, then the pronoun must be referring to two men.

Now, if a woman is included in the pronoun of verse 4:16, then the mandate of the verse applies to her as well. This would contradict the mandate about women in verse 4:15. Here is the contradiction. Verse 4:16 instructs us to leave the two offenders alone (فَأَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمَا) if they repent and correct their ways, whereas verse 4:15 specifies house arrest with no direct reference to repentance as a way to end it.

Being left alone, as verse 4:16 mandates, is not compatible with being prevented from leaving the home, as verse 4:15 mandates. Even [Al-Suyuti \[104\]](#), who partially approves the abrogation claim, firmly excludes the possibility that women are included in verse 4:16.

It is not impossible to try to argue that both verses apply to women, or that they apply to women and men separately but are not about homosexual acts. However, such an argument would be highly labored. While a labored argument may be tolerated in some contexts, it is out of the question that the reconciliation of an abrogation claim would be excluded using a labored argument.

Indeed, the burden of proof means that all that is needed for reconciliation is a viable interpretation, or as pro-abrogation scholar [Al-Zurqani \[128\]](#) phrases it, “*any facet of interpretation*” (أي وجه من وجوه التأويل). The reconciliatory interpretation we presented is not only viable but in fact the most compelling.

To summarize, verse 4:15 addresses an abhorrent act committed by women. Once it is clear that the abhorrent act in verse 4:16 involves two men, and knowing that the offense is the same as the offense in 4:15 because of the wording of the verses, the logical conclusion is that the offense in both verses is that of homosexual acts. Since the other verse in the claim, verse 24:2, explicitly talks about fornication, there is no conflict between the verses and the abrogation claim is refuted.

Interpreting verses 4:15-16 as addressing homosexual acts is attributed to Al-Asfahani ([Al-Razi \[83\]](#)). Other scholars who support this interpretation include [Rida \[193\]](#), [Al-Madani \[66\]](#), [Al-Bahiyy \[25\]](#), and [Al-Khatib \[61\]](#), among others. There are also variations of this interpretation that were put forward by [Jumaa \[182\]](#) and [Afana \[7\]](#) to reconcile the verses.

The interpretation is also acknowledged by various pro-abrogation scholars. [Al-Ghornati \[47\]](#) starts his commentary on the verses with this interpretation, then details the arguments that support it. [Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#) approves this interpretation and discusses it in detail. [Al-Zamakhshari \[124\]](#) acknowledges this interpretation, and so does [Al-Baydawi \[31\]](#). [Al-Suyuti \[104\]](#) concludes

that verse 4:16 is talking about homosexual acts in no uncertain terms.

- There is an additional, subtle point about verses 4:15-16. The verses use *present-tense* forms of the verb يَأْتِي (engage in). This means that the offenses are current, rather than something that was committed only in the past and then stopped.

The verses are focused on preventing further offenses, as the remedy in the verses is corrective in nature rather than just punitive. Both verses allow for an end to the corrective action, in 4:16 it is وَأَصْلَحَا فَأَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمَا (if they repent and correct themselves, leave them alone), and in 4:15 it is أَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا (or God makes for them a way out). [Al-Zamakhshari \[124\]](#) and others suggest that the way out is marriage.

#### point of interest

It can be argued that the ‘way out’ of house arrest that verse 4:15 mentions may actually be a favorable outcome such as marriage for example. However, as we will see in the next step, the entire case for abrogation is built around a drastically different assertion about the ‘way out’.

By contrast, verse 24:2 addresses an offense that happened already ([Al-Tabari \[107\]](#)). It does not matter if it no longer happens. The prescribed action is punitive in nature; it is mandated even if the offenders have already repented and corrected their ways. Why? Fornication, the subject of the verse, has consequences that homosexual acts, the subject of the other verses, do not have.

Fornication can lead to children out of wedlock, and it can lead to paternity mixups. These consequences happen regardless of whether those who fornicated have repented. By contrast, homosexual acts do not have these tangible consequences. They impact society, but that impact can be remedied by stopping the practice, which is the focus of verses 4:15-16.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

As we have seen, it is straightforward to reconcile the verses of this abrogation claim based on their wording. The reason the claim gained traction has to do with additional evidence outside the verses themselves. The main evidence is a Prophetic narration together with Prophetic traditions that scholars tried to reconcile with the verses, leading to this claim of abrogation among other things.

What is unique about the body of evidence in this case is that it covers broader issues than just what the verses say. Whether the abrogation claim

is valid is only one piece of the debate that this evidence invokes. Trying to reconcile the entire body of evidence to come up with a compelling, coherent conclusion has proved evasive – with or without the abrogation claim.

The efforts to reconcile the evidence are abundant in the literature. For example, Al-Khazen [62] discusses many differing opinions that are derived from that evidence, and so does Al-Nahhas [71]. Ibn Al-Arabi [145] describes the interpretation of verse 4:15 as “*a difficult riddle among verses, that I found no one who grasps it*” (مُغْضِلَةٌ فِي الْآيَاتِ لَمْ أَجِدْ مَنْ يَعْرِفُهَا). All are pro-abrogation scholars.

The subject at hand is the abrogation claim itself, rather than the broader issues, important as they may be. Therefore, we are going to focus on the evidence that directly pertains to the claim. The single most important piece of this evidence is a Prophetic narration about fornication<sup>21</sup> whose wording is linked to the wording of verse 4:15. This link compelled many scholars to conclude that the verse is talking about fornication as well.

The narration in question was included by Muslim [189] who judged its chain of narration to be reliable. Let us look at the narration first, then analyze it in detail.

The Prophet (PBUH) is quoted as saying “*Take after me, take after me - God has made for them [females] a way out, a maiden by maiden [gets] a hundred lashes and a year in exile, and a non-maiden<sup>22</sup> by a non-maiden [gets] a hundred lashes and stoning.*” (خذوا عني خذوا عني قد جعل الله لهن سبيلا) (البكر بالبكر جلد مائة وتغريب سنة والثيب بالثيب جلد مائة والرجم).

The link of this narration to the current abrogation claim is that the wording “*God has made for them a way out*” that it uses matches the wording in verse 4:15 “*or God makes for them a way out*”. The Quran does not use the expression “making for them a way out” in the feminine anywhere else. This makes it compelling that the narration is referring to what verse 4:15 said.

However, the role of the narration in this discussion is not that it abrogated<sup>23</sup> verse 4:15. The wording of the narration elaborates verse 4:15 rather than conflicts with it since it provides details about the ‘way out’ that were not included in verse 4:15, without contradicting anything the verse said.

Indeed, the role of the narration in the abrogation claim is that it is used as evidence that verse 4:15 is talking about fornication, not homosexual acts. This creates a conflict with verse 24:2 which explicitly talks about fornication

<sup>21</sup>The narration does not explicitly mention fornication, but it is universally interpreted as being about fornication.

<sup>22</sup>The Arabic word ثَيِّب which we translated to ‘non-maiden’ technically means someone who consummated a legitimate marriage at some point.

<sup>23</sup>Even those who accept that narrations can abrogate the Quran recognize that this is a *singles* narration, thus *uncertain in sourcing*. This means that it cannot abrogate something that is *certain in sourcing* like the Quran.

but prescribes a different punishment. It is this role that we are focusing on here because it is used as evidence against the otherwise obvious reconciliation argument.

A closer look reveals a number of significant discrepancies about this narration which raise legitimate concerns. We will address these factors in detail, one at a time.

### 1. Sourcing:

This narration is *uncertain in sourcing* (a *singles* narration). Its most credible sourcing was documented by [Muslim \[189\]](#), a major scholar. However, one of the narrators in the chain that he documented has a questionable record in terms of the narrations that he conveyed. This narrator is Al-Hasan Al-Basri. He was a respected scholar, but when it comes to narrations that he conveyed, there are widespread reservations about them.

Two of the foremost scholars in evaluating the credibility of narrators have very unflattering words about Al-Basri. [Ibn Hajar \[157\]](#) used technical terms to say that Al-Basri often quoted people he did not hear from and concealed weaknesses in his narration chains (كان يُرسل كثيراً ويُكَلِّس). [S. Al-Zahabi \[120\]](#) says that Al-Basri “is an imposer whose words are not to be taken as evidence from those he has not met, and he may impose from those he met” (هو مدلس فلا يحتج بقوله «عن» في من لم يدركه، وقد يدلّس عمن لقيه). Other books include examples of narrations by Al-Basri whose sourcing was impeached.

More pointedly, [Al-Shafei \[93\]](#) impeaches Al-Basri’s sourcing in the very narration we are addressing. In the version reported by [Muslim \[189\]](#), Al-Basri narrates from a middle man who quotes the person who heard the Prophet (PBUH). Commenting on the narration, Al-Shafei says that he was told by a trustworthy person that Al-Basri used to insert that middle man in the chain (حدثني الثقة أن الحسن كان يدخل بينه وبين عبادة حطان الرقاشي). Notice that Al-Shafei was half a century closer in time to Al-Basri than Muslim was.

The narration is not the only questionable point by Al-Basri about verse 4:15. He also claims, without providing evidence, that verse 4:15 was revealed *after* verse 4:16 and is contingent upon it. [Al-Razi \[83\]](#) describes this view as “*extremely remote*” (في غاية البعد), and most scholars don’t even mention it. The view is patently wrong as it goes against the syntax of the verses. Verse 4:16 uses the word يَأْتِيَانَهَا (engage in it) that refers to the word الفاحشة (abhorrent act) in verse 4:15, so it cannot have been revealed before it.

### 2. Content:

A close examination of the wording (الْمَثْنِ) of the narration raises further issues about whether it was accurately narrated.

- The narration explicitly refers to women (الهن), with no explicit mention of men. While it is linguistically customary to use the masculine when the subject is both men and women, this feminine word is never linguistically used to cover both men and women.

Extrapolating to men is further complicated by the fact that the narration references verse 4:15 which sets rules for women that are different from those set for men in verse 4:16, so there is no basis for claiming that the rules would be the same for men and women. This raises doubt about the accuracy of the wording in a narration that is universally interpreted as setting the rules for both men and women.

- Other reported traditions raise further doubt about the accuracy of the wording. What was reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) did in practice when a fornication offense occurred in the community does not agree with what the narration says, as the hundred lashes for the non-maiden were not administered (Ibn Al-Arabi [145], Al-Thaalibi [111], and others).

The fact that a punishment specified by the narration was not administered made Al-Tabari [107] question the accuracy of this narration. After considering the statements and opinions of various scholars, he came to the conclusion that there was “*clear evidence about the weakness of the narration that was conveyed from Al-Hasan [Al-Basri]*” (دليل واضح على وهاء الخبر الذي روي عن الحسن).

The exile punishment for the maiden, also specified by the narration, created another dilemma for scholars. If the narration is accurate, this exile is explicitly mandated and the wording is about women. However, many scholars still opined against the exile (Al-Maqdesi [68]).

The dilemma that the scholars faced seems to be that it makes no sense to expel an unmarried woman for a year away from her family under these circumstances. Doesn't that subject her to more sin? If she sinned while she was living with her family and under their protection, what can we expect if she is away without that protection?

- Another problem is that the wording of the narration deals with specific combinations of those who commit the offense it is talking about, namely ‘a maiden by a maiden’ and ‘a non-maiden by a non-maiden’. The narration does not address what happens when one of the offenders is a maiden and the other is a non-maiden. It is doubtful that a matter of life or death would be left out to guesswork rather than being spelled out. Again, the accuracy of the wording is suspect.

Why would a serious matter like this be worded with so many blatant discrepancies? It is highly suspect that what the narration conveys is an accurate quote of something that the Prophet (ﷺ) actually said.



### 3. Chronology:

Even if we conceded that the narration was authentic and accurate, either the Prophet (PBUH) said those words before verse 24:2 was revealed to him, or else he said them after the verse was revealed. Under either scenario, there is a fundamental dilemma in explaining the narration and the verse together.

If the narration came after verse 24:2, as Zeid [206] and most scholars assert, the opening words of the narration would not fit. If verses 4:15-16 are talking about fornication and verse 24:2 abrogated them with the penalty for fornication set to a hundred lashes, pro-abrogation scholars see this as the ‘way out’ of the house arrest that verse 4:15 had prescribed. While a hundred lashes is no easy punishment, it is possible to see it as a way out of life imprisonment.

Now, here is the dilemma. Coming after verse 24:2 was revealed, the narration would be elaborating on that verse with details about the penalty for maidens versus non-maidens. How could this role fit the opening part of the narration about making a way out? The way out of the permanent house arrest of verse 4:15 was already in place through verse 24:2. What the narration does is mandate harsher penalties *for both maiden and non-maiden* compared to what verse 24:2 prescribes. How could this be a way out? A way out of what?

The exact wording further exacerbates the dilemma. Verse 4:15 does not only mention a way out, but it says that the way out is *for* the women (لَهُنَّ) not against them (عَلَيْهِنَّ). Contrast that with the use of ‘against’ earlier in the same verse when it says “seek testimony against them” (فَاسْتَشْهِدُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ). Such contrast between *for* and *against* is used elsewhere in the Quran when it describes the accounting of each soul, “... for it is what it has earned, and against it is what it has brought upon itself ...” ﴿... لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٦].

Al-Ghornati [47], among many pro-abrogation scholars, raises this issue. A harsher penalty for those women would be against them not for them. We are not questioning the penalty itself here. We are only questioning the description of a harsher penalty as ‘a way out for them’ when the lighter penalty in verse 24:2 had already provided a way out from the life imprisonment that verse 4:15 prescribed.

The other possibility for the chronology also presents its own dilemma. If the narration came before verse 24:2, it would no longer be an elaboration of the verse but would be superseded by the ruling in the verse. Most scholars reject this possibility based on other evidence. Therefore, the narration presents a dilemma if we assume it came before verse 24:2 and presents another dilemma if we assume it came after 24:2. This raises doubt about the narration itself.

In addition, which one came before the other is not certain. For example,

[Al-Razi \[83\]](#) reports disagreements about which one came first. [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#) and [Muslim \[189\]](#) report a narration where a Fellow of the Prophet (PBUH) was asked whether Chapter 24 came before or after stoning events for adulterers, and he answered that he did not know. That question was apparently asked to ascertain which penalty supersedes which, the practice of stoning supported by the narration or the flogging penalty specified in verse 24:2.

Actually, it is not the time of revelation of Chapter 24 (سورة النور) as a whole that matters here. The key is when verse 24:2 in particular was revealed. The verses of Chapter 24 were revealed separately on multiple occasions. For instance, there are 3 distinct events that are reported as circumstances of revelation for verses 24:3, 24:6-9, and 24:11 ([Al-Wahidi \[116\]](#)). By most accounts, these three events happened approximately in the 2nd, 9th, and 5th *hijri* years, respectively. For example, verses 24:6-9 are tied to an event in the 9th *hijri* year ([Ibn Ashur \[153\]](#)).

Not only does this show that the revelation of Chapter 24 was spread over several years, but it also shows that the order of verses in the Chapter does not match the chronological order of their revelation. Therefore, the time of revelation of verse 24:2 cannot be narrowed down by the verse number. Neither can the time be pinned down by a specific event, as both [Al-Wahidi \[116\]](#) and [Al-Mazini \[70\]](#) did not attach verse 24:2 to any historical event in their books about circumstances of revelation.

Putting all of these points together, the lack of reliability in what Al-Basri narrated comes on top of the concerns about the wording of the narration and its timing. The accuracy of this narration is, therefore, in serious doubt.

This narration is used to support the abrogation claim by undermining the reconciliation of the verses. The words “*God has made for them a way out*” in the narration reinforce the interpretation of verse 4:15 as conflicting with verse 24:2. With the accuracy of the narration in doubt, it falls far short of the burden of proof needed to side with conflict over reconciliation.

The other evidence that supports the abrogation claim is based on narrations and historical reports about penalties for homosexual acts that go against the reconciliation argument ([Zeid \[206\]](#)). The evidence is not consistent,<sup>24</sup> and none of it is *certain in sourcing*, so it cannot overrule the reconciliation of an abrogation claim per the burden of proof. There are many other pieces of evidence related to what the punishment for fornication is, but they do not impact the abrogation claim itself one way or the other.

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<sup>24</sup>For instance, a narration sets the penalty for male homosexual acts then a report says that the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) did not agree what that penalty should be ([Zeid \[206\]](#)).

**E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:**

Pro-abrogation scholar [Al-Razi \[83\]](#) defended the reconciliation interpretation of Al-Asfahani in great detail. This reconciliation, which interpreted verses 4:15-16 as addressing homosexual acts, was widely adopted by many scholars, e.g., [Shaltout \[198\]](#), [Al-Madani \[66\]](#), [Al-Bahiyy \[25\]](#), and [Rida \[193\]](#) who documented the opinions of Muhammad Abduh. [Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#) also chose the interpretation that verses 4:15-16 are about homosexual acts, which reconciles the verses in the claim.

Pro-abrogation scholar [Waliyullah \[203\]](#) did not approve this abrogation claim. Each of pro-abrogation scholars Ibn Al-Arabi and Al-Suyuti rejected ‘half’ the claim, with [Ibn Al-Arabi \[145\]](#) rejecting the abrogation of verse 4:15 while [Al-Suyuti \[104\]](#) rejected the abrogation of verse 4:16.

Finally, According to [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) and others, early scholar Mujahid interpreted verse 4:16 as talking about “the two men who do it” (الرجلان الفاعلان), an apparently tactful way of referring to homosexual acts, thus reconciling this verse with verse 24:2. Because he was not explicit about it, some scholars argued in a rather labored way that “the two men who do it” is not about homosexual acts, but about (heterosexual) fornication.

**F) Conclusion:**

The reconciliation of verses 4:15-16 with verse 24:2 leads to a consistent set of rules:

Islam enforces rules against debauchery. Female homosexual acts are punished by house arrest and male homosexual acts are punished by hurting the perpetrators, with provisions for ending these punishments. Illegitimate heterosexual intercourse is punished by a hundred lashes for both females and males.

## 4.5 Thought Accountability (2:284)

This is a famous claim that sounds meritorious on the surface, but it is refutable on several grounds. It deals with the question of whether people may be accountable for their thoughts.

**A) The claim:**

The following verse:

﴿... وَإِنْ تُبْدُوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ يُحَاسِبْكُمْ بِهِ اللَّهُ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٤]

[2:284] ... and whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it, God will hold you accountable according to it...

has been claimed to be abrogated by a subsequent verse:

﴿لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٦]

[2:286] God does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity. For it is what it has earned, and against it is what it has brought upon itself ...

by key early Muslims according to [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#), including Ali (RA) and Ibn Masoud (RA). It is also supported by [Al-Sadusi \[84\]](#), [Ibn Salama \[170\]](#), [Al-Suyuti \[100\]](#), and [Al-Qattan \[78\]](#), among others.

#### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The perceived conflict is based on interpreting “for it is what it has earned, and against it is what it has brought upon itself” in verse 2:286 as restricting our accountability to deeds that we actually carry out, while interpreting verse 2:284 as including thoughts that are not accompanied by deeds in our accountability. This presumption of conflict is bolstered by the start of verse 2:286, “God does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity”, since controlling thoughts is seen as beyond our capacity.

#### C) Reconciliation arguments:

The first argument against this abrogation claim presents a direct reconciliation between the two verses. The wording of verse 2:284 about God holding us accountable with respect to thought uses the preposition “بِهِ” (according to the thought) rather than the preposition “عَلَيْهِ” (for the thought). If it was for the thought, the offense would be the thought itself that would be punished independently of any accompanying deed, and that would fall under the perceived conflict with verse 2:286.

However, the wording “according to it” in the verse means that the accounting depends on the thought in a way similar to how the punishment for a crime would depend on the intention. The severity of how the deed is accounted for depends on the type of thought that led to that deed. Therefore, there is no conflict even if verse 2:286 is interpreted to exclude pure thought.

The same preposition “بِهِ” (according to) appears in a related, authentic

Prophetic narration<sup>25</sup> that says “*Deeds are [accounted for] according to intentions*” (إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ). Intentions are certainly among the things that we can conceal within ourselves, and that makes the narration consistent with this interpretation of verse 2:284.

**A second argument**, adopted by Al-Tabari [107] and others, interprets verse 2:284 as a follow-up to the preceding verses 2:282-283 which prohibit withholding testimony. The passage “whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it, God will hold you accountable according to it” in verse 2:284 is then interpreted as elaborating that prohibition. This would make the subject matters of verses 2:284 and 2:286 of the abrogation claim unrelated, thus eliminating the conflict altogether. A narration attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) (Al-Tabari [107]) is cited to support this interpretation.

**A third argument** also reconciles the verses by focusing on something important that we hold within ourselves. The argument challenges the abrogation claim by establishing through indisputable evidence that the statement in verse 2:284, “whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it, God will hold you accountable according to it”, which is claimed to be abrogated, is in fact valid for all times.

The reason the statement is clearly valid is that the cornerstone of religion, upon which everything else is built, is not an action; it is whether one believes in God and His Messenger (PBUH), a point that was raised by Ibn Ashur [153]. There is no dispute that we will be accountable, in the most decisive way, for that sheer belief even though it is not an outward action, but something within ourselves.

Once it is clear that we would be accountable for something that is within ourselves, we know that verse 2:284 remains valid. How do we reconcile this with the apparent conflict with verse 2:286 that came later? The reconciliation is based on interpreting the passage “for it is what it has earned, and against it is what it has brought upon itself” in verse 2:286 as not restricted to physical deeds, a possible interpretation since the wording of the passage does not preclude that.

Indeed, there is Quranic evidence that the wording of this passage is compatible with something within ourselves, not just outward action. The word “earned” (كَسَبَتْ) in the passage is used elsewhere in the Quran to describe something within our heart: “... [God] holds you accountable for what your hearts have earned ...” [البقرة: ٢٢٥] ﴿... يُؤَاخِذُكُم بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ ...﴾ (Al-Ghali [43] and others).

Belief is just one clear example of something within ourselves for which

<sup>25</sup>This ubiquitous narration appears as the very first narration in the renowned compilation book of narrations by Al-Bukhari [35], and its authenticity is undisputed through multiple reliable chains of narration.

we are accountable. **Ibn Atiya** [154] further characterizes the scope of what is covered by this notion to be “*what settled inside as a conviction that is cogitated about*” (ما تقرر في النفس واعتقد واستصحت الفكرة فيه), as opposed to passing thoughts that casually occur to us. He goes on to assert that the follow-up in verse 2:286 is aimed at clarifying this point to those who took verse 2:284 beyond its scope. Thus, verse 2:286 does not abrogate verse 2:284, but clarifies its scope (**Al-Thaalibi** [111]). It is the deliberate thought, not the casual thought, that is the subject matter of verse 2:284.

Another argument that is sometimes invoked to refute this abrogation claim, e.g., by **Al-Shaarawi** [92], is that verse 2:284 is a statement of fact, “whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it, God will hold you accountable according to it”, thus cannot be subject to abrogation per the **Facts** validation rule. A possible rebuttal to this argument is that, while the verse is indeed phrased as a statement, it is not unreasonable to interpret it as a command against the thing that we would be held accountable for, in this case, villainous thought.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

The main evidence for supporting this abrogation claim is a story that was reported through many reliable sources (see, for example, the detailed account from **Ibn Kathir** [163]) about events that took place after the revelation of verse 2:284. The events show the reaction of some of the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) that reflects an understanding that the verse asserts that we are accountable for all our thoughts even if we do not act upon them. The story, told in different versions of the narration, is considered highly authentic (see narration 31 in Appendix A.3 for full text and analysis).

According to the story, the Fellows (RA) reacted to the passage “whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it, God will hold you accountable according to it” in verse 2:284 by stating that they could not bear that (لَا نُطِيقُهَا). The response of the Prophet (PBUH) focused entirely on their reaction being a refusal to obey something that the Quran commands. The Fellows (RA) immediately recanted and declared obedience to the command. In the exchange, the Prophet (PBUH) did not elaborate or interpret what the verse meant; he just addressed the issue of hearing something from the Quran and disobeying it.

The narrator (not the Prophet himself) then goes on to say that after the Fellows declared obedience to what they heard, God revealed “... and they said we have heard and obeyed ...” [البقرة: ٢٨٥] ﴿... وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ...﴾ in the following verse, then He abrogated (the narrator used the Arabic word *naskh*) the passage of verse 2:284 by the opening of the final verse 2:286 “God does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity. For it is what it has earned, and against it is what it has brought upon itself.”

Another narration, attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA), describes a similar reaction to verse 2:284, this time by Ibn Umar (RA) who was distressed by the command in the verse which seemed unattainable to him (Ibn Kathir [163]). In the narration, Ibn Abbas (RA) also states that verse 2:286 abrogated this command, again using the Arabic word *naskh*.

Given these narrations, what is indisputable is that some of the fellows of the Prophet (ﷺ) did perceive the command in verse 2:284 as something unattainable, and that verse 2:286 relieved their anxiety by reassuring them that God would not impose on them something unattainable. This fact, in and of itself, would justify using the Arabic word *naskh* in its general sense to describe the relationship between the two verses; the perception of what verse 2:284 entailed was mitigated by verse 2:286.

The question for us here that is relevant to the validity of the abrogation claim is whether the command in verse 2:284 was annulled, such that the passage “whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it, God will hold you accountable according to it” would no longer apply. The reconciliation arguments in the previous step show that this passage very much applies; it just does not mean the unattainable task that the Fellows (RA) understood it to mean.

This is a case in point of the general observation that Ibn Taymia [175] made about abrogation claims. He asserted that “many of the predecessors mean by the term ‘abrogation’ the lifting of what they think the verse signifies” (كثير من السلف يريد بلفظ النسخ رفع ما يظن أن الآية دالة عليه). Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] has a specific quote that what was abrogated in this case is the apprehension that the Fellows (RA) felt in their heart.

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

Al-Tabari [107] rejects this abrogation claim, siding with interpretations that leave verse 2:284 in force.

Al-Razi [83] finds the abrogation claim to be weak based on his analysis of the definition of abrogation and the wording of the verses.

Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] concludes a long analysis by rejecting the claim based on the Facts validation rule even after he cited key early Muslims who support the claim. Al-Nahhas [71] also invokes the Facts validation rule in strong terms after weighing the evidence. Al-Shaarawi [92] rejects the abrogation claim on the same grounds.

Ibn Atiya [154] rejects the claim, asserting that verse 2:286 explains which thoughts we would be accountable for and which we would not be accountable for. Al-Thaalibi [111] asserts the same argument that verse 2:286 elaborates verse 2:284, not abrogate it. Waliyullah [203] describes it as specifying a generality (تخصيص العام).

Al-Arid [20] rejects this claim citing the opinions of a number of scholars.

#### **F) Conclusion:**

There is no conflict between the two passages in verses 2:284 and 2:286. Together, they say to Muslims:

God will hold us accountable according to what we believe and what we intend, even if that is hidden in our thoughts. He will not hold us accountable for casual thoughts that just occur to us since He does not impose on us something unattainable.



The abrogation claims we discussed in this chapter (and in §3.4) are among the most cited in the abrogation literature, but perhaps the strongest abrogation claims are the three claims accepted by nearly all pro-abrogation scholars which M. Al-Ghazali [46] singled out as the only meritorious claims. We refer to them as ‘the big three’, claiming abrogation of verse 58:12 about private consultation, verse 8:65 about steadfastness in battle, and verses 73:1-4 about night prayer. We dedicate the next chapter to discussing them in detail.



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## Chapter 5

# The Big Three

There are three distinct abrogation claims that most of the pro-abrogation scholars accept as valid claims. What they have in common is that the affected verses contain language within them which can be construed as suggesting that abrogation took place. We dedicate this chapter to discussing these three claims in detail given their common features and their importance to the Abrogation Doctrine.

### 5.1 Private Consultation (58:12)

The first abrogation claim we discuss among the ‘big 3’ is about verses 58:12-13. The verses address the protocol for Muslims who sought private consultation with the Prophet (PBUH). There are other angles in these verses beyond the abrogation question. We will address those angles in a number of side notes while focussing here on the abrogation question itself.

#### A) The claim:

The verse claimed abrogated is,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ  
ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَظْهَرُ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَجِدُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ [المُجَادِلَة : ١٢]

[58:12] O you who have believed, when you consult privately with the Messenger, then offer ahead of your consultation a charity. That is better for you and more purifying. But if you cannot afford it, God is forgiving and merciful.

and the verse claimed to have abrogated it is the next verse,

﴿ أَأَشْفَقْتُمْ أَنْ تُقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَاتٍ فَإِذْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَتَابَ  
اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا  
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾ [المُجَادِلَة : ١٣]

[58:13] Were you apprehensive about offering, ahead of your consultations, charities? Now that you have not done it - and God has pardoned you - then establish prayer, give alms and obey God and His messenger. God is well aware of what you do.

With only few exceptions, pro-abrogation scholars who studied these two verses for possible abrogation have concluded that verse 58:12 was abrogated. The majority of them said that it was abrogated by verse 58:13 but a minority opined that the abrogating is the regular *zakah* (required almsgiving) mandate, an opinion which [Al-Thaali](#) [111] described as weak.

## B) Pinpointing the conflict:

Scholars who saw a conflict between the two verses viewed verse 58:12 to be instructing Muslims to give charity before one may consult privately with the Prophet (PBUH) if one can afford it, and they viewed verse 58:13 to be rescinding that instruction.

Although this abrogation claim is the most agreed upon, the above conflict is not self-evident based on the wording of the verses as we will see in Step C. The claim seems to hinge ([Al-Qasimi](#) [77]) on narrations quoting Ali (RA) saying that he was the only one who complied with verse 58:12 until verse 58:13 abrogated it.

In spite of these narrations being widely cited, none of the top *hadith* scholars<sup>1</sup> included any of them as an authentic narration. Every chain of narrators of that quote has been impeached (see Step D). Not only is the narration uncertain in sourcing, but it also is outrightly inauthentic.

## C) Reconciliation arguments:

One argument for reconciling the two verses is based on the interpretation of [Al-Maqdesi](#) [68]. It asserts that verse 58:13 only provides a way of expiation for those who failed the test of verse 58:12. Expiation does not remove the command that was disobeyed; it only gives a second chance to those who disobeyed it. An example is the expiation for someone who did not fast in

<sup>1</sup> Authors of the “six books” of narrations from the Prophet (PBUH) and his Fellows (RA): [Al-Bukhari](#) [35], [Muslim](#) [189], [Abu-Dawoud](#) [3], [Al-Tirmizi](#) [113], [Al-Nasai](#) [73] and [Ibn Majah](#) [166].

Ramadan without an excuse. Having that expiation does not remove the requirement of the Ramadan fast.

There are two aspects of the wording of verse 58:13 that support the expiation view:

1. The verse uses the word **فَإِذَا** which means “now that” when it says “Now that you have not done [what you were supposed to do]”. This means that an infraction has already taken place (AIRA [131]), and the verse is only addressing what to do after such an infraction. As Abu-Albaqaa [2] phrases it, “you left out [the charity] in the past (فيما مضى), so redress it by establishing the prayer”. If the verse had said “If you do not do” instead of “Now that you have not done”,<sup>2</sup> it might be viewed as creating an alternative to what is supposed to be done. Here, if the wording of the verse is faithfully followed, what is supposed to be done is still supposed to be done; having an expiation for an infraction does not change that.

2. After pointing out the infraction that took place, the verse says **وَتَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ**, which is normally translated to “and God has pardoned you.” However, the word used for ‘pardon’ (توبة) is also used for ‘expiation’ in the Quran, e.g., at the end of verse 4:92 which prescribes the expiation for accidental killing.

The verses describe the infraction and its expiation in specific terms, but these specifics do not affect the reconciliation argument. The argument is simply that verse 58:13 addresses those who made an infraction regarding verse 58:12, and offers them an expiation for such infraction. Therefore, *it does not negate anything mentioned in verse 58:12*. It just complements it.

**A second argument** that reconciles the two verses postulates that verse 58:13 provides a *license* or easing of a hardship that exempts a specific group from the charity requirement of verse 58:12. This interpretation is mentioned in a number of exegesis books, although they consider two different groups in their analyses.

The first group that the exegetes, e.g., Al-Thaalibi [111], Al-Shawkani [96], and AIRA [131] identify as covered by the license is comprised of those who are able to give the charity (hence they are not exempted by verse 58:12), but would be burdened by it. This view is supported by the word **أَلَسَّافَقْتُمْ** (Were you apprehensive?) in verse 58:13 which shows reluctance but not inability.<sup>3</sup>

The second group that the exegetes identify (Al-Thaalabi [110] and Al-Baghawi [23]) is comprised of the companions of the Prophet (PBUH). It stands to logic that those close to the Prophet (PBUH) often talk to him privately, so

<sup>2</sup>Interestingly, it takes one letter to modify **فَإِذَا**, the word used in verse 58:13, into **فَإِذَا** which would make it “If you do not do”.

<sup>3</sup>Another meaning of the verb **أَلَسَّافَقْتُمْ** (was apprehensive) when used as a transitive verb is “did less of” as in gave less charity or gave charity less often (**أَلَسَّافَقَ الْعَطَاءَ - قَلَّلَهُ**).

offering a charity every time they do that would be a hardship. Two words in the verses support this view; charity is mentioned in the plural (صَدَقَاتٍ - charities) when verse 58:13 talks about the license while it is mentioned in the singular (صَدَقَةً - a charity) when verse 58:12 talks about the requirement (AIRA [131]). Thus, one may argue that the license in verse 58:13 is meant for those who seek out the Prophet (ﷺ) frequently (Al-Khatib [61] and Nada [190]) hence would need to give many charities for that.

It should be noted that most of the books we cited in this second interpretation still referred to the relationship between the two verses as *naskh* despite the reconciliatory nature of their interpretation. As we introduced in Chapter 1 and explained in Chapter 2, this may be a manifestation of the semantic ambiguity of the Arabic word *naskh* (نسخ) that allows it to be used for meanings other than abrogation. These other uses routinely occur in the literature as we have seen.

**A third argument** that reconciles the two verses is that verse 58:13 is qualified by its *contingency*: apprehension. A contingent command is tied to its contingency. It applies only when the contingency exists and ceases to apply when the contingency is no longer. This reconciliation was offered by Mostafa [186]. He concludes that once the apprehension is cleared, the command in verse 58:12 returns.

This third interpretation is similar in spirit to the second interpretation, but there is a difference. The second interpretation exempts a group of people, e.g., the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), while the exemption in the third interpretation is based on a condition, namely, the hardship that would result from following the command, a hardship that may come and go. Both interpretations leave the charity requirement of verse 58:12 intact for all but those specifically exempted, which means that verse 58:12 is not abrogated.

In conclusion, we reiterate that it takes only one viable interpretation that reconciles the two verses to refute the abrogation claim according to the burden of proof set forth by the pro-abrogation scholars themselves. It is not necessary to argue that such an interpretation is more plausible than the interpretation that substantiates the conflict between the two verses.

The above interpretations have faithfully followed the wording of verses 58:12-13 and based their reconciliation on a straightforward reading of that wording, and it is an established rule of exegesis (Al-Zarkashi [125]) to interpret Arabic words the way Arabs normally use them (“*taking the absolute of the language*” - (الأخذ بمطلق اللغة)).

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

As mentioned earlier, this abrogation claim is largely based on narrations attributed to Ali (RA). In one version, he is reported to have said “*In God’s*

book, there is a verse that no one before me put into action, and no one after me will put into action [quoting verse 58:12]. I had a *dinar*<sup>4</sup> and I sold it so when I consulted with the Messenger privately I gave a *dirham*<sup>4</sup> for charity until I ran out. Then [verse 58:12] was abrogated by the other verse [quoting verse 58:13].”

The wording of this version of the narrations is quite pointed. The statement “no one after me will put into action” indicates actual abrogation, thus removing the ambiguity associated with the word *naskh* which was often used for things other than abrogation during that era. Coming from a revered personality like Ali (RA), this clearly would be decisive evidence for the abrogation claim, and it may explain why the claim has been so widely accepted. The problem is that these narrations attributed to Ali (RA) are not authentic. We are going to establish this important fact in detail here.

Since these inauthentic narrations are the cornerstone in claiming that verse 58:12 is abrogated, it is worthwhile to explain the criteria for authentication of narrations. A narration is considered by *hadith* scholars to be authentic only if its chain of narrators is *connected* and every narrator in the chain is identified and reliable.

Different *hadith* scholars have different criteria for determining connectivity and reliability, some more strict than others, but the consensus of *hadith* scholars has been that six books of narration compilation are the most authoritative in this matter: [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#), [Muslim \[189\]](#), [Abu-Dawoud \[3\]](#), [Al-Tirmizi \[113\]](#), [Al-Nasai \[73\]](#) and [Ibn Majah \[166\]](#). Next to those, two more books have been highly regarded by most *hadith* scholars: [Ibn Hibban \[161\]](#) and [Ibn Khuzayma \[165\]](#).

None of these eight books contains the above quote by Ali (RA), or any of its variations, as an authentic narration. These books contain more than a hundred narrations by Ali (RA) about other subjects and classify them as authentic, but the above narration about this abrogation claim is not one of them.

#### p o i n t   t o   p o n d e r

In the extensive pro-abrogation literature we surveyed, 40 out of 50 scholars who claimed abrogation for verse 58:12 prominently featured the inauthentic narrations attributed to Ali (RA), with many presenting no further evidence. Among the rest, 6 mentioned the story among other evidence and 4 offered no evidence at all.

What disqualified this narration from being considered authentic? A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. Therefore, if one of the narrators in a chain

<sup>4</sup>A *dinar* is a gold coin and a *dirham* is a silver coin worth a small fraction of a *dinar*. Selling a *dinar* means breaking it into *dirhams*.

of narrators is rated “weak”, as Al-Nasai determined when he analyzed the narrator chain of this narration, the narration is not classified as authentic.

Similarly, if the narrator chain is disconnected, as the prominent *hadith* scholar Ibn Hajar [156] found when he analyzed the narration in question, it leads the scholar to conclude that the narration is less than authentic. Ibn Al-Arabi [145] looked at variations of the narration that were also attributed to Ali (RA) and concluded that they are inauthentic, using unequivocal language (“and all of this is invalid” - وهذا كله لا يصح).

The narration encyclopedia published by Al-Dorar Al-Saniyya [89] has compiled an online database of tens of thousands of narrations and their ratings as reported in a multitude of narration books. The encyclopedia includes two instances of the narration in question and summarizes the ratings of one of them as “weak” (ضعيف) and the other as “disconnected” (منقطع).<sup>5</sup>

It should be noted that if a narration that was not rated authentic by the original narration books was later judged to be authentic by a prominent scholar, e.g., Al-Albani, through reexamining the chain and finding it to be reliable, the encyclopedia would feature the belated authentication in its rating summary, so the “disconnected” and “weak” ratings that it gave to the narration in question are the cumulative verdict.

The case of this narration is not a rarity. In the early centuries of Islam, before authentication of narrations became a discipline with the advent of Al-Bukhari, many narrations were floated in the literature that later proved to be inauthentic, even fabricated. Given how compelling the wording of this narration is about the abrogation of verse 58:12, and given that it was attributed to Ali (RA) who not only was a first cousin of the Prophet (ﷺ), but also a foremost scholar of Islam who later became the Caliph of the nation, it is not surprising that this abrogation claim gained such momentum.

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Other narrations by key personalities that ‘corroborate’ the story about Ali (RA) are also inauthentic. Among them is a narration attributed to Ibn Umar (RA) where he mentions blessings that Ali (RA) had that he would have loved to have and one of them is the event of 58:12-13. None of the major narration compilations includes this narration. What they include is a variation of it that is unrelated to 58:12-13, and even that is not authentic. Another inauthentic narration is attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) that relates the story about Ali (RA). Similar inauthentic accounts of the story are attributed to Mujahid.

Other narrations that are not related to the story about Ali (RA) are on par with similar inconclusive evidence that is invoked in many other abrogation claims:

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- Two narrations attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) assert the *naskh* of verse

<sup>5</sup>See Side note 17 for the full Arabic text.

58:12 by the *zakah* mandate (rather than by verse 58:13) or describe 58:13 as easing, rather than tightening, on Muslims. Not only is the language subject to interpretation, but the two narrations in question are inauthentic. [Ibn Al-Arabi \[144\]](#) dismissed the assertions in these narrations as well as their authenticity.

- Other narrations attributed to some of *the followers* (التابعون), the generation after the fellows of the Prophet (ﷺ), report their interpretation of verses 58:12-13. Authenticity aside, some of the opinions in these narrations are themselves subject to interpretation, e.g., those using the word *naskh* which, in that era, commonly meant things other than abrogation as we detailed in §2.3.2.
- A narration attributed to Ibn Hayyan says that the charity requirement proved to be a hardship for Muslims, so after a short time God revealed the license. However, the license to which he is referring is not that of verse 58:13, but the license exempting the poor from the charity requirement at the end of verse 58:12 itself ([Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#)). Not only is this narration inauthentic, but also it is about an exception to the charity requirement not an abrogation of that requirement.

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

Pro-abrogation scholar [Al-Isnawi \[52\]](#) discusses this claim and says “*this is not abrogation*” (هذا ليس بنسخ). As [Zuhair \[207\]](#) discusses both sides of the debate, he quotes and elaborates Al-Isnawi’s view.

Pro-abrogation scholar [Al-Maqdesi \[68\]](#) reconciled verses 58:12 with 58:13. He saw 58:13 as instituting an expiation for those who failed to follow the command in 58:12. The first reconciliation argument in Step C is based on his interpretation. While Al-Maqdesi did not mention abrogation by name, his interpretation does reconcile the two verses. As we discussed in §2.2, a reconciliation argument is a refutation of the abrogation claim.

In his commentary on verse 58:12, pro-abrogation scholar [Al-Razi \[83\]](#) noted that the prevalent view is that of abrogation by verse 58:13, and included views that approve the abrogation claim and other views that disapprove it. When he cited an interpretation that refutes the claim, he went on to say “*so this would not be abrogation, and what was said is good and not objectionable*” (فلا يكون هذا نسخاً، وهذا الكلام حسن ما به بأس).

Pro-abrogation scholar Ibn Al-Arabi seems to offer opinions both against and for the abrogation claim of verse 58:12. He included the verse among verses “*in which abrogation does not materialize*” (لا يتحقق النسخ فيها) in his book about abrogated verses, but also referred to the verse later as being

abrogated (Ibn Al-Arabi [144]).<sup>6</sup> He also dismissed the inauthentic narrations on which this abrogation claim is based in no uncertain terms: “so there is no benefit in engaging in them or in their likes” (فلا فائدة في الاشتغال بها ولا بأمثالها).

Hasaballah [139], who is also pro-abrogation, did not approve the abrogation claim of 58:12, relating it to a reconciliation argument that he used in another abrogation claim. The disapproval was cited by Al-Nimr [74], another pro-abrogation scholar, when he addressed this claim.

There is a group of scholars who made statements that reconcile the two verses, but still used the word *naskh* to describe the situation. This is not unusual since the other meanings of the Arabic word *naskh*, e.g., elaboration (see the discussion of the Elaboration validation rule) are often used in the literature. Those other meanings could be what these scholars had in mind when they mentioned *naskh* since their statements show that there is no real conflict between the two verses that would call for a claim of abrogation.

Among them are Al-Thaalibi [111], Al-Shawkani [96], Al-Thaalabi [110], and Al-Baghawi [23] who made statements along the lines of the second reconciliation argument based on *license* in Step C. Al-Qasimi [77] opposed this abrogation claim based on a similar reconciliation argument, and also pointed out the conflation of alternative meanings of the word *naskh*.

Some modern scholars discussed verses 58:12 and 58:13 without mentioning abrogation directly or indirectly. An example from this group is SCIA [201] who are a committee of scholars. They interpreted the two verses without mentioning abrogation by name or by synonym. Other modern scholars explicitly opposed the abrogation claim, e.g., Al-Saqqa [88] who opposed the claim and interpreted the acts of worship mentioned in verse 58:13 as a form of charity that satisfies the requirement of verse 58:12.

## F) Conclusion:

All the reconciliatory arguments outlined in Step C above are sound and any of them is sufficient to refute this claim. We favor the first argument (expiation) because it is consistent with the particular wording of verse 58:13. That argument can be articulated in the following reconcilability statement that combines the two verses without any conflict,<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup>In another one of his books, Ibn Al-Arabi [145] approves this abrogation claim. Because of cross-referencing, it is not clear which of the two books came first (Ibn Al-Arabi [144]), but we relied on the book that he dedicated to the subject of abrogation.

<sup>7</sup>The exegesis of SCIA [201] makes a similar statement.



Before believers may seek private counsel with the Prophet (PBUH), it is proper and more purifying of their souls to offer a token charity if they can afford it. They should not feel apprehensive or reluctant about doing that. Those who felt apprehensive were assured that God pardoned them as long as they kept up their prayers, almsgiving, and obedience to God and His Messenger.

### 5.1.1 Impact of Inauthentic Evidence

The abrogation claim of 58:12-13 is one of the starkest examples of the impact inauthentic evidence can have. The vulnerability to inauthentic evidence is an important issue in general, and critically important for the discussion of the Abrogation Doctrine in particular. We will address this issue in detail here.

As we will tally shortly, the inauthentic narrations that were attributed to Ali (RA) have been the main piece of evidence cited by those who concluded that verse 58:12 was abrogated by verse 58:13 throughout the entire Islamic history. It is logical that scholars who thought that these narrations were authentic would conclude that verse 58:12 was abrogated. If it were true that Ali (RA), a foremost scholar, the son-in-law and close fellow of the Prophet (PBUH), and the future Caliph of the nation, explicitly said that 58:12 was abrogated, the rest of the evidence would pale in comparison.

However, without exception, all the major scholars of narration compilations did not find any variation of these narrations to be authentic. Let us look at the specifics. There are various variations of these narrations (e.g., in [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#)), but they basically belong to three versions:

1. *A version quoting Ali (RA) asserting that he is the only one who abode by 58:12 then it was abrogated.* This is the strongest version in terms of being direct evidence of abrogation from Ali (RA) himself, and it is the version that was shown to be inauthentic ('weak' - ضعيف and 'disconnected' - منقطع) in the above discussion of [the claim's evidence](#).
2. *A version quoting Ali (RA) discussing with the Prophet (PBUH) the appropriate amount of charity<sup>8</sup> per 58:12.* This version is suggestive of abrogation if not explicit about it, and it was referred to briefly in the same discussion. It was dismissed in strong terms, e.g., the quote by [Ibn Al-Arabi \[145\]](#): "and all of this is invalid" - وهذا كله لا يصح.

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<sup>8</sup>Some scholars point out that the tone of the purported discussion is unbecoming, adding to the doubts about its authenticity.

3. A version where a third party is relating some variation of the above stories about Ali (RA). The third party is sometimes Mujahid, sometimes Ibn Abbas (RA), and sometimes others. None of these variations is anywhere to be found in the major narrations books.

There are other narrations reporting analyses and opinions about the abrogation claim of 58:12 without mentioning Ali (RA) or any of the above stories, so they do not affect the present discussion. The main point here is that all versions of these stories about Ali (RA) are inauthentic. Nonetheless, the following tally shows how much these stories were cited as evidence, sometimes as the *only* evidence, when scholars concluded that 58:13 abrogated 58:12.

- Surveying the books of exegesis of the Quran that interpret verse 58:12, we looked at [30] books that are pro-abrogation. Among them, [25] prominently featured the story about Ali (RA) in their interpretation that 58:12 was abrogated (including Al-Tabari [107], Al-Samarqandi [86], Al-Thaalabi [110], Al-Baghawi [23], Al-Zamakhshari [124], Al-Baydawi [31], Al-Nasafi [72], Al-Khazen [62], Al-Ghornati [47], Ibn Kathir [163], Al-Thaalibi [111], and Ibn Adel [143]). The remaining five books mentioned it less prominently, including Al-Qurtubi [80] and Al-Shawkani [96].
- Surveying the books that are dedicated to abrogation or have a detailed section about it, we looked at [20] books that approved the abrogation claim of verse 58:12. Among them, [15] prominently featured the story about Ali (RA) in their analysis of the abrogation claim (including Ibn Sal-lam [171], Al-Nahhas [71], Al-Jassas [57], Ibn Salama [170], Al-Baghdadi [24], Makki [184], Al-Khazraji [63], Ibn Al-Jawzi [147], Al-Karmi [60], and Al-Ajhuri [9]). One book mentioned it less prominently, and the remaining four books did not mention it or mention any other evidence, e.g., Al-Andalusi [19].

Three main factors have made it possible for an inauthentic narration like this to propagate so deeply throughout Islamic literature:

**1. Pre-authentication Era:** Before authentication of narrations became a discipline with the advent of Al-Bukhari in the third *hijri* century, scholars routinely quoted narrations without the means to verify their authenticity. Many of the narrations were cited without a chain of attribution that traces down to the person being quoted, which would be needed for authentication. That era was not brief nor inconsequential; it lasted for almost two centuries and included some of the foremost scholars in Islam, including all the founders of the major Islamic schools of thought, e.g., Abu-Hanifa and Al-Shafei.

An anecdote that shows how authentication was not a mature discipline during that era is a quote by Al-Shafei about the book *Al-Muattaa* ('The well-trodden

path') which was the first major compilation of Prophetic narrations, written by the revered Imam Malik. Al-Shafei, who followed Malik but predated Al-Bukhari and the authentication era, described *Al-Muattaa* saying “no book after the Book of God [the Quran] is more correct than the book by Malik [Al-Muattaa]”. While the book does command great respect by scholars from all eras, many narrations in it have been subsequently found to be inauthentic.

This reflects on the limited tools that were available in that era, not on those great scholars who did their best with the tools that they had. The inescapable conclusion, however, is that inauthentic narrations have indeed been cited and taken into consideration by scholars during that era before the discipline of authentication eliminated them.

**2. The role of Conveyance:** Even after a narration is found to be inauthentic, it may still persist in the literature. The main method of jurisprudence in Islam is ‘conveyance’ (*al-naql* - النقل), namely copying from past information. Conveyance from the Quran and from the Prophet (ﷺ) is of course the fundamental source of jurisprudence in Islam. Conveyance from other key figures is also taken very seriously. Many also defer to previous scholars as part of conveyance.

While conveyance protects divine revelations from being corrupted by alterations or injected novelties, it inadvertently enables occasional false information to propagate through generations. An example of this is an outrageous story that was fabricated about verse 22:52. This story is now completely debunked, but it is still cited by some authors as it was ubiquitous in the literature over many centuries. We will discuss this incident in Chapter 12.

**3. Compromised References:** Some books that have been published and made it to the mainstream Islamic bibliography have an abundance of false narrations listed as if they were authentic. Two such books are the narration compilation by Al-Hakem and the alleged compilation of the exegesis of Ibn Abbas (RA) written by Al-Fairuzabadi.<sup>9</sup> As these and other compromised references make it through the literature, authors may inadvertently cite a false narration from them thinking that it is authentic.

The end result is that there are many inauthentic narrations that are routinely cited to support different abrogation claims. Because of this, we created Appendix A.3 as a complete reference that lists *all* authentic narrations included in the major narration books that pertain to any abrogation claim. Needless to say, the narrations about verses 58:12-13 that were wrongly attributed to Ali (RA) did not make it to that Appendix.

<sup>9</sup>An Internet copy of the book even has a posted warning on the cover page.

## 5.2 Steadfastness in Battle (8:65)

This claim, together with the previous claim (§5.1), are the only two abrogation claims that both Waliyullah and Zeid approved in their short lists. The claim addresses how much bigger the enemy army can be without deterring the Muslim army from fighting. While this claim is not as widely approved by scholars as the previous claim, it is sometimes used as an example to prove the validity of the Abrogation Doctrine.

### A) The claim:

The following verse,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ إِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ عِشْرُونَ صَابِرُونَ يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتَيْنِ وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفًا مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ﴾ [الأنفال: ٦٥]

[8:65] O Prophet! Urge the believers onto fighting. If there may be twenty steadfast ones of you, they would beat two hundred, and if there may be a hundred of you, they would beat a thousand of those who have disbelieved, for they are folk who do not comprehend.

is claimed to be abrogated by the next verse,

﴿الْآنَ خَفَّفَ اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ ضَعْفًا فَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ صَابِرَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتَيْنِ وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أَلْفٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفَيْنِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ﴾ [الأنفال: ٦٦]

[8:66] Now God has eased upon you and He knew that there is weakness in you, so if there may be a hundred steadfast ones of you, they would beat two hundred, and if there may be a thousand of you, they would beat two thousand by the permission of God. God is with the steadfast.

The claim is supported by many scholars including [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#), [Ibn Salama \[170\]](#), [Al-Andalusi \[19\]](#), [Ibn Al-Arabi \[144\]](#), [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#), [Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#), [Al-Suyuti \[100\]](#), [Waliyullah \[203\]](#), and [Zeid \[206\]](#).

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

Verse 8:65 is understood to direct Muslims to fight even if they face an army tenfold their size, while verse 8:66 is understood to limit that directive to

armies that are only twofold in size, thus removing the stricter demand of the first verse.

### C) Reconciliation arguments:

A fundamental issue in reconciling verses 8:65-66 is whether their assertions of tenfold and twofold, e.g., “if there may be twenty steadfast ones of you, they would beat two hundred”, constitute commands (to fight an army that size) or just statements of fact (reassurance about prevailing over an army that size). Linguistically, these references are phrased as conditional statements of fact; if a condition holds then a result follows. However, a majority of scholars have concluded that these statements are metaphors, meant as commands.

The first reconciliation argument takes the majority view that these are commands. It reconciles the two commands as being contingent on different conditions. A number of pro-abrogation scholars who reject this abrogation claim have adopted the contingency argument, including [Al-Razi \[83\]](#), [Al-Zahiri \[121\]](#), and [Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#).

The contingency is spelled out in the opening of verse 8:66,

﴿الآن خَفَّفَ اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ ضَعْفًا فَإِنْ ...﴾ [الأنفال: ٦٦]

[8:66] Now God has eased upon you and He knew that there is weakness in you, so if ...

which cites a condition of weakness before stating the new command. The use of ‘so’ (فَ) shows that the command that follows is a consequence of this opening part.

Strength and weakness are conditions that change with time; “*the strong may become weak*”, as [Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#) phrases it. In verse 8:66, weakness is a new condition that emerged. [M. Al-Ghazali \[46\]](#) elaborates this point based on the wording of the verse: “Now ... [God] knew ...”. He points out that “*what is referred to by knowing here is an emerging [condition], meaning that a weakness that had not been in them [has now] emerged; because if it had been there before, God would have known it existed*” (والمراد بالعلم هنا الظهور يعني) (أنه قد ظهر فيهم ضعف لم يكن؛ لأنه لو كان سابقاً لكن الله قد علمه موجوداً).

The emergence of weakness ‘now’ does not mean that weakness is here to stay *from now on*. The word ‘now’ also describes conditions that hold *just for now*. Thus a condition of strength as well as another condition of weakness may hold in the future, leading to the tenfold command and the twofold command being operative at different times. If a command can become operative, it is not abrogated by definition.

Al-Asfahani provided an elaborate discussion of the contingency argument

([Al-Razi \[83\]](#)). He conceded that verses 8:65-66 constitute commands, not statements of fact, and then noted that these commands are conditioned. In verse 8:65, the command is conditioned on the twenty's ability to be steadfast (or patient, as the word صَابِر typically signifies) in the face of two hundred.

﴿... إِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ عِشْرُونَ صَابِرُونَ ...﴾ [الأنفال : ٦٥]

[8:65] ... If there may be twenty steadfast ones of you, ...

Al-Asfahani then notes that when the following verse 8:66 states “Now God has eased upon you and He knew that there is weakness in you”, this means that the previous condition is not valid for this group. The more stringent command is conditioned on a strong level of patience. The above quote by [Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#) continues with a similar point, “*the strong may become weak, and similarly some people may be burdened by patience*” (القوي قد يصير ضعيفاً وكذلك فإن بعضاً). (من النفوس قد تضيق بالصبر).

We should note that patience is also mentioned in verse 8:66, even in the context of weakness. The fact that there are different levels of patience, some weaker than others, is an established notion in Islam. [Ibn Al-Qayyim \[151\]](#) presents an elaborate account of the levels of patience, supported by authoritative narrations. Muslims can strive for the higher levels of patience, but they are still considered patient if they are at the lower levels.

**A second argument** is also based on the different levels of patience, but it takes the view that the twofold and tenfold ratios in verses 8:65-66 are statements of fact to reassure the Muslims rather than commands for them to fight ([Qutb \[191\]](#), among others).

There is evidence to support this view. First, verses 8:65-66 use the word يَغْلِبُ (‘beat’ or ‘prevail’) rather than ‘fight’, which supports the view that they are statements of fact. People can be commanded to fight, but they cannot be commanded to prevail since this is not entirely under their control. Second, the preceding verse,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَسْبُكَ اللَّهُ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ [الأنفال : ٦٤]

[8:64] O Prophet; sufficient for you is God and whoever followed you of the believers.

makes the context that of reassurance.

However, there is also evidence on the other side. The opening part of verse 8:66 states “Now God has eased upon you” (الآن خَفَّفَ اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ). This supports the view that these are commands since commands are amenable to easing, while statements of fact are not. This point needs to be countered if

the statement-of-fact view is to hold. What is it about such a statement that could be ‘eased’?

- To answer this question, we note that the statement “*if there may be twenty steadfast ones of you, they would beat two hundred*” is a conditional construct. It only states that *if* the Muslims are patient, they will prevail over a tenfold numerical advantage of the enemy. This is a characterization of being patient; those who are patient will prevail. By the same token, if you do not prevail against such an enemy, the inevitable conclusion is that you are not patient because if you were, you would.

The particular conditional article used here (إِنْ) has a neutral connotation; it does not tilt toward the condition being true or being false. Muslims can be patient, and they can be not patient. Indeed, the verses are referring to those who are patient *among* the Muslims (مِنْكُمْ). Ibn Ashur [153] takes this point further, concluding that only “*the patient believers who will not be shaken*” are to be urged to fight.

The subject of patience continues in the next verse 8:66, “*if there may be a hundred steadfast ones of you, they would beat two hundred*”, which Al-Zahiri [121] describes as “*only informing about prevailing, under the condition of patience.*” The ending of the verse reinforces that; “*and God is with the patient*” (وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ). That is why they will prevail.

- So, what was eased in verse 8:66 compared to verse 8:65 if there is no command for Muslims? What was eased is the burden that needs to be overcome to qualify a Muslim as patient in the eyes of God. The easing is not the reduction of the enemy advantage *per se*, but the broadening of the scope of who will be counted as patient by the Almighty.

There is evidence to support this view. A narration attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) and authenticated by Al-Bukhari [35] contains a statement that is consistent with the view that what was eased was the level of patience. In the narration, Ibn Abbas (RA) describes the easing in verse 8:66 by saying “*so when God eased the count [tenfold down to twofold] on them, He reduced from the patience as much as was eased on them*” (فَلَمَّا خَفَّفَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ مِنَ الْعِدَّةِ نَقَصَ مِنْ) (الصَّبْرِ بِقَدَرٍ مَا خَفَّفَ عَنْهُمْ).

This type of easing is somewhat similar to the situation depicted in the Prophetic narration: “*the strong believer is better and more beloved by God than the weak believer, and there is good in each.*” (إِلَى) (الْمُؤْمِنُ الْقَوِيُّ خَيْرٌ وَأَحَبُّ إِلَى) (اللَّهِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِ الضَّعِيفِ، وَفِي كُلِّ خَيْرٍ).<sup>10</sup> There are degrees of strength among the believers, and while the stronger believers are better, all believers are good. The last part of the narration is the easing that extends being good in the eyes of God to weaker believers, as verse 8:66 extends being patient in the eyes of

<sup>10</sup>Authenticated by Muslim [189].

God to weaker believers who do not meet the stringent prescription of verse 8:65.

- Easing by broadening the scope for Muslims occurs elsewhere in the Quran ([Al-Razi \[83\]](#)). In this case, verse 4:25 broadens the scope of who a Muslim can marry, with an elaboration that follows:

﴿يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ وَخُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ ضَعِيفًا﴾ [النساء: ٢٨]

[4:28] God wants to ease upon you; and mankind was created weak.

whose wording has a striking similarity to the opening of verse 8:66 “Now God has eased upon you and He knew that there is weakness in you”.

The reduction from tenfold to twofold is not the only manifestation of easing in verse 8:66 compared to verse 8:65. The other manifestation is the different bases for prevailing over the bigger army in the two verses. In verse 8:65, the basis is a deficit in the enemy (“for they are a folk who do not comprehend” - *بَانَهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ*) while in verse 8:66, the basis is a directive from God (per “permission of God” - *بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ*). For the believers, it is certainly a bigger assurance when it is a directive from God than when it is a worldly rationale.

Being statements of fact is sufficient to refute the abrogation claim (the **Facts** validation rule), but some may still perceive a conflict that verses 8:65-66 provide two different characterizations of being patient. There is no conflict; God is teaching us that there are different levels of patience and that He is with the patient during their strength and their weakness.

**A third argument**, put forward by [Al-Nahhas \[71\]](#) in the fourth *hijri* century, reconciles the directives of verses 8:65-66 by asserting that the first directive is optional while the second is mandatory. He argues that the ruling in verse 8:65 was not abrogated because the ruling in verse 8:66 “*did not lift the first ruling since [God] did not say in it that a man should not fight ten; rather, if he was able to, then the choice would be his.*” He treats it as a pure license that is not contingent; it is simply up to each individual Muslim to decide. This would be similar to the license for a fasting traveler to break the fast; it is his call to take advantage of the license or to fast.

Indeed, the tenfold directive in verse 8:65 has the form of a recommendation for the believers per the wording of the verse which addresses the Prophet (PBUH) saying “urge the believers onto fighting” (*حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ*). The word ‘urge’ (*حَرَّضَ*)<sup>11</sup> is certainly not conducive to a binding command. By contrast, the twofold directive in verse 8:66 has the style of a command per

<sup>11</sup>Derived from *حَرَضَ*, thus meaning ‘avoid calamity by doing what is urged’ ([Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#) and others). Also meaning ‘be persistent and steady in what is urged’ ([Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#)).



the wording of the verse that addresses the believers directly, so there is a basis for taking it as mandatory.

The three reconciliation arguments presented here have merit based on the wording of the two verses and have support from many scholars, including pro-abrogation scholars. Any one of these arguments would be sufficient to refute the abrogation claim; there is no irreconcilable conflict. Without irreconcilable conflict, there is no case for abrogation as established in §2.2.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

The additional evidence for and against this abrogation claim falls into two categories. The first category is evidence coming from historical facts about Islamic battles. This category is unique to this abrogation claim; if the claim holds, there are practical consequences for the Muslims when they fight a battle, and history can reveal to us whether these consequences were actually observed. The second category consists of different narrations attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) and others that are related to verses 8:65-66.

Before we present the historical evidence, let us pin down exactly what the abrogation claim would imply for the military decisions of Muslim leaders, so that we can compare it to what actually happened in the battles. The abrogation claim would render verse 8:65 inoperative, so Muslims are only required to fight as long as the enemy is at most twice their size. This is the lower requirement that verse 8:66 substituted for the higher requirement of verse 8:65.

As a result, Muslim leaders would not be able to order their soldiers to fight when the enemy is more than twice the Muslim army. The historical evidence shows that they have in fact ordered their soldiers to do exactly that, thus contradicting the abrogation claim.

- The evidence comes from early Islamic history, where Muslim armies fought multiple battles against armies that were more than twice their size. These battles took place after verse 8:66 was revealed.<sup>12</sup> One of the battles occurred during the life of the Prophet (PBUH). The other two battles occurred during the rule of the first two Caliphs, Abu-Bakr (RA) and Umar (RA), immediately after the death of the Prophet (PBUH).

The most famous and well-documented of these battles is the battle of *Yarmuk* (معركة اليرموك) fought under the rule of Umar (RA) in the 15th *hijri* year. In that battle, Khalid Ibn Al-Walid (RA) led the Muslim army against a Roman army<sup>13</sup> that was numerically superior, and still achieved a decisive victory. Almost all accounts from both Arab and Western sources put the

<sup>12</sup>There are varying accounts of how much later verse 8:66 was revealed after verse 8:65, but two of the battles in question happened after the death of the Prophet (PBUH), so there is no doubt that they happened after the revelation of verse 8:66.

<sup>13</sup>In the Byzantine era, where they still referred to themselves as Roman.

numerical advantage of the Romans at more than twofold.

For example, in his early book about Islamic conquests in the Levant, [Al-Waqidi \[117\]](#) wrote an elaborate narrative of the battle of *Yarmuk*. He reports detailed accounts of the numerical advantage of the Romans over the Muslims at different stages of the battle, showing that such advantage was tenfold or higher.

*Yarmuk* was a culmination of battles between Muslims and Romans that started with the *Moata* incursion (غزوة مؤتة) in the 8th *hijri* year. Again, the Roman army was far bigger than twofold the Muslim army ([Al-Maraghi \[69\]](#) and [Al-Ghali \[43\]](#)). *Moata* was followed by the campaign of Osama ibn Zayd (RA) (بغث أسامة) in the 11th *hijri* year in which the Muslims prevailed against the numerically superior enemy.

While estimates of the exact ratios of armies in these battles vary, the evidence is overwhelming that within these battles, the Muslims fought an army that was more than twice their size. Even if they only *perceived* that it was more than twice their size, they would not have fought it in defiance of the Quranic directive that the abrogation claim implies. The only conclusion is that no such directive existed, thus the abrogation claim is not valid. The leaders who ordered these battles, namely Abu-Bakr (RA) and Umar (RA), are revered Muslims who would not go against Quranic instructions.

- The details of these battles point to an important observation that goes against interpreting verses 8:65-66 as dictating the acceptable army ratios. The reality of the battlefield makes such ratios critically dependent on the military considerations of each situation. For example, with superior weaponry, and depending on the nature of the terrain and the element of surprise, the acceptable army ratios would vary significantly.

Indeed, in the battle of *Yarmuk*, Khalid Ibn Al-Walid (RA) took advantage of some of these factors to achieve a decisive victory against an enemy whose army was many times bigger than the Muslim army. In modern times, a superior air force can wipe out a vastly bigger army ([Al-Ghali \[43\]](#)).

It is worth noting that the decision to go to war is not up to individual Muslims who assess the situation and then decide whether to go to war. The decision is up to the Muslim leadership based on military considerations ([Nada \[190\]](#)), and Muslims must follow that decision.<sup>14</sup> The above historical evidence shows that the Muslim leadership decided to fight under circumstances that the abrogation claim would have not allowed.

The inescapable conclusion is that *the documented history of Islamic battles provides decisive evidence against this abrogation claim.*

- Let us now address the narrations about verses 8:65-66, many of which are

<sup>14</sup>In a Prophetic narration authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#), the Prophet (PBUH) says “and if you are mobilized [to fight], do it” (وَإِذَا اسْتَنْفَرْتُمْ فَاَنْفِرُوا).

attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA), and most have not been found to be authentic by the major narration scholars. For example, [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) reports more than ten narrations. Only two of the narrations attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) are reported in [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#). Other books add some narrations of varying authenticity, including a third narration attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) and authenticated centuries later by [Al-Albani \[10\]](#). Let us look at the three authenticated narrations of Ibn Abbas (RA).

In the two narrations authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#), Ibn Abbas (RA) uses the word ‘ease’ rather than ‘abrogate’ in describing the effect of verse 8:66 on verse 8:65. This would be consistent with the first reconciliation argument we presented. In addition, in one of the two narrations, Ibn Abbas (RA) states “so when God eased the count [tenfold down to twofold] on them, He reduced from the patience as much as was eased on them” *فَلَمَّا خَفَّفَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ مِنَ الْعِدَّةِ* (نَقَصَ مِنَ الصَّبْرِ بِقَدْرِ مَا خَفَّفَ عَنْهُمْ) which would be consistent with the second reconciliation argument.

In the narration authenticated by [Al-Albani \[10\]](#), Ibn Abbas (RA) states that if a Muslim escaped from three enemy fighters, he would not be considered as having escaped. While this would be consistent with the abrogation claim, it is also consistent with the third reconciliation argument which points out that fighting a tenfold ratio was only a recommendation, not a requirement. Furthermore, some scholars disagree with the opinion reported in this narration.

In his book that preceded Al-Albani by centuries, [Al-Zahiri \[121\]](#) exclaims that “it is perplexing that someone says that [verse 8:66] allows the escape of one confronted by three. How I wonder from where did that occur to them? Is there in the verse a mention of escape or turning one’s back in any facet, or a pointer to it and an evidence of it? The verse does not have any of that at all.”

- Some narrations of varying authenticity by other early Muslims also talk about *escaping* from battles with more than twofold numerical disadvantage, not just avoiding these battles before they begin. Escaping would be in direct contradiction to Quranic instruction,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا رَحُّوا فَلَا تُولُوهُمْ الْأَدْبَارَ ۚ وَمَنْ يُولُوهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ دُبْرُهُ إِلَّا مَتَحَرِّقًا لِقِتَالٍ أَوْ مُتَحَيِّزًا إِلَىٰ فِتْنَةٍ فَقَدْ بَاءَ بِعَضْبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَأْوَاهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَيُثَسِّسُ الْمَصِيرُ﴾ [الأنفال: ١٥-١٦]

[8:15-16] O you who have believed, when you encounter those who disbelieve attacking, do not turn your backs to them. And whoever turns his back to them that day, except in a tactic of war or to join with reinforcements, then he has ended up with wrath from God and

his refuge is hellfire; how wretched a destination.

The stern warning in these verses leaves no doubt that quitting the fight is forbidden. There is no limit given here to the relative sizes of the army ([Al-Zahiri \[121\]](#)); the command is absolute.

Additional narrations that were not found to be authentic present opposing views about the abrogation claim. For example, a narration attributed to Al-Suddi mentions abrogation explicitly ([Al-Tabari \[107\]](#)) while another attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) states that verse 8:65 does not require Muslims to fight an army that is tenfold their size, but just urges it ([Al-Tabari \[107\]](#)), which is exactly what the third reconciliation argument asserts.

In summary, the historical evidence related to this abrogation claim tilts strongly against the claim. The narrations about verses 8:65-66 offer mixed views that are inconclusive about the claim. Given the three credible reconciliation arguments presented in Step **C**, the evidence to support this abrogation claim falls far short of the high burden of proof required for a valid claim (§2.1), a burden that was agreed by the pro-abrogation scholars themselves.

#### **E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:**

Several pro-abrogation scholars rejected this abrogation claim. Among them:

[Al-Nahhas \[71\]](#) rejected the claim based on the premise that the first verse is not a binding command, and is still valid as an option (3rd reconciliation).

[Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#) agrees with the opinion that 8:66 eases, but does not abrogate, the command in 8:65.

[Al-Zahiri \[121\]](#) rejects the abrogation claim with an elaborate discussion, emphasizing that the reduction in ratios is contingent on weakness (1st reconciliation).

[Al-Razi \[83\]](#) adopts Al-Asfahani's view that, based on contingency, there is no abrogation.

[Hasaballah \[139\]](#) rejects this claim with definitive language.

[Qutb \[191\]](#) reconciles the two verses as statements of fact, not commands. Al-Zahiri also alluded to that in his discussion.

[Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#) rejected the claim based on the contingency argument.

#### **F) Conclusion:**

The historical evidence of early Islamic battles, such as *Yarmuk*, provides decisive evidence against this abrogation claim. In addition, the two verses that are subject to the claim, verses 8:65-66, can be reconciled based on their

own verbiage as follows,

The believers are urged to be steadfast and fight enemy armies even if those are ten times in size. Under conditions of weakness, they should still be steadfast enough to fight armies that are twice their size. God is with the steadfast; they will prevail with His permission.

### 5.3 Night Prayer (73:1-4)

This is the last claim among the ‘big 3’. Chronologically, the verses claimed abrogated here were revealed the earliest among all verses in any abrogation claim; they date back to the first year of Prophethood.<sup>15</sup> The claim pertains to whether praying late at night had been mandated on Muslims and then the mandate was lifted.

#### A) The claim:

The verses

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَرْمَلُ ﴿۱﴾ فُمِ اللَّيْلِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿۲﴾ نِصْفَهُ أَوْ انْقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا ﴿۳﴾ أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا ﴿۴﴾﴾ [المُرَّمَل: ١-٤]

[73:1-4] O you, the bundled up! Arise in the night, except a little - half of it, or reduce from it a little. Or add to it, and articulate the Quran in recitation.

are claimed to be abrogated by the last verse in the same chapter:

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ أَدْنَىٰ مِنْ ثُلُثِي اللَّيْلِ وَنِصْفَهُ وَثُلُثَهُ وَطَائِفَةٌ مِنَ الَّذِينَ مَعَكَ وَاللَّهُ يُقَدِّرُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ عَلِمَ أَنْ لَنْ تُحْصَوْهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاقْرَءُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ عَلِمَ أَنْ سَيَكُونُ مِنْكُمْ مَرْضَىٰ وَآخَرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَآخَرُونَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَاقْرَءُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنْهُ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَقَرِّضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا ...﴾ [المُرَّمَل: ٢٠]

[73:20] Your Lord knows that you [Muhammad] arise close to two-thirds of the night, half of it, and a third of it, as well as a bevy of those

<sup>15</sup>The consensus is that these verses are the third to be revealed among the 114 chapters of the Quran.

with you. God measures night and day. He knew that you [Muslims] will not be able to finish it thus He forgave you, so recite what you find easy to recite of the Quran. He knew that there will be among you sick, others venturing in the land seeking from the bounty of God, and others fighting in the cause of God, so recite what you find easy to recite of it. And establish prayer and give alms and [figuratively] lend God a good loan ...

The claim is widely supported, e.g., by [Al-Zuhri \[127\]](#), [Ibn Sallam \[171\]](#), [Al-Nahhas \[71\]](#), [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#), [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#), [Al-Khazen \[62\]](#), [Al-Karmi \[60\]](#), and [Zeid \[206\]](#), among others.

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

Verses 73:1-4 contain a command to arise for a good part of the night and recite the Quran, whereas verse 73:20 acknowledges the hardship of arising in the night and directs Muslims to recite from the Quran within their facility, thus alleviating that hardship.

### C) Reconciliation arguments:

It is straightforward to reconcile verses 73:1-4 with verse 73:20 of this abrogation claim. Even some pro-abrogation scholars who side with the claim mention the elements of this reconciliation argument, e.g., [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#).

The reconciliation is based on a simple observation; the command in verses 73:1-4 is directed toward the Prophet (PBUH) personally ([Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#)), rather than toward all Muslims, while the lightening of the burden that is included in verse 73:20 is directed toward those Muslims who took it upon themselves to follow the command in 73:1-4 and ended up in hardship ([Hasanallah \[139\]](#)).

We will break the argument into 3 parts. First, we will show that the night prayer requirement in verses 73:1-4 pertains to the Prophet (PBUH) alone. Second, we will cite evidence that the night prayer requirement continued for the Prophet (PBUH) years after verse 73:20 was revealed. These two parts are sufficient to refute the abrogation claim since the command in 73:1-4 would still be applicable after verse 73:20 was revealed. The third part is to elaborate on how the lightening of the burden on other Muslims, which verse 73:20 brought, fits in this argument.

**First**, the evidence that the original command is directed toward the Prophet (PBUH) alone is indeed compelling:

1. The addressee in verses 73:1-4 is “the bundled up” (الْمُرْمَلُ), an endearing expression which God used to address the Prophet (PBUH) at a personal level, rather than saying “O Prophet” or “O Messenger”. After [Al-Sayis](#)

[90] elaborately discusses all views for and against the abrogation claim, the verifier of the book addresses this specific point:

*“What appears from directing the speech to the Prophet (PBUH) and ordering him to arise in the night together with calling him by the description that is particular to him - which is the bundling up - that the night prayer was a requirement on him, and the requirement was particular to him” (وَأَنَّ فَرَضِيَّتَهُ كَانَتْ خَاصَّةً بِهِ).*

2. In a related chapter of the Quran, chapter 74 that was revealed contemporarily with the current chapter 73 (Al-Ghali [43]), God addresses the Prophet (PBUH) in a very similar, endearing way “O you the cloaked one” (يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ) in verse 74:1. In this case, the command that follows in verse 74:2 is patently particular to the Prophet (PBUH) and not obligatory on all Muslims: “Arise and warn”, an obligation of prophethood and not of everyday Muslims. It stands to logic that the similarly phrased command “Arise in the night” in verse 73:2 after an almost identical opener would also apply to the Prophet (PBUH) personally.
3. The verse immediately following the command in verses 73:1-4 provides a rationale for this command:

﴿ إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ﴾ [الْمُرَّمَل: ٥]

[73:5] We shall cast upon you a weighty utterance.

The weighty utterance is universally interpreted as the Quranic revelations, thus the night prayers would be a preparation for the Prophet (PBUH) to withstand the heavy task ahead (Al-Razi [83], Ibn Ashur [153], and Qutb [191]). Since the task of prophethood is particular to him, it stands to logic that the required preparations for it are also particular to him. The rise-up during the night was to be a spiritual exercise for the Prophet (PBUH); to charge him up for the heavy responsibility he has to undertake.

4. In verse 73:20, God refers to the other Muslims who arise in the night as “a bevy of those with you” (طَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ مَعَكَ). If arising in the night was obligatory on all Muslims, that would not be just a ‘bevy’ but the entirety of Muslims. Nada [190] elaborates this point: “the believers knew that they were not required to arise, but a bevy of them did in participation with the Prophet (PBUH) and following him.”

Indeed, scholars argued that the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) took it upon themselves to do the night prayers without being required to, in their characteristic way of following the footsteps of the Prophet (PBUH). As Ibn Ashur [153] phrases it, “As for the Muslims arising in the night, they were following

وأما قيام الليل للمسلمين فهم اقتدوا فيه بالرسول صلى (the model of the Messenger (PBUH) (الله عليه وسلم).

**Second**, several scholars argued that the lightening of the burden in verse 73:20 did not remove the obligation on the Prophet (PBUH), the sole addressee of the original command:

1. Two other verses that were revealed later than verse 73:20 reiterate the requirement on the Prophet (PBUH) to observe the night prayer.<sup>16</sup> These two verses provide evidence that the night prayer requirement remained for the Prophet (PBUH). The first verse is

﴿وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَىٰ أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا﴾  
[الإسراء : ٧٩]

[17:79] And [a portion] of the night, spend it in prayer, an extra for you, perhaps your Lord will send you out [on the Day of Resurrection to] a praised station.

While the word *نافلة* (an extra) is often used to mean an option rather than a requirement, the phrasing ‘an extra for you’ implies that being extra here is because of being particular to the Prophet (PBUH), not because of being optional *per se*. As the verifier of the book by [Al-Sayis \[90\]](#) asserts, citing a group of scholars, “the meaning of the night prayer being an extra for the Prophet (PBUH) is that it is an addition to what is required of the others”. Linguistically, the word *نافلة* is defined as ‘what was additional to the original’ ([Ibn Manzur \[168\]](#) - *Lisan Al-Arab* dictionary).

[Ibn Ashur \[153\]](#) also cites this verse as he asserts that the night prayer requirement continued for the Prophet (PBUH), saying that this was “a ruling that is particular to the Prophet (PBUH), and scholars have mentioned it under the category of the particularities of the Prophet” (خصائص الرسول).

Concurring in no uncertain terms, [Zeid \[206\]](#) states that verse 17:79 requires the Prophet (PBUH) and him alone to observe the night prayers: “so arising in the night was still a requirement on the Messenger of God (PBUH) in particular” (فقيام الليل ما زال فريضة على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم) (خاصة).

The other verse that also reiterates night prayers for the Prophet (PBUH) is:

﴿وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَاسْجُدْ لَهُ وَسَبِّحْهُ لَيْلًا طَوِيلًا﴾ [الإنسان : ٢٦]

<sup>16</sup>In both verses, the Arabic command is singular, not plural, and the addressee is the Prophet (PBUH).



[76:26] And [in a portion] of the night prostrate to Him and exalt Him a long [part of the] night.

In fact, [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) interprets verse 76:26 by explicitly likening it to the night prayer command in verses 73:1-4. Notice that the use of ‘long’ to describe the duration here is consistent with the length of night prayers in the verses of the abrogation claim; [Al-Zamakhshari \[124\]](#) spells out the length intended by verse 76:26 as two-thirds, half, or one-third of the night, matching verse 73:20.

2. There are scholarly reports that the Prophet (ﷺ) continued the night prayers as an obligation long after the verses of this abrogation claim were revealed. [Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#) cites the above verse 17:79 when he asserts that “*the Prophet (ﷺ) was obedient to the command of God to do the night prayers, and it was a requirement for him alone*” then mentions verse 73:2 (“*Arise in the night, except a little*”) as a specification of *the amount* of that night prayer. [Ibn Al-Arabi \[144\]](#) also asserts that “*the correct is that [the requirement of night prayer] remained on him [the Prophet (ﷺ)].*” and details what these night prayers were like in practice ([Ibn Al-Arabi \[145\]](#)).

**Third**, we address the lightening of the burden that verse 73:20 brought to other Muslims, and how it fits in this reconciliation argument.

As we discussed above, this burden was self-imposed by some Muslims, “a bevy of those with you” as verse 73:20 describes them to the Prophet (ﷺ). This is not the only instance where early Muslims have imposed upon themselves a restriction beyond what was required, and Divine intervention came to relieve them.

For example, when the fasting requirement started, Muslims started their day’s fast immediately after waking up from the night’s sleep, even if it was just a short nap and they woke up while it was still nighttime. Verse 2:187 came to clarify that fasting starts at dawn (regardless of sleeping pattern) and that they can eat, drink, and mate with their spouses until then ([Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#)).

A notable aspect of verse 73:20 is that one of the justifications for lightening the burden on Muslims was that some of them would be “fighting in the cause of God” thus making the burden of arising in the night to pray excessive. As we will see when we discuss the time line surrounding this abrogation claim in Step **D** next, Muslims did not fight until the battle of *Badr*, more than a decade after the revelation of verse 73:20.

Because of this fact, [Al-Ghali \[43\]](#) interpreted the entire verse as explaining why God did not impose the night prayer on them in the first place, rather than just intervening after it became burdensome since one of the reasons

mentioned in the verse (fighting in the cause of God) had not happened yet when the verse was revealed.

There is also an aspect of the phrasing of verse 73:20 that supports this interpretation; the verse uses future tense when it states the different reasons (“He knew that there will be among you ...” - عَلِمَ أَنَّ سَيَكُونُ مِنْكُمْ -) which fits a predetermined plan rather than an intervention after the fact. Contrast that with the present tense used in the opener of the verse when God says to the Prophet (PBUH): “Your Lord knows that you arise” (إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ) as He describes the present practice of night prayers.

Whether verse 73:20 is meant to explain why night prayers were not a requirement on Muslims in the first place, or only intervenes to relieve Muslims of their self-imposed hardship, the reconciliation argument is achieved; there is no conflict with verses 73:1-4 which imposed the requirement on the Prophet (PBUH) alone, and this is the key point in reconciling the verses. It is a case in point of the **Sameness** validation rule; the addressees are not the same so there is no conflict.

Given this straightforward reconciliation argument that is cited not only by opponents of the abrogation claim but also by some of its supporters, why is this claim so widely accepted? The burden of proof to claim abrogation is clearly violated given such clear reconciliation. The reason is that there are reported narrations by Aisha (RA) and Ibn Abbas (RA) that are interpreted as supporting the abrogation claim. We will address those and other related evidence now.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

We will discuss the narrations related to this abrogation claim, and then address the discrepancies in the time line of events surrounding the claim. These discrepancies are unique to this claim and have strongly impacted the way it is analyzed by different scholars.

##### • Narrations

The most relevant narration regarding this claim is attributed to Aisha (RA) and authenticated by [Muslim](#) [189], [Al-Nasai](#) [73], and [Abu-Dawoud](#) [3], among others. It is a long narration dealing with different subjects and there are many minor variations in its wording among the different sources. In the part that directly pertains to this abrogation claim, Aisha (RA) mentions chapter 73 of the Quran and then says (in the main version by Muslim):

*“God Almighty required arising in the night in the beginning of this chapter. So the Prophet of God (PBUH) and his fellows arose [in the night] for a year. And God held its ending for twelve months in heaven. Until God revealed, at*

the end of this chapter, the easing. So arising in the night became voluntary after [being] an obligation.” ( *إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ افْتَرَضَ قِيَامَ اللَّيْلِ فِي أَوَّلِ هَذِهِ السُّورَةِ. فَقَامَ* ) نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَصْحَابُهُ حَوْلًا. وَأَمْسَكَ اللَّهُ خَاتِمَتَهَا اثْنِي عَشَرَ شَهْرًا فِي السَّمَاءِ. ( *حَتَّى أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ، فِي آخِرِ هَذِهِ السُّورَةِ، التَّخْفِيفَ. فَصَارَ قِيَامُ اللَّيْلِ تَطَوُّعًا بَعْدَ فَرِيضَةٍ* ).

It is completely understood why this narration, coming from the wife of the Prophet (PBUH) who is keenly familiar with his daily life, would be persuasive to those who support this abrogation claim. In fact, this narration is often cited as the basis for claiming abrogation, e.g., by Zeid [206].

The key point about this narration is that *it is not a first-hand account of the events that it is reporting*. Aisha (RA), the wife of the Prophet (PBUH), was not describing events that she witnessed in their household. The night prayers and the revelation of the verses in question happened when Aisha (RA) was at most 4 years old and was living in a different household.<sup>17</sup>

Nor does the narration convey a statement by the Prophet (PBUH) or by one of his Fellows (RA) who actually participated in those night prayers. Without first-hand knowledge of the events or direct quotes from the participants, it is entirely plausible that what was conveyed to Aisha (RA) about those events led her to believe that the night prayer was a requirement on the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH), not only on him. After all, *those fellows (RA) did treat it as a requirement*. That was the point why verse 73:20 was revealed in the first place per the above reconciliation argument.

Furthermore, there is a discrepancy in the wording as narrated to us. The discrepancy is that the requirement of night prayer continued for the Prophet (PBUH) as evidenced by the other verses in the Quran, as we showed in the reconciliation argument. This does not mesh with the narration's wording “*So arising in the night became voluntary after [being] an obligation*” which, at face value, would also apply to the Prophet (PBUH) given the context: “*the Prophet of God (PBUH) and his fellows arose [in the night] for a year*” per the wording of the narration.

This narration is the primary evidence for this abrogation claim. The other authenticated narration that is also cited in support of the claim is reported in Abu-Dawoud [3] in which Ibn Abbas (RA) is reported to say that verse 73:20 did *naskh* to verses 73:1-4. As noted repeatedly in this book, Ibn Abbas (RA) used the word *naskh* for a variety of adjustments, not only for abrogation. Verse 73:20 certainly adjusted how Muslims reacted to verses 73:1-4, so there is no contradiction with that.

There are further, less authentic narrations that report conflicting accounts

<sup>17</sup>The earliest estimate of the year of birth of Aisha (RA) is 17 years before *hijra*, and the first year of Quranic revelation was 13 years before *hijra*, so Aisha (RA) was at most 4 years old when verses 73:1-4 were revealed.

of events surrounding the verses of this claim. In one case, the conflict is so clear that [Al-Ghornati \[47\]](#) called the narration in question a *blatant lie* (كذب صراح). Nonetheless, some of these narrations are widely cited in books that discuss this abrogation claim.

Finally, we reiterate that a narration by anyone other than the Prophet (PBUH), even if authentic,<sup>18</sup> is not sufficient to overcome the burden of proof needed for abrogation of a Quranic verse.

#### • Time-Line Discrepancies

This claim is unique among all abrogation claims in terms of the discrepancies that surround it. Most of these discrepancies have to do with the time line of events. This is not unexpected. Verses 73:1-4 are the earliest revelations in the Quran that have been claimed to be abrogated. There were far fewer Muslims at the time, so unsurprisingly, there is no first-hand account of events from anyone who took part in those night prayers.

Once the abrogation claim was accepted, these discrepancies created conflicts that remain unresolved until this very day. We will discuss three such instances here. As we will see, the reconciliation argument we provided in Step C would eliminate these conflicts altogether. Once it is recognized that 73:1-4 were directed toward the Prophet (PBUH) alone and verse 73:20 came to relieve Muslims from their self-imposed burden, both the abrogation claim and the ensuing conflicts are rectified.

- The most blatant example of such conflict is in the timing of revelation of verse 73:20, the verse that is claimed to abrogate verses 73:1-4. The consensus is that verses 73:1-4 were among the earliest revelations in the Quran. As for verse 73:20, we have seen that three major *hadith* scholars have authenticated a narration by Aisha (RA) which states clearly and repeatedly that verse 73:20 was revealed one year (and specifically twelve months) after verses 73:1-4. The narration is universally accepted and cited whenever this abrogation claim is discussed. Nonetheless, there is a separate consensus of scholars that verse 73:20 is Medinite ([Al-Ghornati \[47\]](#)). This means that it was revealed after *hijra*, more than a decade after the revelation of verses 73:1-4.

The discrepancy between these two time lines has not been reconciled in the literature. Rather, it is mostly glossed over. Some scholars did try to reconcile it. [Hasaballah \[139\]](#) tried to adapt the words of Aisha (RA) to the Medinite timing: “*perhaps the twelve months mentioned in the narration by Aisha start from the requirement of [regular] prayers or from the hijra, not from the timing of revelation of [verses 73:1-4] as is the perception*”.

This argument flies in the face of what the narration explicitly says; the twelve-month gap is between the revelations of the beginning and end of chap-

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<sup>18</sup>Notice that all the narrations cited here are ‘singles’, hence uncertain in sourcing, even if their individual chains have been authenticated.

ter 73, namely verses 73:1-4 and verse 73:20. The narration never mentions anything about the requirement of regular prayers or about the *hijra* that Hasaballah alludes to.

If the narration is so clear that it was a year, how did the Medinite timing that made it more than a decade come about? One of the reasons is another event in the time line; the battle of *Badr* that took place in the second year after *hijra*. It was the first event in Islamic history where Muslims fought their enemies. Verse 73:20 contains an explicit reference to fighting: “others fighting in the cause of God”, hence the argument that verse 73:20 must have been revealed after *Badr*. Afana [7] supports the Medinite timing based on when Muslims were directed to fight.

A closer look shows that this argument is not accurate. What verse 73:20 says is “[God] knew that there will be among you ... others fighting in the cause of God”. The fighting is in future tense. We have pointed out in Step C the role of that future tense in reconciling the verses of the abrogation claim. The same point also reconciles the discrepancy in revelation time as it shows that verse 73:20 is talking about fighting that is yet to occur, hence it could have been revealed a year after verses 73:1-4, well before the battle of *Badr*. Ibn Kathir [163] states that the fighting in verse 73:20 “is in the category of telling about future unknowns”.

- Another example of conflict is the reiteration of the night prayer requirement on the Prophet (PBUH) that took place later in the time line, for example by verse 17:79 that we discussed in detail in Step C. In supporting the current abrogation claim, Zeid made two conflicting assertions. First, he asserted that the requirement of night prayer on the Prophet (PBUH) himself was removed in verse 73:20 (Zeid [206]). Then he asserted that it “was still a requirement on the Messenger of God (PBUH) in particular” (ما زال) when he discussed verse 17:79 two pages later (Zeid [206]). This discrepancy would not be there given the reconciliation argument of the abrogation claim, as the requirement on the Prophet (PBUH) was never removed by verse 73:20 and was just reiterated in verse 17:79 (and in verse 76:26 as we discussed before).

- The last example of a conflict that we present here involves an opinion of Imam Al-Shafei. Hasaballah alluded in the above quote to the requirement of regular prayers which took place a year and a half before *hijra*. Al-Shafei analyzed the time line of different requirements of prayers (details in Zeid [206]). Al-Shafei accepted that verses 73:1-4 were abrogated, and asserted that other abrogation steps took place in that time line in order to be compatible with the consensus that once the regular prayers were instituted, no other prayer was required of Muslims.

This assertion was not convincing to Hasaballah [139] who then postulated that Al-Shafei may not have known about the narration by Aisha (RA). Zeid

was more direct with a rare disagreement with the revered Imam, rejecting his assertion. Given the reconciliation argument that we presented, neither the multiple abrogations nor the disagreements with Al-Shafei would be needed, and the regular prayers would indeed be the only required prayers for Muslims, other than the Prophet (PBUH) himself.

Perhaps it is because of these discrepancies that the support for this abrogation claim is often less unequivocal than other claims; some scholars mention the opinions that mostly support abrogation without explicitly mentioning abrogation as their own opinion (e.g., [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#)), and some provide an account of the time-line discrepancies even as they side with the abrogation claim (e.g., [Al-Thaalabi \[110\]](#)). [Ibn Salama \[170\]](#), after asserting other abrogation claims, makes a single comment about this abrogation claim: “*most exegetes said that the ending of chapter 73 abrogated its beginning*”, without expressing his own opinion about it.

#### **E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:**

[Waliyullah \[203\]](#) addressed this claim briefly and did not include it in the 5 abrogation claims that he approved.

Pro-abrogation exegete [Al-Thaalibi \[111\]](#) gave an elaborate commentary on the verses of this claim without using the word *naskh*, while his commentary on the verses involved in other abrogation claims, e.g., verse 58:12 ([Al-Thaalibi \[111\]](#)), uses the word *naskh* explicitly.

[Hasaballah \[139\]](#) dismisses this claim in his conclusion, stating that the command in 73:1-4 was directed toward the Prophet (PBUH) alone. He earlier discussed inconclusively ([Hasaballah \[139\]](#)) whether the obligation of the night prayers continued for the Prophet (PBUH).

One notable case of conflicting opinions about this claim comes from Al-Zurqani. [Nada \[190\]](#) quotes him<sup>19</sup> disapproving the claim with an elaborate statement based on the command in verses 73:1-4 being directed toward the Prophet (PBUH) alone, and verse 73:20 coming to relieve the companions who took it upon themselves to observe the night prayers without being required to do so. In the 3rd edition of the book, [Al-Zurqani \[128\]](#) states in the introduction that in this edition, he “*added and eliminated ... and corrected and redressed*”, then goes on in the section about this claim to summarily approve it, lamenting the ‘fuss and disagreement’ about it without going into any substantive details ([Al-Zurqani \[128\]](#)), and without addressing his earlier, opposing opinion that was attributed to him by [Nada \[190\]](#).

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<sup>19</sup>Apparently, the quote comes from an earlier edition of Al-Zurqani’s book that we were not able to obtain.

**F) Conclusion:**

Verses 73:1-4 and verse 73:20 (as well as other verses mentioned in this section are reconciled as collectively saying

Arising in the night, for certain durations, and reciting the Quran are required of the Prophet (ﷺ) as a spiritual preparation for the prophethood tasks ahead. God knows that such a requirement would be burdensome for other Muslims who are going through the trials of life, so God exempted them from this requirement; they can recite from the Quran within their facility and observe the other duties of Muslims.



In this chapter, three abrogation claims were refuted which are arguably the strongest claims in the abrogation literature. We continue with the rest of the famous abrogation claims in the next chapter.

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## Chapter 6

# Other Famous Claims

In this chapter, we present more abrogation claims that were often cited in the classic literature, but with less agreement on them among pro-abrogation scholars. The merit of several of them does not measure up to their fame. There are two sets of claims that we will address here.

The first set covers the sword-verse claims and related claims about fighting. The sword-verse claims assert that more than 100 verses were abrogated by a single verse. These claims are widely dismissed, but they warrant attention because of their sheer scope.

The second set covers Al-Suyuti's claims. His 20 claims had a historical impact on the trajectory of the Abrogation Doctrine, becoming the *de facto* starting point of discussion of abrogation in subsequent work. Some of these claims have already been discussed in previous chapters, and the rest will be discussed here.

### 6.1 Leaving a Will (2:180)

This is a famous abrogation claim and one of the twenty claims approved by [Al-Suyuti](#) [100]. These claims will be addressed together in a later section of this chapter, but we single out this claim here because of its merit. It is the last abrogation claim we discuss that warrants judicious refutation.

As you can see from Appendix [A.2](#), over ninety scholars in the literature we surveyed have analyzed this claim. You can also see that they were split. Half of them approved the claim of abrogation and the other half did not. The claim has been cited often in the literature, sometimes as proof of abrogation.

**A) The claim:**

This claim pertains to leaving a will. The verse which is claimed abrogated is 2:180,

﴿كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ إِن تَرَكَ خَيْرًا الْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ  
وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٠]

[2:180] Decreed upon you, when death approaches one of you if he leaves wealth, is a will for the parents and closest relatives properly - a duty upon the pious.

and the verses claimed to abrogate it are the inheritance rules verses, namely 4:11-12,176, that detail heirs and their shares of the estate.

The claim is supported by many scholars, including Ibn Abbas (RA) according to Ibn Al-Jawzi [147], Ibn Sallam [171], Ibn Salama [170] although he notes dissenting scholars, Al-Suyuti [100], Al-Karmi [60] while also noting a number of dissenting scholars, and Waliyullah [203]. This claim is the only one that is unequivocally supported by Hasaballah [139], but the abrogating text for him includes a Prophetic narration (see Step D below).

**B) Pinpointing the conflict:**

There are two main arguments that scholars have made to show that there is a conflict between the command in verse 2:180 and the subsequent commands in the inheritance verses. The first argument is that verse 2:180 allows the testator to determine the distribution of the estate, whereas the rules mandated in the inheritance verses restrict this allowance. The second argument is that leaving a will as verse 2:180 instructs is no longer required since inheritance law would supersede any will.

**C) Reconciliation arguments:**

Let us look closely at what verse 2:180 mandates. The verse has three instructions:

1. That a will is required (كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ... الْوَصِيَّةُ) if the testator is leaving an estate.
2. That parents and close relatives (لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ) must not be left out of this will.
3. That the will must be according to standards of propriety (بِالْمَعْرُوفِ).

The first instruction is about the requirement of leaving a will, while the second and third instructions are about requirements on the content of the will.

These two aspects are precisely the subjects of the two perceived conflicts that were mentioned in the previous step. Let us start with the instructions about the content of the will. Where is the conflict between these instructions and what the inheritance verses subsequently mandate?

- The perceived conflict stems from a presumption that verse 2:180 provides a juristic ruling that the testator is allowed to divide his estate among the designated beneficiaries as he pleases, a ruling that would be annulled by the specific prescription in the inheritance verses about who gets how much. However, verse 2:180 contains no such juristic ruling; it only sets the general principles of inheritance without getting into the question of shares.

Not addressing a question is not the same as mandating that the answer be up to the testator. The answer can be subject to further mandates at a later stage, which is often observed in Quranic commands.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the detailed answer to this question was mandated later - in the inheritance verses that elaborated verse 2:180.

What is certainly true is that the assertions of verse 2:180 remained valid; the parents and the nearest relatives remained eligible heirs, and the proper way (بالمعروف) to divide the estate was set. The two assertions were affirmed and detailed by the inheritance verses which designate the shares of parents and close relatives and establish the standards of propriety.

That was the argument Al-Asfahani used to refute this claim: that inheritance verses are an elaboration of the generality of 2:180 (Al-Razi [83]). Elaboration is one of the meanings that the word *naskh* has been used for, but it is certainly not abrogation (see the **Elaboration** validation rule).

Al-Zahiri [121] focused on a simple aspect of this elaboration; he wrote that there is nothing in 4:11-12 that prevents bequeathing to parents,<sup>2</sup> so the mandate in 2:180 that parents inherit is not annulled by the inheritance verses.

- While the specification of inheritance shares elaborates the general designation of heirs in verse 2:180, it is not the only elaboration of this verse in the Quran. Other verses can be construed as elaborating ‘the proper way’ that verse 2:180 requires. For example, in pre-Islamic Arabia, women were deprived of inheritance. Is this proper? The Quran says it is not,

﴿لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا﴾ [النساء : ٧]

[4:7] For men is a share of what parents and close relatives have left, and for women is a share of what parents and close relatives have

<sup>1</sup>The book by Ataya [132] provides a thorough analysis of the Quranic theme of setting a principle first then elaborating the details later.

<sup>2</sup>There is a Prophetic narration that addresses eligibility for bequests which we will discuss in Step **D** next.

left - be it little or much, a mandated share.

Thus, a major principle of propriety was defined.<sup>3</sup> Another pre-Islamic practice deprived parents of inheritance in favor of sons ([Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#)). After the mandated shares were specified in verse 4:11, the verse elaborated another principle of propriety:

﴿... أَبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفْعًا فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا﴾ [النساء: ١١]

[4:11] ... Your parents and your children - You do not realize which of them are more beneficial to you. [This is] a mandate from God. God is All-Knowing and Wise.

thus explaining why the fixed shares mandated by the inheritance verses are indeed the proper way of dividing the estate; our biases and favoritism regarding our relatives need to be controlled so that the division of the estate would be done properly, based on God's knowledge, not ours.

- Muslims still have some leeway in distributing their estate through bequests. There is a limit; bequests can be at most one-third of the estate in total.<sup>4</sup> This guarantees the original heirs at least two-thirds of their mandated shares regardless of the bequests, so no eligible heir can be deprived of inheritance. As noted by [Al-Shawkani \[96\]](#), this is a manifestation of propriety that is captured by the words *غَيْرَ مُضَارٍ*, meaning "not being harmed", which appear in verse 4:12.

We can therefore conclude that while subsequent verses elaborated the implementation details of the shares and elaborated the propriety in dividing the estate, verse 2:180 is not abrogated since its guidelines regarding inheritance remain in force. [Tahir \[202\]](#) points out that the verbiage of the verse, "Decreed upon you" (*كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ*) and "a duty upon the pious" (*حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ*), underlines how forceful its command is.

**A second argument** that reconciles the verses deals with the second perceived conflict, that leaving a will as verse 2:180 instructs is no longer required since inheritance law would supersede any will. Reconciling this conflict is straightforward as there are cases where a will is in fact *needed*, notwithstanding the inheritance law. Here are two examples:

1. [Jumaa \[182\]](#) enumerated cases where a will is needed, e.g., parents and close relatives who are not Muslim do not fall under the mandated shares,

<sup>3</sup>[Ibn Salama \[170\]](#) claimed that 4:7 was abrogated by 4:11-12. No one else that we know of agreed with him.

<sup>4</sup>A Prophetic narration authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#) sets this cap of one-third.

but can be given bequests in the will as mandated in verse 2:180. [Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#) made the same observation and so did exegete [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#). The will would be the only vehicle to give them any part of the estate.

2. Islamic inheritance law may not always be enforced. For instance, a Muslim living in a non-Muslim country may not be able to divide his estate as Islamic law requires unless he leaves a legal will stating that wish. Without a will, the probate court of the country will decide how to divide up his estate, and their decision may not be compatible with Islamic law. As a matter of fact, Islamic inheritance law is not in force even in some Muslim-majority countries.

In conclusion, nothing in the verses that elaborate the inheritance law in Islam *conflicts* with any of the three provisions of verse 2:180, and there are legitimate situations until this very day that directly necessitate the command in verse 2:180. Therefore, there is no ground for abrogation.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

Two narrations, both attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA), support this claim. However, *hadith* scholars criticized both narrations and noted that in one of them, the sourcing is disconnected and in the other the sourcing includes a problematic narrator, Al-Husayn ibn Waqid, as stated by narrator appraisal scholars such as [Al-Suyuti \[103\]](#) and [Al-Dominy \[41\]](#).

The claim of abrogation of verse 2:180 by inheritance laws is sometimes bundled with another claim that the verse was abrogated by a narration of the Prophet (ﷺ). The narration<sup>5</sup> asserts that “*there shall be no bequest to an heir*”, i.e., one who normally inherits by law.

Setting aside for the moment the controversial issue of whether a Prophetic narration can abrogate a Quranic verse, and the narration is even uncertain in sourcing in this case, one can see some merit to that claim. Verse 2:180 appears to order a bequest be made to parents, while the narration appears to forbid it because parents always inherit by Islamic law.

This apparent discrepancy is caused by the multiple meanings of the Arabic word *وصية*, which is a polyseme. It can mean one of three things: (i) a recommendation or an instruction, which is how it is used at the beginning of verse 4:11 (يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ - God instructs you), (ii) a legal will, which is how it is used in verse 2:180 (الْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْأَقْرَبِينَ - the will for the parents and close relatives), or (iii) a bequest, which is how it is used in verse 4:12 (مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَى بِهَا -

<sup>5</sup>Reported by [Al-Tirmizi \[113\]](#) and belatedly authenticated by [Al-Albani \[13\]](#) but found inauthentic by several scholars, such as [Ibn Al-Arabi \[144\]](#). [Ibn Taymia \[172\]](#) rejects the claim that it abrogated verse 2:180.

after a bequest that is willed) and in the narration “*there shall be no bequest to an heir*”.

With that in mind, one can see that there is no discrepancy between verse 2:180 and the narration. The verse requires a proper, legal passing of property upon death and the narration forbids giving more than the proper share to any heir.

Finally, as in many abrogation claims, the different behaviors of early Muslims in reaction to the different verses in the claim are sometimes taken as evidence that abrogation had taken place. There is no question that those who died after verse 2:180 was revealed, but before the inheritance verses detailed the estate shares, did not have the benefit of knowing the mandated shares and may have legitimately followed the general guidelines of verse 2:180 and came up with a different division of the estate.

This is a manifestation of the dynamic process that we described in §1.6. This is the process that spanned 23 years during which the Quran was gradually being revealed and the Muslim community was learning and adapting to its teachings. Islam was not complete until the Quran announced that fact in verse 5:3,

﴿ ... الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا ... ﴾ [المائدة : ٣]

[5:3] ... Today I have completed for you your religion, fulfilled upon you My favor and approved for you Islam as a religion ...

However, as we have discussed in §1.6, this does not mean that older verses were *abrogated* in the course of this progression. In the present claim, the principles set forth in verse 2:180 are valid today as they were valid the day the verse was revealed. These principles were elaborated later by the other verses, but they were not annulled. The conflation of these two notions in the word *naskh* is the cause for many invalid abrogation claims, as we discussed in §2.3.2.

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

Al-Nahas [71] concluded that the ruling in verse 2:180 is valid. Al-Tabari [107] assertively stated that there was no abrogation of verse 2:180.

Zeid [206] rejected the claim after a detailed analysis, based on elaboration versus abrogation. Al-Arid [20] also rejected the claim citing the opinions of different scholars.

Al-Shaarawi [92] and other scholars stated that 2:180 was abrogated for the heirs who inherit by the rulings in 4:11-12 but not abrogated for other heirs.

Shaker [196] commented on that by saying that this is not called abrogation. Indeed, a ruling which stays valid in part is not an abrogated ruling.

### F) Conclusion:

We have shown that the perceived conflict between verse 2:180 and the inheritance verses 4:11-12,176 can be reconciled, thus refuting the abrogation claim. The following reconciliation statement can be made to express all the verses involved and show that there is no conflict between them:

A Muslim who has an estate must ensure the proper passing of it to his parents and close relatives after his death, following Islamic inheritance law that defines eligible heirs and their shares. He may bequeath to others in his will. He must leave a legally enforceable will stating the aforementioned provisions if one is needed, e.g., wherever this law is not automatically enforced.

## 6.2 The “Sword Verse” Claims

In these famous claims, one verse that commands fighting is claimed to abrogate more than 100 verses that counsel tolerance. The claims are easily refuted and have indeed been widely rejected. We opt to discuss them in some detail not because of their merit, but because of the notoriety of claiming abrogation for that many verses in the Quran *en masse*.

The name “sword verse” that was given to the abrogating verse in these claims was coined by scholars, as the verse contains a command to fight. The word سيف (sword) does not appear in that verse or any other verse in the Quran for that matter. Nor is there a verse in the Quran which God, or the Prophet (PBUH), has called the sword verse.

### A) The claim:

This verse<sup>6</sup> about fighting polytheists,

﴿ فَإِذَا انْسَلَخَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرُمُ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَخُذُوهُمْ  
وَاحْصُرُوهُمْ وَاقْعُدُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصِدٍ قَالُوا تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ فَخَلُّوا  
سَبِيلَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴾ [التوبة : ٥]

[9:5] Then when the sacred months<sup>7</sup> have shed, then kill the poly-

<sup>6</sup>Two other verses, 9:29 and 9:36, are considered to be the abrogating “sword verse” of these claims by some scholars. We will discuss them in §6.2.1.

<sup>7</sup>These are months where fighting is restricted. They will be addressed again in §6.2.1.

theists wherever you found them, seize them, besiege them, and sit [in wait] for them at every vantage point. But if they should repent, establish prayer, and give alms, then let them go on their way. Verily, God is much Forgiving and Merciful.

is claimed to abrogate more than 100 verses in the Quran whose subject is tolerance and coexistence. As an example, one verse is

﴿وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ...﴾ [الكهف: ٢٩]

[18:29] And say "The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve" ...

and another verse is the first abrogation example given in this book:

﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٥٦]

[2:256] There is no compulsion in religion ...

The abrogation of this verse was asserted by [Ibn Salama \[170\]](#).

Most of the claimants did not provide a full list of the verses that they claimed were abrogated, but instead gave a description or a summary count of them.<sup>8</sup> For example, [Makki \[184\]](#) asserted that the majority support that verse 9:5 abrogated all verses that instruct the believers to forgive or pardon the polytheists. [Ibn Salama \[170\]](#) asserted that the number of verses it abrogated is 124.

## B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The perceived conflict is that verse 9:5 seems to order Muslims to fight polytheists until they accept Islam, while the verses claimed abrogated counsel tolerance and forbid coercion into accepting Islam.

## C) Reconciliation Arguments:

Who are the polytheists that verse 9:5 orders the Muslims to fight? They are explicitly specified a few verses before the fighting order is given,

﴿بَرَاءَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾ [التوبة: ١]

[9:1] Disavowal by God and His Messenger unto **those whom you have covenanted of the polytheists**.

<sup>8</sup>We counted all those claims in the literature that we studied and found 160 such verses. See Appendix [A.2](#)



The highlighted sentence points to covenants that were there between Muslims and polytheists at the time the verse was revealed; thus, these are not all polytheists at any place and at any time. They are specifically the polytheists in the Arabian peninsula at the time of the Prophet (PBUH) who previously attacked him and were under a non-aggression treaty that they had already violated (as we will see shortly) when verse 9:5 was revealed.

The fact that verse 9:5 is not talking about all polytheists has been acknowledged by many scholars. They had different opinions about what specific group of polytheists the verse is talking about, but they all agreed that it is not talking about all polytheists. This is all that is needed to reconcile the verse with the other verses it is claimed to abrogate since those verses talk about polytheists in general. Here are some of the opinions, coming from pro-abrogation scholars, about which group of polytheists verse 9:5 is talking about.

Zeid [206] concludes that they are “a special group of polytheists” (فريق خاص) (من المشركين) who had a treaty with the Prophet (PBUH) and then broke it and allied with his enemies, while Ibn Al-Arabi [145] concludes that they are “polytheists who fight [the Muslims]” (المشركين الذين يحاربونكم). Al-Zamakhshari [124] and Al-Nasafi [72] both characterize them as those “who broke their treaties with you (Muhammad) and allied with others against you”. Al-Baydawi [31] restricts it to “violators [of the treaty]”.

If one needs further proof that the objects of fighting in verse 9:5 are not all polytheists, one only needs to look at the immediate next verse,

﴿وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ أَبْلِغْهُ مَأْمَنَهُ ...﴾ [التوبة: ٦]

[9:6] And if any one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that he may hear the words of God. Then deliver him to his place of safety ...

The polytheist in this verse is not subjected to any of the commands in the previous verse, 9:5. On the contrary, he is to be helped by the Muslims then taken to safety *without any demand that he abandon polytheism*. This fact is undeniable; the verse is talking about polytheists, and it does not require accepting Islam for them to be delivered to safety. Even Qutb [191], who wrote a stern commentary about polytheists, goes on to interpret this verse as saying that “God mandated on Muslims to protect them” (أوجب الله على أهل) (دار الإسلام أن يحرسوهم) even if they reject an invitation to Islam.

Therefore, polytheism, in and of itself, is not what triggers the ruling of verse 9:5. Nonetheless, the claimants of abrogation extend the scope of the ruling to all polytheists, everywhere, perpetually after a certain point in time.

Their rationale for this extension may have come from the opening words of the verse,

﴿ فَإِذَا انْسَلَخَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرُمُ فَ... ﴾ [التوبة: ٥]

[9:5] Then when the sacred months have shed, then ...

which trigger the fighting order once the sacred months have ended. The perception that the order extends indefinitely comes from interpreting the words of the verse as indicating that the order, once triggered, continues in perpetuity, everywhere, for all polytheists. This imposes a meaning on the words that they do not bear:

1. [Al-Ghali \[43\]](#) counters the perpetual extension with an example. If you tell your child “go to sleep once you finish studying”, this does not mean that the child should continue to sleep forever. The circumstances of the order are understood from the context, the same way that the circumstances in the verse are understood from its context.
2. The polytheists being addressed are the specific group stated in verse 9:1. To deviate from that meaning and seek a different interpretation that creates conflict with other Quranic verses would be the opposite of what the burden of proof for abrogation claims mandates. We are required to reconcile the verses “*through any facet of interpretation*” - [أي وجه من وجوه التأويل](#) ([Al-Zurqani \[128\]](#)), not seek conflict through any facet of interpretation.

Once it is clear that the polytheists in verse 9:5 are a specific group that does not cover all polytheists, there is no conflict between fighting this group and coexisting with polytheists in general as mandated in more than 100 other verses in the Quran. Verse 9:5 only makes an exception to that coexistence mandate for a particular, guilty group. Exception is not abrogation.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

- The first piece of evidence against abrogation looks in detail at the context of verse 9:5, from verse 9:1 to verse 9:6. These verses show continuity of subject ([SCIA \[201\]](#)) that confirms that the group of polytheists specified in verse 9:1 (namely “those whom you have covenanted of the polytheists”) is indeed the same group against which verse 9:5 mandates fighting, thus supporting the above reconciliation argument. Here is what the verses say, with parts that depend on other verses put between brackets.

1. Verse 9:1 declares an end to non-aggression treaties with the polytheists who were under those treaties [but violated them, *per* 9:4].

2. Verse 9:2 gives those polytheists a four-month grace period before the non-aggression comes to an end.
  3. Verse 9:3 tells those polytheists to reconsider their militancy against Islam.
  4. Verse 9:4 clarifies that the polytheists who have respected the terms of their treaty with Muslims are exempt, and instructs Muslims to allow the treaty with these people to continue to term. The four-month period mentioned in verse 9:2, therefore, does not apply to them.
  5. Verse 9:5 instructs Muslims, when the grace period ends, to attack the polytheists [only those who violated their treaties, per 9:4], fight them vigorously, and kill them unless they decide to accept Islam.
  6. Verse 9:6 instructs the Prophet (PBUH) to accept the refuge of any polytheist who seeks refuge with him from the fight, give him a chance to hear the words of God, then accompany him to a place where he will be safe.
- Another set of evidence against abrogation comes from the practice of the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) after he died, hence after verse 9:5 was revealed. When they entered foreign lands, they always allowed the natives to keep practicing their religions (Mulhim [188]). If verse 9:5 had mandated the conversion of everyone to Islam by force, the Fellows (RA) would not have let non-Muslims practice their religions freely and openly.
  - There is also evidence against the abrogation claims coming from some of the verses that are claimed abrogated themselves. How is that? There are passages within these verses that are statements of fact. As such, they are *unabrogatable* per the Facts validation rule, and they reaffirm the principles of tolerance and coexistence. Zeid [206] lists more than 20 instances of these passages. Here are two examples,

﴿وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ﴾  
[البقرة : ١٩٠]

[2:190] Fight in the way of God those who fight you but do not transgress. **Indeed, God does not like transgressors.**

The highlighted passage is a statement of fact, therefore it cannot be abrogated. The statement goes against the interpretation of verse 9:5 as a command to fight all polytheists including those who are peaceful and did not initiate any aggression against Muslims. The other example is

﴿ فَإِنْ أَغْرَضُوا فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا إِنَّ عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ ... ﴾  
[الشورى: ٤٨]

[42:48] So if they turn away - then We have not sent you [O Muhammad] over them as a guardian; you need only convey [the message] ...

which is a statement that goes against the interpretation of verse 9:5 as a license to coerce all polytheists into Islam.

What these Quranic statements refute is precisely what the abrogation claims advocate, namely attacking polytheists even if they did not initiate hostility and coercing them into Islam. Notice that we are not just arguing that the two verses are not abrogated by the sword verse. We are arguing that the sword verse did not abrogate tolerance and coexistence *in any verse at all*, because the interpretation of the sword verse that would support abrogation conflicts with these Quranic statements, so that interpretation must be false.

- The bulk of the evidence supporting the abrogation claims of the sword verse comes from narrations by the early scholars, such as Ibn Abbas (RA) and Al-Sadusi, who often used the word *naskh* in its broad meaning which covers all aspects of subsequent statements about a ruling such as elaboration and exception, in addition to abrogation.

It is only later convention that limited the meaning of the word *naskh* to abrogation only and that has caused countless misunderstandings of earlier opinions about what was abrogated and what was simply elaborated (see §2.3.2). In this case, there is no question that verse 9:5 elaborated other verses by making an exception to tolerance and coexistence, excluding a specific group of violators. However, this is exception not abrogation.

- Finally, there is a narration by the Prophet (PBUH) about fighting people and accepting Islam.<sup>9</sup> This narration is often cited as proof of the sword-verse abrogation claims. The narration does not make any reference to the sword verse or to abrogation, but its subject matter is indeed seen as conflicting with tolerance and coexistence.

If that is the case, this would be an argument that the narration itself, not the sword verse, abrogated the Quranic verses about tolerance and coexistence. Nothing has changed in what the sword verse itself says. We have already established that the verse is about a special group of polytheists and that does not abrogate anything.

A narration abrogating the Quran is not a possibility, though (Al-Shafei [94], among numerous pro-abrogation scholars, as we will discuss in Appendix A.7). This does not mean that narrations should be ignored. An authentic

<sup>9</sup>The text of the Prophetic narration, and analysis of the word ‘people’ (الناس) in it, are included in side note 22.

Prophetic narration is a significant piece of evidence that should be taken into consideration together with the Quranic evidence. This brings into focus a key point:

**Key Point**



This book is not trying to deduce the final ruling on fighting or on any other subject for that matter. The discussion here is not about what the final ruling is. It is about what body of evidence needs to be taken into consideration to arrive at the final ruling.

This is why the abrogation question is pivotal. Once it is shown that the sword verse did not abrogate the abundant evidence in the Quran about tolerance and coexistence, a scholar can approach the deduction of the final ruling judiciously by considering all evidence, *without ignoring the bulk of it in the name of abrogation*.

**E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:**

Support for this blanket abrogation claim waned considerably in later generations. Al-Suyuti did not include it in his approved twenty claims, and practically every scholar who came after him followed suit, often without mentioning the sword verse at all, e.g., [Waliyullah \[203\]](#). Pro-abrogation scholar [Zeid \[206\]](#) wrote a particularly thorough refutation of the claim.

**F) Conclusion:**

Verse 9:5 is in a context that explains it. It must not be taken out of context. It can be reconciled with the verses that mandate tolerance and coexistence as follows,

Muslims are ordered to put an end to hostility toward Islam from those who have violently attacked them and breached their treaties with them. Those violators forfeited their safety and freedom through this aggression. Others who are not aggressors must be protected and are not to be coerced into Islam.

### 6.2.1 Fighting Claims

There are other verses in the Quran about fighting that are also involved in abrogation claims. Here, we will cover those that are related to famous claims.

We start with two verses that are considered by a minority of scholars to be the “sword verse” that they claim abrogated scores of verses, instead of the more widely recognized verse 9:5. Some refer to all three verses as “verses about fighting” (آيات القتال) instead. The first of the two verses is

﴿... وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً ...﴾ [التوبة: ٣٦]

[9:36] ... And fight against the polytheists collectively as they fight against you collectively ...

where the claimants view the qualification “collectively” (كَافَّةً) in the verse as extending the command to fight all polytheists, anywhere, anytime. There are two flaws with this interpretation. First, the verse specifically conditions the command to fight on being fought (“as they fight against you”), so we are back to defense against aggressors, not aggression against peaceful people. Second, the adverb “collectively” could qualify the subject, not the object, so the verse could mean “all of you fight the polytheists”, not “you fight all the polytheists”, and that would be a call for the unity of Muslims at time of war (Al-Ghali [43]).

#### point of interest

Fighting commands may sound harsh, but they are dealing with reality. If Muslims are violently attacked and they do not respond in kind, they will be slaughtered with impunity. The Quran empowers Muslims with the necessary tools to defend themselves so as not to let misplaced benevolence jeopardize their lives and well-being.

The second verse, which is less often considered to be the “sword verse”, is

﴿قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حَتَّى يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ﴾ [التوبة: ٢٩]

[9:29] Fight those who do not believe in God nor in the Final Day, nor make unlawful what God and His Messenger have made unlawful, nor adopt the religion of truth, among those who were given the Scripture - [fight] until they give the jizya (mandatory tax) handily while they are humbled.

Most scholars refer to this verse as the “jizya verse” instead. The verse authorizes Muslims to require a tax that is paid without resistance from non-Muslims

who live under Islamic rule. Muslims are required to pay their own tax, the *zakah*, so the *jizya* levels the playing field of financial obligations. It is difficult to see how this verse can be viewed as abrogating anything about tolerance and coexistence. Tolerance does not mean appeasing the freeloaders.

There are other, less famous claims related to fighting, which we mention in §7.8 and §8.2. We now finish this section with claims about verses that speak of forbidding fighting during the sacred months,<sup>10</sup> or inside the Sacrosanct Mosque in Mecca, such as 2:217 and 5:2. Let us examine these two claims in more detail.

### Sacred months and mosque (2:217 and 5:2)

Al-Suyuti approved the abrogation claims of these two verses in his list of 20 claims (§6.3). Other scholars agreed, but had different views about what was abrogated. According to Shula [199], it is an almost universal opinion that the first verse,

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ وَصَدٌّ عَنْ سَبِيلِ  
اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ  
مِنَ الْقَتْلِ ...﴾ [البقرة : ٢١٧]

[2:217] They ask you about the sacred month; fighting therein?  
Say fighting therein is a major sin but shunning away from the way of  
God, disbelieving in Him, and the Sacrosanct Mosque and evicting its  
attendants from it is a bigger sin in the eyes of God, and persecution  
is worse than killing ...

was abrogated by the sword verse. He identified fighting in the sacred month as what was abrogated. Al-Suyuti agrees with what was abrogated, but he said that the abrogating verse is verse 9:36, which is one of the ‘other’ sword verses that we have just discussed.

This claim ignores the parts of the verse that say that persecution is a bigger sin in the eyes of God than killing, hence Muslims must fight back the polytheists who attack them even if that happens during a sacred month. Self-defense has a higher priority. When there is no urgency, the default is not to fight. That makes the no-fight ruling still valid at normal times. A ruling that remains valid at times is not an abrogated ruling.

A related claim that fighting at the Sacrosanct Mosque has become allowed is the abrogation claim against the second verse,

<sup>10</sup>As we alluded to before, a sacred month (الشهر الحرام) is any of the four designated months in a *hijri* year where fighting is restricted.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحِلُّوا شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا  
الْقَلَائِدَ وَلَا آمِينَ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامَ ...﴾ [المائدة : ٢]

[5:2] O you who have believed, do not violate the rites of God nor [the sanctity of] the sacred month nor the animals offered or marked for sacrifice nor [the safety of] those heading to the Sacred House ...<sup>11</sup>

which is claimed abrogated by

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْمُشْرِكُونَ نَجَسٌ فَلَا يَقْرَبُوا الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ بَعْدَ  
عَامِهِمْ هَذَا ...﴾ [التوبة : ٢٨]

[9:28] O you who have believed, verily the polytheists are but filth, so they are not to approach the Sacrosanct Mosque after this year ...

While verse 9:28 does not mention fighting, the claimant may have presumed that fighting is the only way to stop the polytheists from entering the mosque. However, this task can be achieved with armed guards *outside* the mosque area. That is the significance of the word ‘approach’ in the verse.

Another angle for the abrogation claim is that what is abrogated is “[the safety of] those heading to the Sacred House” since the polytheists would be prevented if they head to it. [Al-Ghali \[43\]](#) points out that the remainder of verse 5:2 qualifies those headed toward the Sacred House as “seeking bounty and approval from their Lord” (يَسْتَغْنُونَ فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا), hence the verse is talking about Muslim pilgrims not polytheist pilgrims who worship multiple idols, so there is no conflict with verse 9:28.

[Al-Suyuti \[100\]](#) offers a third angle for abrogation, focusing on “[the sanctity of] the sacred month” in verse 5:2 and claiming that it was abrogated by the allowance to fight in the sacred month. This is refuted the same way the claim about verse 2:217 was refuted; the sanctity of the sacred month forbids aggression during that month, but defense is always allowed.

## 6.3 Al-Suyuti's Twenty

[Al-Suyuti \[100\]](#) listed twenty abrogation claims that he approved, and stated that no other claims were valid. Most abrogation scholars who came after him agreed largely on the latter but refuted some of the twenty claims he approved. We present his full list of abrogation claims here, in the order of the Quranic script.

<sup>11</sup>The Sacred House (البيت الحرام) is an alternative reference to the Sacrosanct Mosque (المسجد الحرام) in Mecca.



p o i n t   o f   i n t e r e s t

Al-Suyuti initially listed 21 claims, in almost the same order as the Quranic script. He then eliminated two of them (verse 4:8 about inheritance charity and verse 24:58 about home etiquette, which will be discussed in §8.3) and added the claim about verse 2:115, making the total 20.

These twenty claims vary in how strong they are. The nine strongest claims have already been covered in previous chapters and in the first section of this chapter. Pointers to where they were discussed will be given. As we discuss the remaining claims, we will do so less elaborately since these claims are easier to refute.

## 1. Prayer direction (2:115)

The change of the *qibla* (the direction Muslims face when praying) is a notable event in Islamic history that is detailed in the Quran ([Al-Tabari \[107\]](#)). In the second *hijri* year, the Prophet (PBUH) was instructed in verse 2:144 to direct the prayer toward the Sacrosanct Mosque in Mecca. Up till that point, the direction had been toward the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

This event is often cited as an undeniable example of abrogation. However, what was abrogated in this case was not a Quranic verse, since praying toward the Aqsa Mosque was a matter of tradition rather than a Quranic ruling. Therefore, this example does not belong to the Abrogation Doctrine which concerns itself only with claims of abrogation of verses within the Quranic script.

However, there is another claim about the prayer direction that asserts an abrogation of a Quranic ruling, that of verse 2:115. Al-Suyuti initially did not include this claim in his tally, but later decided to add it ([Al-Suyuti \[100\]](#)). The claim pertains to whether prayer direction may be any direction or just toward Mecca.

### A) The claim:

The verse claimed abrogated is,

﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾  
[البقرة: ١١٥]

[2:115] And to God belongs the East and the West, so, wherever you turn - there is the Face of God. Verily, God is Capacious and All-Knowing.

and the verse claimed to have abrogated it is,

﴿قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٤٤]

[2:144] We do see the turning over of your face into the sky, therefore We shall ordain to you a prayer direction that you approve. Direct your face toward the Sacrosanct Mosque, and wherever you all may be, direct your faces toward it ...

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The argument for abrogation has been that verse 2:115 allows any direction during a prayer, while verse 2:144 restricts it toward Mecca only.

### C) Reconciliation arguments:

The reconciliation of the two verses is straightforward. Verse 2:115 does not refer to a prayer direction at all. It simply states one of the attributes of God: that He is everywhere. God is never restricted to any one place. Exegete [Al-Tabari](#) [107] emphasized this point. Therefore, to anyone who asks where God is, verse 2:115 answers.

It is verse 2:144 that explicitly mentions the prayer direction. Before the revelation of 2:144, Muslims did not have Quranic instructions on which direction to face when performing their prayers. The Muslims in Medina did as the Jews there did; they faced Jerusalem, which to them is North ([Al-Tabari](#) [107]).

However, the Prophet (PBUH) was unhappy about that direction as verse 2:144 alludes to with the words “the turning over of your face into the sky”. He loved his hometown Mecca and wished that Muslims prayed toward it. That is exactly what 2:144 instructed him to do.

**A second argument** presented by [Al-Zalmi](#) [123] rejects the claim because verse 2:115, even if it is interpreted to be about prayer direction, remains in effect when a Muslim cannot determine which direction Mecca is. A ruling which continues to be in effect in some circumstances is a ruling that was not abrogated. [Al-Qattan](#) [78] agrees.

**A third argument** simply notes that verse 2:115 is a statement of fact about where God is, thus it cannot be abrogated per the **Facts** validation rule.

### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

One narration, attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) (see Appendix [A.3](#)), states a support for this claim. [Ibn Abi-Hatem](#) [142] mentioned that Al-Hakem

authenticated the narration, but most other scholars of narrations did not find its chain reliable because it included a narrator, Al-Khorasani, who has been much criticized by narrator appraisal scholars.

There is another verse that is claimed to be the abrogating verse of verse 2:115,

﴿وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٥٠]

[2:150] And wherever you go out, turn your face toward the Sacrosanct Mosque. And wherever you all may be, turn your faces toward it ...

This is a slightly more plausible claim, because, like verse 2:115, verse 2:150 does not mention a prayer direction, but says “wherever you go out” which sounds the same as “wherever you turn” in verse 2:115. However, a similar reconciliation argument would apply here. Verse 2:150 does not say that facing Mecca when going out is because that is where God is.

As we mentioned earlier, several pro-abrogation scholars have argued that 2:144 abrogated the practice of facing Jerusalem. While this is true, we reiterate that it does not make for a valid abrogation claim *within the Abrogation Doctrine*, since the decision to face Jerusalem was not by Quranic order. The ruling in 2:144 is a new order without precedence within the Quran.

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

Ibn Abi-Hatem [142] mentioned two narrations authenticated by Al-Tirmizi and narrated by Mujahid and Ibn Umar (RA) refuting the claim by offering their reconciling interpretations of the verses. Among the pro-abrogation scholars who rejected the claim of abrogation of 2:115 were Al-Tabari [107], Al-Nahhas [71], Ibn Al-Jawzi [147], Al-Zurqani [128] and Al-Qattan [78].

#### F) Conclusion:

In summary, we can make this reconciliation statement that combines all the above verses without conflict,

God is not in any one place. Whatever direction you happen to be facing, God is there. Do not think that you can only call upon God if you are facing Jerusalem or Mecca or any other place. For the ritual prayers though, God mandates that you always face the Sacrosanct Mosque in Mecca if you can determine that direction.

## 2. Leaving a will (2:180)

See §6.1.

## 3. Fasting night (2:183)

This claim pertains to whether fasting Muslims are forbidden to mate with their spouses on fasting nights.

### A) The claim:

In addition to Al-Suyuti, [Shula \[199\]](#) reported that people whom he did not name have claimed that

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٣]

[2:183] O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you so that you may watch out [for God].

was abrogated by

﴿ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ ... ﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٧]

[2:187] It has been allowed to you, the eve of fasting, to mate with your wives ...

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

What caused some people to think abrogation here is that they knew of people of the Scripture<sup>12</sup> who would not mate with their wives on fasting nights and they thought that verse 2:183 was saying that Muslim fast is like the fast of prior nations.

### C) Reconciliation arguments:

The aforementioned understanding, which gave rise to a conflict, is mistaken because what verse 2:183 states is that fasting has become decreed on Muslims just as it was decreed on prior people. It does not say that the conduct or rituals are the same. For example, abstaining from all food and

<sup>12</sup>This expression (أهل الكتاب - literally 'people of the book') refers to Christians and Jews, followers of previous scriptures in the Abrahamic tradition.

drink from dawn to sunset every day in Ramadan is certainly not how previous nations practiced fasting. What is the same is only the mandate to fast. Therefore, no abrogation case needs to be made. [Shula \[199\]](#) confirmed this understanding and said that others have said the same.

#### **D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:**

[Shula \[199\]](#) wrote that the cause of the impression that mating with wives on fasting night was forbidden is that Umar (RA) and other Fellows (RA) observed that. Verse 2:187 can then be seen as correcting this practice, not abrogating verse 2:183 which does *not* assert such practice in the first place.

#### **E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:**

[Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#) rejected the claim based on the interpretation of the phrase “as it was decreed” to mean a simile of mandate, not of practice, which is the reconciliation argument we presented in point C above. [Waliyullah \[203\]](#) agreed.

[Ibn Al-Arabi \[144\]](#) rejected the claim on the basis of specification. He considered night mating to have been an allowance specific for Muslims.

#### **F) Conclusion:**

Simply,

Fasting is decreed upon Muslims as it was decreed upon nations before them. Its rules for Muslims may differ from the rules for nations before them, but they all have a mandate to fast.

An interesting comparison to note: This claim is similar to the night prayer claim that was discussed in §5.3. In both claims, and in other abrogation claims as well, something was understood to be required at first, then the Quran clarified that it was not required. In the night prayer case, it was the understanding that all Muslims are required to do the night prayers. In the present claim, it was the understanding that Muslims are required to abstain from mating with their spouses during fasting nights. Neither understanding was correct, and the Quran clarified that.

## **4. Fasting exemption (2:184)**

See §4.3.

## 5. Sacred month (2:217)

This claim, together with the claim about verse 5:2, was refuted in §6.2.1 based on the distinction between waging war and self-defense.

## 6. Widows residence (2:240)

See §4.1.

## 7. Thought Accountability (2:284)

See §4.5.

## 8. True piety (3:102)

See §3.4.

## 9. Debauchery penalty (4:15-16)

See §4.4.

## 10. Promises of inheritance (4:33)

This claim addresses promises of a share of inheritance that were made to unrelated people.

### A) The claim:

Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] reported that Al-Sadusi said that verse 4:33,

﴿... وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَآتُوهُمْ نَصِيبَهُمْ ...﴾ [النساء: ٣٣]

[4:33] ... And to those to whom your vows obligated you - give them their share ...

was abrogated by

﴿... وَأُولُوا الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَفْعَلُوا إِلَىٰ أَوْلِيَائِكُمْ مَعْرُوفًا ...﴾ [الأحزاب: ٦]

[33:6] ... And relatives by the wombs are more entitled to each other in the Book of God than to the believers and the migrants (from Mecca), unless you do to your associates a recognized goodness ...

Al-Suyuti [100] wrote that the abrogating verse is

﴿... وَأُولُو الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ ...﴾ [الأنفال: ٧٥]

[8:75] ... And relatives by the wombs are more entitled to each other in the Book of God ...

Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] also wrote that the majority have agreed with the claim, such as Malik, Al-Shafei, and Ibn Hanbal.

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The perceived conflict is that promises made to allies and non-relatives, per verse 4:33, may consume an estate and leave little or nothing to closer relatives of the decedent. However, verses 33:6 and 8:75 assert that close relatives have a priority.

### C) Reconciliation arguments:

Verse 4:33 commands that promises of a share of inheritance should be honored at estate distribution, but this can be treated as a bequest while the close relatives get their mandated shares, which is what verses 33:6 and 8:75 require. It is a ranking of entitlement. Notice that verse 33:6 itself makes an exception of honoring promises made to allies, calling it a recognized goodness: “unless you do to your associates a recognized goodness”. Thus, verse 33:6 confirms, rather than abrogates, verse 4:33.

As for the dilemma that a promise of an inheritance share made to an ally may consume much of the decedent's estate leaving little or nothing to the close relatives, that dilemma is easily solved by observing the limit the Prophet (PBUH) made on bequest size not to exceed a third of the estate. Notice that verse 4:33 says “give them their share”, not what was promised *per se*. Their share is a bequest.

Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] reported that Abu-Hanifa rejected this claim and saw it as a priority setting. He ruled that if the decedent left close relatives, they inherit according to the rules set by the inheritance verses and the ally does not, but if the decedent had no close relatives and had made a promise of inheritance to an ally then the ally gets the estate and nothing goes to the treasury.

A second argument is due to Al-Asfahani [21]. He wrote that the clause “those whom your vows obligated you - الَّذِينَ عَقَدْتَ أَيْمَانُكُمْ -”, in verse 4:33, means

spouses and that their share (نصيبهم) was detailed in verse 4:12. He argued that marriage is called a 'knot' (عُقْدَةٌ, derived from the same verb as 'obligated' عَقَّدْتُ, which is used in the verse claimed abrogated) more than once in the Quran. For example, وَلَا تَعْرُضُوا عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ ﴿...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٣٥] ﴿...﴾ ("... And do not decide on the marriage knot until the prescription (grace or mourning period) reaches its term ..." [2:235]). That makes his interpretation linguistically valid.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

Mujahid and Ibn Jubair opined that the share mentioned in verse 4:33 refers to promises of mutual defense not to money, while Ibn Abbas (RA) considered it to be the inheritance of non-blood relatives that were made brethren through the migration from Mecca to Medina (Ibn Al-Jawzi [147]).

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

Abu-Hanifa rejected the claim on the basis of prioritizing entitlement to an estate (Ibn Al-Jawzi [147]).

Mujahid and Ibn Jubair rejected the claim by interpreting verse 4:33 to be referring to mutual defense and not wealth (Ibn Al-Jawzi [147]). This is also why Al-Qurtubi [80] rejected the claim. Al-Nahhas [71] discussed several interpretations of the verses in question and rejected the claim.

#### F) Conclusion:

The three verses together say to Muslims,

If you made a promise of a share in your inheritance to someone who is not a relative of yours, it is to be honored as a bequest within the allowed limits, and your regular heirs get the shares mandated to them by the inheritance rules of Islam from the remainder of the estate.

## 11. Sacred month (5:2)

This claim, together with the claim about verse 2:217, was refuted in §6.2.1 based on the distinction between waging war and self-defense.

## 12. Adjudication for non-Muslims (5:42)

This claim pertains to whether the Prophet (PBUH) may arbitrate between non-Muslims when they ask him to do so.



**A) The claim:**

The verse claimed abrogated is,

﴿ فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَإِنْ تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ فَلَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِالْقِسْطِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴾  
[المائدة : ٤٢]

[5:42] If they come to you [for arbitration], then judge between them or decline. If you decline, they will not harm you at all, and if you judge then judge between them with equity. God loves the equitable.

and the verse claimed to abrogate it is,

﴿ وَأَنْ أَحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَاحْذَرْهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ ... ﴾ [المائدة : ٤٩]

[5:49] And judge between them with what God has revealed, and do not follow their fancies and be careful that they do not seduce you away from some of what God has revealed to you ...

**B) Pinpointing the conflict:**

The argument for abrogation in this claim is that verse 5:42 gives the Prophet (PBUH) two choices but verse 5:49 gives him only one.

**C) Reconciliation arguments:**

Verse 5:49 elaborates on the first choice: deciding to arbitrate. It simply tells the Prophet (PBUH) that if he chooses to arbitrate, he must do so by the laws of God which He revealed to him, not by the desires of the litigants. That is the equity mentioned in verse 5:42. Thus, the latter verse confirms, rather than abrogates the former one. [Waliyullah \[203\]](#) also concludes that the choice given to the Prophet (PBUH) remains in place; either rule between them according to the laws of God or let them seek arbitration from their own leaders.

**D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:**

Narrations attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) and Al-Suddi stated that verse 5:42 gave the Prophet (PBUH) two options, one of which was abrogated by verse 5:49. Other narrations attributed to Al-Nakhei and Al-Shaabi, however, stated that verse 5:49 elaborated the manner of judgment if the Prophet (PBUH) chose the first option, to accept the request for adjudication ([Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#)).

**E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:**

Among the pro-abrogation scholars who rejected the claim of abrogation of 5:42 were [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) who surveyed various opinions before concluding that the verse is not abrogated, [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#), [Makki \[184\]](#), [Waliyullah \[203\]](#) and [Al-Zurqani \[128\]](#).

**F) Conclusion:**

The following reconciliation statement can easily be made, showing that the two verses together say the following to the Prophet (PBUH),

Non-Muslims may come to you to arbitrate between them in their disputes. You may accept and arbitrate, or you may decline. If you decline, don't fret; they cannot harm you. If you do accept, then you must apply God's laws which He revealed to you, and not their laws or desires no matter how tempted you are to do so. It is the only way to be equitable in your arbitration.

**13. Witnesses to a will (5:106)**

This claim pertains to witnesses testifying to consummate events, such as a verbal will given by a dying Muslim. Can some of the witnesses be non-Muslim?

**A) The claim:**

The verse claimed abrogated is

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا شَهَادَةُ بَيْنَكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ حِينَ الْوَصِيَّةِ اثْنَانِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ أَوْ آخَرَانِ مِنْ غَيْرِكُمْ ...﴾ [المائدة: ١٠٦]

[5:106] O you who have believed, the testimony between you when death has approached one of you, at the time of stating a will, is two of fairness among you, or two from other than you ...

and the verse claimed abrogating it is

﴿فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ فَارِقُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَأَشْهَدُوا ذَوِي عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ لِلَّهِ ...﴾ [الطلاق: ٢]

[65:2] Thereupon, when they (divorced wives) have reached their term (grace period), then hold them with virtue or leave them with virtue. And call to witness two of fairness among you, and establish testimony for God ...

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The argument for abrogation is that verse 5:106 allows non-Muslims to be witnesses while verse 65:2 does not.

### C) Reconciliation arguments:

This alleged conflict argument is flawed for two reasons:

- Verse 5:106 is about witnessing a will, while verse 65:2 is about witnessing a finalization, or rescindment, of a divorce. These are two different matters, so each may have its own rules. We know, for instance, that the number of required witnesses to an adultery is four and not two. These are not the same situations, so the abrogation claim here simply violates the **Sameness** validation rule.
- At death time, which can happen to a Muslim in a foreign land, the Muslim testator may not be able to call to witness fellow Muslims in time, while divorce proceedings do not have that kind of urgency. Therefore, there are circumstances where verse 5:106 is needed, lest a restriction on witnesses should result in intended heirs not getting bequests the decedent wanted to give them for lack of witnesses (**Al-Arid** [20]). **Ibn Kathir** [163] asserts that the allowance for non-Muslim witnesses in verse 5:106 applies only to a death situation while traveling.

### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

A narration attributed to Zaid ibn Aslam stated the abrogation and found support from Abu-Hanifa. On the other hand, Ibn Abbas (RA), Ibn Jubair, and Ibn Hanbal maintained that there is no abrogation (**Ibn Al-Jawzi** [147]).

In his refutation of the claim, **Ibn Sallam** [171], argues that Chapter 5 of the Quran (where the verse claimed abrogated belongs) is one of the last chapters to be revealed, implying that it has no abrogated verses. He cites a number of opinions supporting this view. This is a rare case of invoking the **Chronology** validation rule to refute a claim. **Al-Nahhas** [71] also brings up this point about Chapter 5 in general.

### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

Among the pro-abrogation scholars who did not approve the claim of abrogation of verse 5:106 were **Ibn Sallam** [171], **Ibn Al-Jawzi** [147], **Al-Tabari**

[107] who discussed verse 5:16 in detail without mentioning abrogation in spite of mentioning abrogation in discussing many other verses, [Al-Nahhas \[71\]](#), [Makki \[184\]](#) who details the opinions against abrogation, [Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#), [Al-Shawkani \[96\]](#), [Al-Arid \[20\]](#), and [Zeid \[206\]](#).

#### F) Conclusion:

We can make this reconciliation statement which easily combines the two verses,

When a Muslim is about to die and wants to state his will, there should be two fellow upstanding Muslims witnessing his will. If such is not available, then two other witnesses should be summoned. As for divorce between husband and wife, it must be two upstanding Muslims who witness that.

### 14. Steadfastness in battle (8:65)

See §5.2.

### 15. Fighting obligation (9:41)

This claim pertains to the question of who must join the fight at the time of war.

#### A) The claim:

The verse claimed abrogated is,

﴿ اَنْفِرُوا خِفَافًا وَثِقَالًا وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ [التوبة : ٤١]

[9:41] Mobilize, light and heavy, and strive with your riches and your persons in the cause of God. That is better for you, if you would know.

Several verses were claimed to abrogate it,

﴿ وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَافَّةً فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ ﴾ [التوبة : ١٢٢]

[9:122] And ought not the believers mobilize all at once. For there should separate from every division of them a group [remaining] to obtain understanding in the religion and warn their people when they return to them so that they may be cautious.

and

﴿لَيْسَ عَلَى الْأَعْمَى حَرْجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْأَعْرَجِ حَرْجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرِيضِ حَرْجٌ﴾  
[الفتح : ١٧] ...

[48:17] There is no awkwardness [for remaining behind] on the blind nor the lame nor the ill ...

and

﴿لَيْسَ عَلَى الضُّعَفَاءِ وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرْضَى وَلَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ مَا يَنْفِقُونَ حَرْجٌ إِذَا نَصَحُوا لِلَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾  
وَلَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ إِذَا مَا أَتَوْكَ لِتَحْمِلَهُمْ قُلْتَ لَا أَجِدُ مَا أَحْمِلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ تَوَلَّوْا  
وَأَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ حَزَنًا أَلَّا يَجِدُوا مَا يَنْفِقُونَ﴾ [التوبة : ٩١-٩٢]

[9:91-92] There is no awkwardness upon the weak, nor upon the ill, nor upon those who do not find anything to spend, if they are sincere to God and His Messenger, and no blame upon the benevolent; God is much Forgiving and Merciful • Nor upon those who, when they come to you to carry them with you, you tell them you don't have anything to carry them on, so they turn back with their eyes tearing up sad that they do not have anything to spend [for the war effort].

Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] and Al-Andalusi [19] added as an abrogated verse,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا خُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ فَانْفِرُوا ثُبَاتٍ أَوْ وَفِرُوا جَمِيعًا﴾  
[النساء : ٧١]

[4:71] O you who have believed, take your precaution and [either] go forth in companies or go forth all together.

and wrote that it was abrogated by verse 9:122. Ibn Al-Jawzi attributed this claim to a narration from Ibn Abbas (RA). Another claim where the abrogating verse is also 9:122 will be discussed in §8.1.

**B) Pinpointing the conflict:**

The main argument for abrogation in this claim is that verses 9:41 and 4:71 excuse no one from battle duty, while all the verses claimed to abrogate them exempt some categories of people.

**C) Reconciliation arguments:**

Exemption is not abrogation. It is elaboration. All the above verses in the claim are pieces of the same ruling; a requirement of fighting and exemptions from the requirement. Abrogation means cancellation. None of the above verses cancel any other.

**D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:**

[Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#) reported a narration attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) quoting him saying that verse 9:41 was abrogated by verse 9:122, a narration that was rated weak in authenticity, likely because it comes through Al-Khorasani who the narration scholars concluded never met Ibn Abbas (RA). Ibn Al-Jawzi also mentioned another narration attributed to Al-Suddi saying that the verse was abrogated by verse 9:91.

**E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:**

Among the pro-abrogation scholars who did not approve the claim of abrogation of 9:41 were [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#), [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#), [Shula \[199\]](#), [Al-Shawkani \[96\]](#), [Waliyullah \[203\]](#), [Al-Arid \[20\]](#) and [Zeid \[206\]](#).

**F) Conclusion:**

In summary, we can make this reconciliation statement that collects together all the pieces of this ruling expressed in the above verses,

When the call to arms is sounded, those of you qualified to join the battle must join it. Exempted are people who are handicapped, who are ill, or who could not be provided with war gear. Also, some of you should stay behind to prepare the other citizens for wartime conditions.

**16. Fornicator marriage (24:3)**

This claim pertains to whom fornicators may marry.

**A) The claim:**

The verse claimed abrogated is,

﴿الزَّانِي لَا يَنْكِحُ إِلَّا زَانِيَةً أَوْ مُشْرِكَةً وَالزَّانِيَةُ لَا يَنْكِحُهَا إِلَّا زَانٍ أَوْ مُشْرِكٌ  
وَحُرِّمَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ [النور: ٣]

[24:3] The fornicating man does not marry but a fornicating or a polytheist woman, and the fornicating woman - none marries her but a fornicating or a polytheist man, and that has been forbidden to the believers.

and the verse claimed to have abrogated it is

﴿وَأَنْكِحُوا الْأَيَامَى مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَائِكُمْ إِنْ يَكُونُوا  
فُقَرَاءَ يُغْنِهِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾ [النور: ٣٢]

[24:32] And have the unmarried among you marry, and the righteous among your bondmen and your bondmaids. If they should be poor, God will enrich them from His bounty, and God is Capacious and All-Knowing.

#### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The most commonly cited argument for abrogation here is that verse 24:3 prohibits the believers from marrying fornicators while verse 24:32 advocates marrying any of a number of categories without explicitly excluding fornicators. Another possible conflict is more specific; the categories include bondmaids who may be considered fornicators by some.

#### C) Reconciliation arguments:

If the conflict is based on verse 24:32 advocating marriage without excluding fornicators, the reconciliation is immediate. The call for marriage is general, so it does not overrule excluding some for special reasons such as fornication. [Ibn Al-Arabi \[144\]](#) makes this point forcefully, wondering how could anyone conceive of a general abrogating a special? To support this point, [Al-Ghali \[43\]](#) gives an example that the verse does not explicitly exclude marrying a sibling either, but that does not abrogate the prohibition of marrying a sibling.

This leaves us with only the other possible conflict related to bondmaids being fornicators. To reconcile this conflict, we note that bondmaids are not fornicators since they are not free to abstain. God makes it clear in the very next verse how He views those who are coerced,

﴿وَلَا تُكْرِهُوا فَتِيَاتِكُمْ عَلَى الْبِغَاءِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَ تَحَصُّنًا لِيَبْتِغُوا عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ  
الدُّنْيَا وَمَنْ يُكْرِهْنَهُنَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِكْرَاهِهِنَّ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ [النور: ٣٣]

[24:33] ... And do not coerce your girls into prostitution if they desire chastity; [you do that] to seek the temporary interests of the worldly life. And whoever coerces them, then verily, God is [to the girls], after their coercion, much Forgiving and Merciful.

Therefore, coerced fornication is forgiven by God, while willful fornication is a sin for which God has mandated a legal penalty in verse 24:2 then restricted the marriage of its offenders in verse 24:3 next. Verse 24:32 does not, therefore, include a category of punishable fornicators so it does not conflict with verse 24:3.

**A second argument** is based on Al-Tabari's interpretation of verse 24:3 which is claimed to be abrogated. [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) highlights an interpretation that the verse is specifically about prostitutes, not fornicators more generally. He provided several pages of evidence to support this interpretation. This would reconcile the two verses of this abrogation claim since the second verse is patently not about prostitutes. [Zeid \[206\]](#) adopts this argument as he refutes the abrogation claim.

**A third argument** advocated by [Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#) views verse 24:3 not as a ruling, but as a statement observing that fornicators get together with other fornicators. This is a legitimate linguistic reading of the wording of the verse, and if the verse is stating an observation, there is nothing to abrogate. [Al-Zamakhshari \[124\]](#) also chooses this interpretation. [Al-Arid \[20\]](#) uses this argument as he refutes the claim, and [Waliyullah \[203\]](#) uses a similar argument.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

The circumstances of revelation for verse 24:3 are described in a narration reported<sup>13</sup> by [Al-Nasai \[73\]](#) and [Abu-Dawoud \[3\]](#), where the Prophet (PBUH) forbade a Muslim man from marrying a prostitute. The man was Marthad Al-Ghanawi. He wanted to marry a prostitute named Anaq. This is obviously different from marrying a bondmaid which is what verse 24:32 addresses, and it supports the above reconciliation argument based on Al-Tabari's interpretation.

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

Among the pro-abrogation scholars who did not approve the claim of abrogation of verse 24:3 were [Ibn Al-Arabi \[144\]](#) who raised doubts about many interpretations of the verses of this claim, [Al-Zamakhshari \[124\]](#), [Waliyullah \[203\]](#), [Al-Arid \[20\]](#) and [Zeid \[206\]](#).

<sup>13</sup>The authenticity level of the narration is "sound" (حسن) which is not as high as narrations considered authentic.



**F) Conclusion:**

The following reconciliation statement is one way to summarize key parts of both verses and show that they are not incompatible,

A Muslim society should always try to get unmarried Muslims married. That said, fornicators are not allowed to marry chaste people. Bondmaids are not fornicators since they are not free to abstain.

**17. Marriage prohibition (33:52)**

This claim pertains to the question of whether the Prophet (PBUH) could marry again.

**A) The claim:**

The verse claimed abrogated is

﴿ لَا يَحِلُّ لَكَ النِّسَاءُ مِنْ بَعْدُ وَلَا أَنْ تَبَدَّلَ بِهِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَاجٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ حُسْنُهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ ... ﴾ [الأحزاب: ٥٢]

[33:52] Unlawful to you after that are all women, or to substitute them for any wives even if you admired their beauty, except your bondmaids ...

and the verse claimed to have abrogated it is

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَحْلَلْنَا لَكَ أَزْوَاجَكَ اللَّاتِي آتَيْتَ أُجُورَهُنَّ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ مِمَّا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ وَبَنَاتِ عَمَّاتِكَ وَبَنَاتِ خَالِكَ وَبَنَاتِ خَالَاتِكَ اللَّاتِي هَاجَرْنَ مَعَكَ وَامْرَأَةً مُؤْمِنَةً إِنْ وَهَبَتْ نَفْسَهَا لِلنَّبِيِّ إِنْ أَرَادَ النَّبِيُّ أَنْ يَسْتَنْكِحَهَا خَالِصَةً لَكَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ... ﴾ [الأحزاب: ٥٠]

[33:50] O Prophet, We have made lawful to you your [current] wives to whom you have paid their dowries and your bondmaids from what God has extended to you and the daughters of your paternal uncle and the daughters of your paternal aunts and the daughters of your maternal uncle and the daughters of your maternal aunts who emigrated with you and a believing woman if she gives herself to the Prophet [and] if the Prophet wishes to marry her, only for you, excluding the [other] believers ...

**B) Pinpointing the conflict:**

The point of the claim is that verse 33:50 allows the Prophet (PBUH) to marry again while verse 33:52 disallows him from doing that.

**C) Reconciliation arguments:**

First, we point out that the verse claimed abrogating is listed in the Quranic script *before* the verse claimed abrogated by it. This is the second famous abrogation claim where this chronology problem is manifest; the other one is the widows-residence claim (§4.1). It is notable that Waliyullah, a pro-abrogation scholar who approved only five abrogation claims, would approve both of the famous claims that have a chronology issue.

Al-Tabari [107] states that there is no proof regarding the order of revelation of the two verses. Zeid [206] was more blunt about it; he drew attention to the phrase “after that - من بعد” in verse 33:52 then asserted that “*it doesn't fit for that to be said in the verse, then it is said that [the verse] was abrogated by two verses that were revealed earlier*” (ثم يقال هذا في الآية، ثم يقال إنها) (منسوخة بآيتين سابقين عليها في النزول).

What do the claimants of abrogation say about this problem? Some, such as Al-Zurqani [128], defended all claims with a chronology problem by saying that what matters is the order of revelation of verses, not the order of their listing in the Quranic script. While that is true, neither he nor any other scholar has offered an authentic proof of the order of revelation. Waliyullah [203] acknowledged the chronology issue, but offered no explanation other than saying it is possible. Others have not even acknowledged it.

When the two verses are read in the order of the Quranic script, the claim is easily refuted as follows. Verse 33:52 is a continuation of verse 33:50, evidenced by the phrase “after that - من بعد” that Zeid referred to. This is how Ibn Al-Arabi [144] refuted this claim. Let us look at what the two verses say.

Verse 33:50 tells the Prophet that he can marry again, from the list that the verse enumerates, if he wants. After that, verse 33:52 tells him ﴿لَا يَحِلُّ لَكَ النِّسَاءُ مِنْ بَعْدُ ...﴾ [الأحزاب : ٥٢] - “Unlawful to you **after that** are [all] women ...” This means that, after the Prophet (PBUH) has made his decision whether and whom to marry, he cannot marry anymore. No conflict. It was a one-time allowance.

**D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:**

A narration is attributed to Aisha (RA) in which she said that the Prophet

(PBUH) did not die until he was allowed to marry.<sup>14</sup> Most scholars understood that to mean that verse 33:52 was abrogated, but her words could simply have been referring to verse 33:50, i.e., the Prophet (PBUH) was given the privilege of marrying other women. [Ibn Al-Arabi \[144\]](#) does not take that narration as evidence of abrogation since it is a *singles* narration, and [Al-Arid \[20\]](#) agrees with him.

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

Among the pro-abrogation scholars who rejected the claim of abrogation of 33:52 were [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#), [Ibn Al-Arabi \[144\]](#), [Al-Arid \[20\]](#) and [Zeid \[206\]](#).

#### F) Conclusion:

To summarize, we can make the following reconciliation statement and show that verses 33:50-52 tell the Prophet (PBUH) this:

As a one-time allowance, the Prophet (PBUH) may marry again from the stated categories in verse 33:50. After that, he cannot marry anyone else.

### 18. Private consultation (58:12)

See §5.1.

### 19. Compensating husbands (60:11)

This is arguably the weakest of Al-Suyuti's 20 claims. It pertains to compensating Muslim husbands whose wives reverted to polytheism and left them. The background of this claim is that verse 60:10 instructs Muslims regarding women who migrated from Mecca to Medina that they were to be queried in order to verify that they were believers. Once found to be believers, these migrating women were not to be returned to their polytheist husbands back in Mecca as Islam has annulled their marriage. A Muslim cannot marry a polytheist or remain married to one. Here is verse 60:10,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا جَاءَكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ مُهَاجِرَاتٍ فَامْتَحِنُوهُنَّ ۚ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَانِهِنَّ فَإِنْ عَلِمْتُمُوهُنَّ مُؤْمِنَاتٍ فَلَا تَرْجِعُوهُنَّ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ لَا هُنَّ حِلٌّ

<sup>14</sup>The authenticity of this narration has been rated "soundly authentic" (حسن صحيح) by [Al-Tirmizi \[113\]](#), and in one version of the manuscript "sound" (حسن). Both ratings are not as high as the authentic level (صحيح) for narrations.

لَهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّ وَآثُوهُمْ مَا أَنْفَقُوا وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوا بِعِصَمِ الْكَوَافِرِ وَاسْأَلُوا مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ وَلْيَسْأَلُوا مَا أَنْفَقُوا ذَلِكَمُ حُكْمُ اللَّهِ يُحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿[الْمُنْتَحَنَةِ : ١٠]

[60:10] O you who have believed, when the believing women come to you emigrating (from Mecca), test them. God knows better their faith. And if you know them to be believers, then do not return them to the disbelievers; they are not lawful [wives] for them, nor are they lawful [husbands] for them. But give the disbelievers what they have spent. And it is no violation upon you if you marry them when you have given them their dowries. And do not hold on to marriage bonds with disbelieving women, but ask for what you have spent and let them ask for what they have spent. That is the judgment of God; He judges between you. And God is much Knowledgeable, very Wise.

#### A) The claim:

The following verse,

﴿وَإِنْ فَاتَكُمْ شَيْءٌ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ فَعاقِبْتُمْ فَاتُوا الَّذِينَ ذَهَبَتْ أَزْوَاجُهُمْ مِثْلَ مَا أَنْفَقُوا ...﴾ [الْمُنْتَحَنَةِ : ١١]

[60:11] And if you lost anything [you spent] on your wives to the disbelievers and you subsequently obtain [some money], then give those whose wives have gone the equivalent of what they had spent ...

was claimed to be abrogated, but there is no agreement about what abrogated it. In his list, [Al-Suyuti \[100\]](#) mentions the sword verse (verse 9:5) as one possibility, with the other possibility being verse 8:41,

﴿وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ ...﴾ [الأنفال : ٤١]

[8:41] And know that whatever you gain [of war booty] - then verily, for God is one-fifth of it and for the Messenger and for the near relative, the orphans, the destitute, and the transient ...

[Al-Nahhas \[71\]](#) states that most scholars support this claim and he mentions different interpretations, but [Zeid \[206\]](#) notes that Al-Nahhas did not

identify the abrogated ruling, nor the abrogating verse, nor the specifics of the conflict. Al-Khazraji [63] attributed this claim to Ibn Salama and Ibn Al-Arabi, but with no agreement on an abrogating verse.

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The point of this particular claim was not spelled out. Given the wording of the two verses, it is likely that the perceived conflict is that compensating husbands, as mandated in verse 60:11, was not one of the five venues listed in verse 8:41. However, there is an assortment of opinions in the literature about what abrogated what, and Zeid [206] laments “*the confusion*” (الاضطراب) about what ruling was abrogated and what abrogated it.

### C) Reconciliation arguments:

There are two points to be made here,

1. If the perceived conflict between the two verses is indeed that compensating husbands, as mandated in verse 60:11, is not one of the five venues listed in verse 8:41 for spending the booty, the reconciliation is straightforward. Verse 8:41 mandates that a share of the war booty is for God (Ibn Ashur [153]). It is God who dictated compensating husbands in verse 60:11, therefore that compensation can come from the portion of the war booty that He mandated to be His. There is no conflict. Al-Arid [20] adopted this argument as he refuted the abrogation claim.

What makes this perceived conflict even more shaky is that verse 60:11 did not specify that the compensation for husbands should come from the war booty. Al-Tabari [107] discusses all opinions in this matter and concludes that God “*did not specify giving [the compensation] to them from some money rather than other money*”. Al-Tabari did not even mention abrogation in his 6-page commentary on the verse.

2. As we mentioned, the above conflict is not mentioned by all claimants of abrogation, nor did they specify the elements of conflict that would call for their claim of abrogation. Therefore, it is not clear what needs to be reconciled in those cases, and Zeid [206] just dismisses the claim for lack of the basics needed for claiming abrogation.

### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

Al-Khazraji [63] began his discussion of the claim by telling the circumstance of the revelation of verse 60:11. A Muslim convert wife in Medina, Umm Al-Hakam bint Abi-Sufyan, reverted to polytheism and fled to Mecca. Her husband was devastated by it. The Prophet (ﷺ) gave him from the battle booty equal to the dowry he had paid. This was consistent with what the verse instructed.

Al-Khazraji attributed the claim to Ibn Salama and Ibn Al-Arabi, but the former claimed that the abrogating verse was the “sword verse” and the latter claimed the abrogating was the end of the Hdaybia treaty which the polytheists breached.

There was another interpretation of verse 60:11 though. Some thought it meant paying the polytheist ex-husbands. The reason they thought that was because verse 60:10 tells Muslim men that they can marry the migrating women if they would pay them dowry (Ibn Salama [170]) and that the polytheist husbands may ask for their dowry back. This may explain why these scholars opined that the “sword verse” abrogated 60:11. Ibn Al-Arabi [144] opined that the polytheist breach of the Hdaybia treaty is what abrogated 60:11.

#### **E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:**

Al-Qurtubi [80] quoted Ibn Abbas (RA) who advised that husbands should be compensated from the war booty before it is divided into fifths.

Al-Arid [20] rejected this claim based on chronology, among other reasons. He observed that verse 60:11 was revealed after the treaty at Al-Hdaybia, which in turn occurred after the revelation of verse 8:41. Nada [190] agreed.

Zeid [206] dismissed the claim as missing the basics of an abrogation claim.

#### **F) Conclusion:**

It is quite straightforward to reconcile the two verses,

If the Muslim convert wife of a Muslim man reverts to polytheism and leaves him, the husband is to be paid back the dowry he paid her from the available sources, including spoils of war.

## **20. Night prayer (73:1-4)**

See §5.3.



As we have seen, some famous claims have less merit than others. They warrant discussion because of their frequent mention in the literature. We move now to claims that do not have the same level of recognition but still warrant some discussion.

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## Chapter 7

# Less Famous Claims

In this chapter, we present a number of abrogation claims that are less frequently mentioned in the literature but still have an element of apparent conflict. Some of these claims warrant a discussion to show that there is no real conflict, while others can be summarily dismissed for simple reasons.

The subject matter of the verses in these claims touches on important ideological questions like the fate of non-Muslims and what the forgivable sins are, and on practical questions like which foods are allowed and what the penalties for killing are under different scenarios. Because these are impactful issues, whether the verses in question are abrogated has significant life consequences.

### 7.1 Allowed Food (2:173, 5:3, 6:121, 16:115)

This claim addresses the meats that Muslims are allowed to eat. One verse (5:5) that asserts a seemingly broad allowance is claimed to have abrogated four verses that forbid certain meats.

#### A) The claim:

Ibn Salama [170] and others reported that the verse,

﴿... وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حِلٌّ لَكُمْ ...﴾ [المائدة: ٥]

[5:5] ... and the food of those who were given the Scripture is lawful for you ...

abrogated the prohibition in

﴿وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَإِنَّهُ لَفِسْقٌ...﴾ [الأنعام: ١٢١]

[6:121] And do not eat of that upon which the name of God has not been mentioned, for verily, it is deviance ...

Zeid [206] reported that other, similarly worded verses were also claimed abrogated by verse 5:5. These include

﴿إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٧٣]

[2:173] Verily, what He has forbidden on you are dead (unslaughtered) animals, blood, meat of the swine, and what was dedicated to other than God ...

and

﴿حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ...﴾ [المائدة: ٣]

[5:3] Forbidden on you are dead (unslaughtered) animals, blood, meat of the swine, and what was dedicated to other than God ...

and

﴿إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ...﴾ [النحل: ١١٥]

[16:115] Verily, what He has forbidden on you are dead (unslaughtered) animals, blood, meat of the swine, and what was dedicated to other than God ...

## B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The claimants of abrogation, as well as other scholars who discussed the claim, identified the perceived conflict as verse 5:5 allowing Muslims to eat the food of the people of the Scripture which may include meat that was not dedicated to God at the time of slaughter, whereas such meat was forbidden by verse 6:121.

## C) Reconciliation arguments:

There are two related reconciliation arguments for this abrogation claim,

1. Al-Tabari [107] argues that the prohibition in verse 6:121 is restricted to slaughtered animals that were dedicated to false gods (ما أُهِلَّ به للطواغيت), and



that slaughtered animals by people of the Scripture are separate from that since those people worship God, whether they mention His name at the time of slaughter or not. Thus, the argument here is based on interpreting verse 6:121 to be limited in scope.

2. The second argument does not limit the scope of verse 6:121, but considers that verse 5:5 is making an exception from the generality of verse 6:121 (Zeid [206]). This means that the meat that was not dedicated to God at the time of slaughter is generally forbidden to Muslims, with an exception when the slaughter is done by people of the Scripture. Exception is not abrogation. Meat that was improperly slaughtered by other than people of the Scripture remains forbidden per verse 6:121, hence it is not abrogated.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

Al-Tabari [107] reports a narration by Ikrima and Al-Basri asserting the ‘*naskh*’ of verse 6:121 by verse 5:5. However, their intended meaning of *naskh* was not abrogation as evidenced by their words “فَنَسَخَ، وَاسْتَشْنَى” (did *naskh*, and made an exception). An exception is not abrogation, as the Elaboration validation rule makes clear. Zeid [206] commented in a footnote that this was what the narrators meant when they mentioned the word *naskh*.

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

Al-Suyuti [100] did not include any of these abrogation claims in his list of 20 approved claims. Zeid [206] rejected the claims of abrogation for all four verses and quoted Al-Tabari [107]’s argument that rejects the abrogation claim of verse 6:121. Al-Nahhas [71] discussed and rejected the claim of abrogation of verse 6:121, and did not include the other verses among the abrogation claims he addressed.

Other scholars rejected some of the abrogation claims. Ibn Salama [170] did not include verse 5:3 as abrogated. Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] discussed the claims that verse 5:5 abrogated the prohibition of improperly slaughtered animals without listing all the relevant verses, then rejected them. Al-Baghdadi [24] briefly discussed the abrogation of verse 6:121 raising doubts about the claim.

#### F) Conclusion:

The following reconciliation statement can be made based on the above discussion,

Slaughtering an animal without invoking God’s name is considered by Muslims to be improper slaughter, except if it was done by people of the Scripture.

## 7.2 Forbidden Foods (6:145)

In the previous section, it was claimed that certain food that was forbidden to Muslims became allowed. In this section, the claim is that certain food that was allowed to Muslims became forbidden.

### A) The claim:

Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] reported that

﴿قُلْ لَا أَجِدُ فِي مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحَرَّمًا عَلَى طَاعِمٍ يَطْعَمُهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا مَسْفُوحًا أَوْ لَحْمَ خِنْزِيرٍ فَإِنَّهُ رِجْسٌ أَوْ فِسْقًا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ...﴾  
[الأنعام : ١٤٥]

[6:145] Say, "I do not find within what was revealed to me [anything] forbidden to one who would eat it unless it be (unslaughtered) dead animal, blood spilled out, or the flesh of swine - for verily, it is filth - or it be [that slaughtered in] deviance, immolated to other than God" ...

was abrogated by

﴿حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ ...﴾ [المائدة : ٣]

[5:3] Forbidden on you are (unslaughtered) dead animals, blood, meat of the swine, and what was dedicated to other than God, and the suffocating, pounded, crashing-down, and gored [animal], and what the canine ate [from] - except what you have seared - and [also prohibited is] what was slaughtered on the altar ...

He did not mention who made the claim. Al-Nahhas [71] also includes verse 6:145 among the abrogation claims, but what is claimed to abrogate it is Prophetic traditions, and he rejects that claim. Al-Hamzani [49] mentioned the same claim that Al-Nahhas discussed as a brief example in the abrogation claims he listed.

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The apparent conflict is that verse 6:145 limits what Muslims are forbidden to consume to a specific list, while verse 5:3 seems to list other items that are also forbidden.

**C) Reconciliation arguments:**

If the above conflict is the basis for claiming abrogation, it is easy to refute. The new items that are listed as prohibited in verse 5:3 (“the suffocating, pounded, crashing-down, and gored [animal], and what the canine ate [from]”) are subcategories of unslaughtered dead animals that are already prohibited by verse 6:145 (Ibn Al-Jawzi [147]). Also, “what was slaughtered on the altar” in verse 5:3 is a subcategory of what was “immolated to other than God” in verse 6:145 (Zeid [206]). There is no conflict.

A **second argument** is that verse 6:145 amounts to a statement of fact (“I do not find within what was revealed to me ...”) which cannot be abrogated, per the the **Facts** validation rule. Makki [184] rejected the abrogation claim based on this argument.

The reconciliation of the other view that Prophetic tradition abrogated verse 6:145 is also easy. As Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] was adamant about, *singles* reports of Prophetic tradition cannot possibly abrogate the Quran which is certain in sourcing (even for those who accept that Prophetic narrations may abrogate Quranic verses).

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**D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:**

Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] reported that Ibn Abbas (RA) saw no problem with eating different meats and referred to the verse claimed abrogated here as the basis, notwithstanding conflicting narrations that prohibited some of these meats. Ibn Al-Jawzi also reported that Mujahid and Tawoos both understood verse 6:145 to refer to the foods the Arabs of the pre-Islamic era used to eat.

**E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:**

Ibn Al-Barezi [146], among many pro-abrogation scholars, did not include this claim in his extensive list of abrogation claims. Shula [199] refuted this claim arguing that it was a partial prohibition at first in Mecca then amended later in Medina. Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] argued likewise and mentioned that Ibn Abbas (RA) followed the allowances of verse 6:145.

Zeid [206] rejected the claim based on the first reconciliation argument we presented, and rejected that verse 6:145 was abrogated by Prophetic tradition based on disapproval of this notion in principle. He related the claim to the previous claims in §7.1 that he also rejected, which involve verse 5:5.

**F) Conclusion:**

The following reconciliation statement can be made to address the claims of abrogation, in particular those about Prophetic tradition abrogating verse 6:145.

The only foods forbidden to Muslims are the ones listed in verses of the Quran as forbidden.

### 7.3 Unforgivable Sins (2:81, 4:18)

#### A) The claim:

This claim pertains to sins that may not be forgiven. The verses claimed abrogated are,

﴿بَلَىٰ مَنْ كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَاطَتْ بِهِ خَطِيئَتُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ﴾ [البقرة: ٨١]

[2:81] Nay! Whoever earns a misdeed and his sin surrounded him - then those are the inmates of the Fire; they therein are lasting.

and

﴿وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الْآنَ وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ أُولَٰئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا﴾ [النساء: ١٨]

[4:18] And repentance is not for those who commit misdeeds, until when death approaches one of them he says, "I repent now", nor for those who die disbelieving. Those We have readied for them a painful torment.

and the verse claimed to abrogate them is

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا﴾ [النساء: ٤٨]

[4:48] Verily, God does not forgive to be associated with [in worship], but He forgives what is beneath that for whom He wills. And he who associates others with God [in worship] has certainly fabricated a tremendous sin.

Shula [199], presented arguments for and against this claim but did not weigh in on either argument. Makki [184] discussed the claim for verse 4:18, citing arguments for and against. Ibn Salama [170] said that 4:18 was abrogated regarding the polytheists but remained unabrogated for people of faith.

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The apparent conflict is that verses 2:81 and 4:18 seem to indicate that habitual sinners are destined to Hellfire, while verse 4:48 leaves the door open for them as long as they did not associate others with God in worship.

### C) Reconciliation arguments:

The most obvious refutation of the abrogation claims here is that both verses that are claimed abrogated are statements of fact, thus cannot be abrogated per the **Facts** validation rule as Zeid [206] mentions briefly. Notwithstanding this observation, arguments in the literature try to address the apparent conflict.

We start with a reconciliation argument that applies to both verses that were claimed abrogated. The phrase “and his sin surrounded him” in verse 2:81 clearly refers to an unrepentant, repeat sinner. This is consistent with what verse 4:18 refers to, since the verse just before it delimits its scope,

﴿ إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴾ [النساء: ١٧]

[4:17] Repentance, accepted by God, is for those who commit bad acts out of ignorance and then repent soon after. Those - God accepts their repentance. God is All-Knowing and Wise.

thus the next verse, 4:18 makes a contrast with those who do not repent soon after, but continue in their sins until the time of death. Zeid [206] makes the same observation.

Given this interpretation, the two verses can be reconciled with verse 4:48 which is claimed to abrogate them. We note that verse 4:48 says “God does not forgive to be associated with [in worship], but He forgives what is beneath that **for whom He wills**”. Consequently, He may exclude repeat sinners from that forgiveness.

A **second argument** was offered by Al-Shawkani [96] and applies to the first verse that was claimed abrogated. He wrote that verse 2:81 is a continuation of the verse before it, a response to what some non-Muslims claimed – that they would not stay but a few days in Hellfire,

﴿ وَقَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَةً قُلْ أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ [البقرة: ٨٠]

[2:80] And they say, “The Fire will not touch us, except for a few days.” Say, “Did you hold [such] a pact with God? For God will never

back out of His pact. Or do you say about God what you do not know?"

countering their statement by the stern "Nay! Whoever earns a misdeed and his sin surrounded him - then those are the inmates of the Fire; they therein are lasting." of verse 2:81. Zeid [206] also made this argument as he rejected the claim.

The fact that verse 2:81 opens with the Arabic word **بَلَى** (Nay!) reinforces this argument. Linguistically, this word negates a negation. In this case, what is negated is the statement in the previous verse: "The Fire will not touch us, except for a few days".

A **third argument** also applies to the first verse, 2:81. **Ibn Al-Jawzi** [147] rejected this claim based on a reconciliation argument that he attributed to the majority of exegetes. He said that they interpreted the sin referred to in 2:81 as associating others with God in worship. That would be consistent with verse 4:48 rather than conflicting with it.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

**Ibn Kathir** [163] wrote that Al-Suddi and Al-Basri opined that the misdeed referenced in 2:81 is of the major sins.

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

**Zeid** [206] rejected both claims, reconciling the verses as we discussed in Step C. The claims are not widely mentioned by pro-abrogation scholars. Some exegetes who discussed verse 2:81 interpreted the sin mentioned in it to be the association of others with God in worship (**Ibn Al-Jawzi** [147]). For example, **Ibn Kathir** [163] cites prominent early Muslims for this interpretation which reconciles the verse with verse 4:48 that is claimed to abrogate it (third reconciliation argument in Step C).

#### F) Conclusion:

The following reconciliation statement can be made and it shows that the three verses in this claim, taken together, mean the following,

God accepts the repentance of a sinner who regrets and asks Him for forgiveness. God will not forgive one who associates others with Him in worship, nor a defiant sinner.

To reiterate, the abrogation claim involving these three verses should not have been made in the first place since the verses are all statements of fact, thus not subject to abrogation per the **Facts** validation rule. The next claim, whose subject is somewhat related to this claim, has the same issue.

## 7.4 Fate of Non-Muslims (2:62, 5:69)

### A) The claim:

The verse,

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ  
الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾  
[البقرة: ٦٢]

[2:62] Verily, those who have believed, those who followed Judaism, the Christians, and the Sabeans - who believed in God and the Final Day and did righteousness - for them is their reward with their Lord and no fear shall be upon them nor shall they grieve.

was claimed abrogated by

﴿وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ﴾  
[آل عمران: ٨٥]

[3:85] And whoever seeks other than Islam as religion - then it will not be accepted from him, and he, in the Hereafter, is among the losers.

The claim is supported by [Al-Andalusi \[19\]](#) and [Ibn Salama \[170\]](#). [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) interpreted a narration by Ibn Abbas (RA) as supporting this claim, too. There is a similarly worded verse (5:69) to the verse that was claimed abrogated (2:62), and we will address it in Step **D** below.

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The perceived conflict between these two verses is that verse 2:62 declares that certain followers of other religions have nothing to worry about while verse 3:85 declares that followers of religions other than Islam will be among the losers on the Day of Judgment.

### C) Reconciliation arguments:

Notwithstanding the apparent conflict which we will reconcile shortly, this abrogation claim can be immediately refuted since verse 2:62 that is claimed abrogated is a statement of fact, thus cannot be abrogated per the **Facts** validation rule. This point was made by [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#) and [Zeid \[206\]](#).

Independently of this point, the apparent conflict can be resolved. Christians and Jews who followed their prophet before the next prophet was sent

have done the right thing (Ibn Al-Jawzi [147]), so this is consistent with how verse 2:62 accepts them among the believers. The issue is how to reconcile this with the statement in verse 3:85 that religions other than Islam are not accepted.

The reconciliation focuses on the word ‘Islam’ which in Arabic means submission [to God]. The word is universally used to refer to the message that Muhammad (PBUH) delivered, but it is not restricted to that meaning as evidenced by what the Quran itself says. For example, the religion that prophets Abraham (PBUH) and Jacob (PBUH) advocated was referred to as Islam,

﴿وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾ [البقرة: ١٣٢]

[2:132] And Abraham instructed with it his sons and [so did] Jacob, [saying], “O my sons, verily, God has chosen for you the religion, so do not die except as **Muslims**.”

so was the religion that Jesus (PBUH) delivered,

﴿فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَىٰ مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَأَشْهَدُ بِأَنَّكَ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾ [آل عمران: ٥٢]

[3:52] But when Jesus felt disbelief from them, he said, “Who are my supporters for God?” The disciples said, “We are the supporters for God. We have believed in God and testify that we are **Muslims**.”

Therefore, when verse 3:85 mentions Islam, that includes the religions delivered by previous prophets of God, so there is no conflict with the glad tidings that verse 2:62 brings to followers of those religions; they held identical beliefs to what Islam teaches.

This interpretation is consistent with how verse 2:62 describes those followers as “who believed in God and the Final Day and did good works” which is what Islam teaches. Shula [199] emphasized this qualifying description in refuting the abrogation claim.

How about followers of previous religions after their Scripture was altered, or after Muhammad (PBUH) was sent with the final message? The references we cited and the exegeses they quote address these important questions. What we addressed here was how to reconcile the verses in the abrogation claim. Once this is done, the conclusion is that both verses should be fully taken into consideration, together with other evidence, to arrive at the final ruling. Our focus is on refuting the abrogation claim, not what the final ruling is.



**D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:**

Another verse in the Quran, which was revealed after both verses in this abrogation claim<sup>1</sup> has almost identical wording to verse 2:62 that is claimed abrogated (Zeid [206]),

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِئُونَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ  
الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾ [المائدة: ٦٩]

[5:69] Verily, those who have believed, those who followed Judaism, the Sabaeans, and the Christians - who believed in God and the Final Day and did righteousness - for them is their reward with their Lord and no fear shall be upon them nor shall they grieve.

Zeid goes on to exclaim how abrogation can be even conceived given this later verse.

There is a narration from Ibn Abbas (RA) where he was addressing verse 2:62 and said that God revealed verse 3:85 after that. Some commented that this means abrogation. In addition to this being their opinion and not something that Ibn Abbas (RA) himself said, Zeid [206] points out that this narration is disconnected, hence its authenticity is questionable.

**E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:**

Among many pro-abrogation scholars who rejected the claim, Zeid [206] used several arguments to refute the claim, and so did Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] by quoting exegeses and further by invoking the Facts validation rule. Shula [199] rejected this claim by reconciling the verses.

**F) Conclusion:**

It is quite straightforward to reconcile the verses in this claim,

People who believed in God, the Final Day, and did good works will be rewarded for it and will have nothing to worry about. This is the message of Islam that all prophets of God preached to their followers. God will not accept a religion that is different from that on Judgment Day.

<sup>1</sup>The verse is in Chapter 5 which is widely recognized as the last chapter revealed in the Quran. Some scholars conclude that it has no abrogated verses based on that (see Al-Nahhas [71] and Ibn Sallam [171]).

## 7.5 Legal Retribution (2:178)

This claim pertains to legal retribution for murder.

### A) The claim:

The verse claimed abrogated is

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلِ الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ  
بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْأُنْثَى بِالْأُنْثَى فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَاتَّبَاعْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءٍ إِلَيْهِ  
بِإِحْسَانٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٧٨]

[2:178] O you who have believed, prescribed to you is retribution for the murdered: a free man for a free man, a bondman for a bondman, and a female for a female. But if something is forgiven by the (figurative) brother, then follow-up with virtue and carry out with benevolence ...

and the verse claimed to abrogate it is

﴿وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنَّ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالْأَنْفَ بِالْأَنْفِ  
وَالْأُذُنَ بِالْأُذُنِ وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ وَالْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ فَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَهُ  
...﴾ [المائدة: ٤٥]

[5:45] And We prescribed upon them in it that a soul for a soul, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth, and wounds [likewise] as retribution. But whoever forgives it as charity, then it is expiation for him ...

Shula [199] reported that the claim was supported by Abu-Hanifa, Al-Nakhei, and Al-Shaabi, among others. Ibn Al-Barezi [146], Al-Andalusi [19], and Ibn Salama [170] also supported the claim and added another verse as a possible abrogating verse,

﴿... وَمَنْ قُتِلَ مَظْلُومًا فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لَوْلِيَّهِ سُلْطَانًا فَلَا يَسْرِفُ فِي الْقَتْلِ إِنَّهُ  
كَانَ مَنْصُورًا﴾ [الإسراء: ٣٣]

[17:33] ... And whoever is killed unjustly, We have assigned for his next of kin authority, so let him not overkill for he is supported.

**B) Pinpointing the conflict:**

The claim is based on two apparent conflicts. First, verse 2:178 seems to exclude from retribution a murderer who is of a different status compared to the murdered, while the verses claimed to abrogate it make no such exclusion. Second, verse 2:178 seems to imply that retribution can be directed at someone other than the murderer, while verse 5:45 does not.

**C) Reconciliation arguments:**

The verses in this claim can be reconciled by noting that they are addressing two different situations, individual retribution versus group retribution. [Qutb \[191\]](#) explains the difference as follows.

The scope of verse 5:45 is individual retribution when a certain person attacks a certain person (من فرد معين على فرد معين), in which case the individual culprit or culprits are punished. The scope of verse 2:178 is retribution against group attack, such as a tribe attacking a tribe or a clan attacking a clan, where collaborative effort by the attacking group collectively caused deaths in the other group. In this case, the verse is prescribing retribution against the culprit group as a whole.

How do we know that group attack is the scope of verse 2:178? Several exegetes, e.g. [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#), report a narration about the circumstances of revelation. The narration describes two tribes that had an indiscriminate fight (قتال عمية) that resulted in multiple deaths, and the tribes were seeking excessive retribution for their dead. This type of occurrence was not just an isolated incident in that era, as [Ibn Ashur \[153\]](#) details.

The key point in group retribution that verse 2:178 addresses is the prevention of escalation ([Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#)). Escalation would happen if those who were attacked seek a retribution that is disproportionate, which in turn would lead to further disproportionate attacks, retributions, and deaths. Al-Shaarawi specifically concludes that “*God is addressing here an escalation case of retribution.*” Preventing escalation requires constraints on group retribution such that, while attackers don’t get away with murder, the situation does not spiral out of control.

The situation that the verse is dealing with is a reality that has occurred throughout history. [Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#) gives a concrete example of clan wars in modern times. Unfortunately, group attacks are part of the human experience; they happen at all levels, even at the national scale, and they need rules to be dealt with properly.

Therefore, the ruling of verse 2:178 is needed until this very day, both to deter group attacks and to avoid their escalation. It deters the attacks by instituting a punishment for them and avoids escalation by constraining this punishment. As [Qutb \[191\]](#) elaborates, lives will be saved when these goals

are achieved, as the verse immediately after alludes to,

﴿وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَاةٌ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٧٩]

[2:179] And there is for you in legal retribution [saving of] life, O you people of understanding ...

A **second reconciliation** also sees verse 2:178 as addressing group retribution - but on the financial side. This means the money paid to victims' kin, if they accept it, in lieu of the physical punishment. [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#), among other exegetes, cites a story<sup>2</sup> where the Prophet (ﷺ) arbitrated a settlement between two warring groups, canceling out the amounts of money to be paid for those killed based on their status.

The abrogation claim is therefore not valid based on the **Sameness** validation rule. The verses in the claim are not dealing with the same situation, so there is no conflict between them.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

A number of narrations cited by [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) are consistent with the first reconciliation argument we presented, and other narrations ([Al-Tabari \[107\]](#)) are consistent with the second reconciliation argument. However, these narrations do not have reliable authentication information.

Many early scholars refer to the pre-Islamic practices about retribution that verse 2:178 altered and base their interpretation of the verse on that. [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#) concurs, applying the rule that دليل الخطاب عند الفقهاء حجة ما لم يعارضه دليل أقوى منه (the jurists' understanding from a text is evidence unless a stronger evidence contradicts it) to substantiate the understanding of the early scholars. Their understanding was influenced by their recollection of the retaliation practices of the Arabs in the pre-Islamic era.

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

[Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#) was unambiguous in rejecting the claim. [Ibn Sallam \[171\]](#) rejected the claim, agreeing with a refutation argument by Ibn Abbas (RA) that he reported.

A number of exegetes, e.g., [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#), reconciled the verses based on the interpretation that they chose. [Zeid \[206\]](#) rejected the claim, agreeing with an interpretation by Al-Tabari.

Based on chronology, [Zeid \[206\]](#) also rejected the claim that the abrogating verse is 17:33. He noted that this verse belongs to a Quranic chapter that was

<sup>2</sup>No authentication information was given for the story, but we include it to explain the basis that was used for the reconciliation argument.

revealed in Mecca while the verse claimed abrogated was revealed later in Medina.

#### F) Conclusion:

We can make this simple reconciliation statement to show that the verses in this abrogation claim have no conflict,

Legal retribution is allowed for victims, their kin, or their larger group. In individual cases, only the culprit person is to be punished, equitably, not more and not anyone else. In group cases, where a group collectively attacked another group, retribution is allowed against the attacking group as a whole, but it also has to be equitable: one-for-one and in kind.

## 7.6 Intentional Killing (4:93)

While the previous section addressed worldly punishment for intentional killing (murder), this section addresses its punishment in the Hereafter.

#### A) The claim:

**Ibn Al-Barezi** [146] reported the claim that

﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا﴾ [النساء: ٩٣]

[4:93] And whoever kills a believer intentionally - his recompense is Hell, wherein he will abide eternally, and God has become angry with him and has cursed him and has prepared for him a grand torment.

was abrogated by

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ...﴾ [النساء: ١١٦]

[4:116] Verily, God does not forgive being associated with [in worship], but He forgives what is below that for whom He wills ...

and by a similarly worded earlier verse, 4:48. **Al-Andalusi** [19] and **Ibn Salama** [170] also reported these claims, and added an abrogating verse,

﴿وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا﴾ [الفرقان: ٦٨]

[25:68] And those who do not invoke with God another deity, nor kill the soul which God has sanctioned, except by right, nor fornicate. And whoever does that will meet with requital.

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The claimants did not spell out what the perceived conflict is, but it probably is that verse 4:116 declares that God's forgiveness covers every sin other than associating others with Him in worship, so it must include intentional killing which verse 4:93 seems to suggest is unforgivable. As for verse 25:68, the perceived conflict could be that the verse makes an exception of "except by right" in the case of killing, whereas verse 4:93 makes no such exception.

### C) Reconciliation arguments:

This is the third claim in a row where the verse claimed abrogated is a statement of fact, hence not subject to abrogation per the **Facts** validation rule. **Al-Razi** [83] decries claiming that such a statement by God is abrogated as "close to (religious) infidelity" (يقرب من أن يكون كفرًا). Notwithstanding this obvious refutation of the abrogation claim, the perceived conflict between the verses in the claim can be reconciled.

As **Al-Razi** [83] argues, verse 4:116 could be making an exception from the threat of verse 4:93. As he phrases it, "not carrying a threat is generosity" (خلف الوعيد كرم). A possible case for exception is where the murderer has repented.<sup>3</sup> This would be consistent with verse 4:116, where the qualification "for whomever He wills" now applies to a murderer who repented before he died, and that would make it an exception from verse 4:93, not an abrogation.

To see that exceptions can be made even from rulings that may sound absolute like that of verse 4:93, one need not look further than the ruling in verse 4:116 itself. Repentance applies even to the ultimate sin, associating others with God in worship. A polytheist who converts to Islam wipes out all prior sins. If 4:116 were unconditional, then a convert from polytheism would not be accepted which is clearly not the case (**Al-Razi** [83]).

There is also a Prophetic narration that is consistent with this reconciliation. It was reported by **Abu-Dawoud** [3] and authenticated by the verifier of his book, **Al-Arnaoot**, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said "Whoever killed a believer and was glad he did, God would not accept from him any excuse or compensation". In view of this narration, verse 4:93 would be addressing a murderer who did not repent while verse 4:116 is making an exception for repentance.

<sup>3</sup>The exception is from punishment in the Hereafter. The worldly punishment still stands.

**A second argument** is possible even if verse 4:93 is interpreted as an absolute with no exceptions. The verse can still be reconciled with verse 4:116 because 4:116 specifies a contingency, “for whomever He wills”. Therefore, a possible reconciliation is that God could forgive the murderer of a believer, but He decided He will not, per 4:93.

As for the perceived conflict between verses 25:68 and 4:93, that can be reconciled by observing that “except by right” in verse 25:68 is an exception from its command not to kill. The statement in verse 4:93 condemns killers in general, so that exception is an elaboration of the general statement. It is making an exception from it, not an abrogation of it.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

There are narrations attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) related to this abrogation claim (Appendix A.3), including narrations that reverse the role of which verse is abrogated and which is abrogating in the claim. Most notable are narrations reported through different chains where he rejects the claim altogether. It is one of the rare cases where the authenticity of these narrations rises to the level of *certain in sourcing*, as shown in that Appendix.

In another narration that was reported and authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#), Ibn Abbas (RA) explained that verses 25:68-70 are about polytheists who thought it was too late for them to regret their past and accept Islam, while verse 4:93 is about Muslims who knew the law but deliberately killed a fellow Muslim, thus reconciling the two verses as addressing two different groups.

[Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#) supported the exception of repenters from the condemnation of verse 4:93, which reconciles the abrogation claim, citing the verse

﴿إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ  
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا﴾ [الفرقان: ٧٠]

[25:70] Except for those who repent, believe, and do righteous work. For them, God will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is God Forgiving and Merciful.

which comes shortly after the threat in verse 25:68, and declares that repentance is not only accepted by God but that He will even count the sins as if they were good deeds because of this repentance.

Finally, another argument against abrogation by verse 25:68 is that Chapter 25 was revealed in Mecca, and Chapter 4 was revealed in Medina long after it, so verse 25:68 could not possibly abrogate verse 4:93.

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

Ibn Abbas (RA) rejected this claim according to authenticated narrations

(Appendix A.3). Many pro-abrogation scholars also rejected the claim, including Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] who presented many arguments that all the verses mentioned in the claim were not abrogated, Al-Nahhas [71] who also presented several arguments, and Al-Razi [83] who rejected the claim in very strong terms.

#### F) Conclusion:

This claim can be refuted with a reconciliation statement such as the following,

Intentional killing of a believer is such a major sin that God has set its punishment to be a grand and permanent torment in Hell. Yet, the door of repentance is open with God, as He wills.

## 7.7 Accidental Killing (4:92)

The discussion now moves from intentional killing to accidental killing. The subject matter is unique in that although it is about something done by mistake with no malintent, and as such would normally not carry religious repercussions, it does have serious repercussions that befit the sanctity of human life.

#### A) The claim:

This verse, which details the remedies for accidental killing,

﴿... وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَاً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَدِيَّةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَصَدَّقُوا فَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ فَدِيَّةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِنَ اللَّهِ ...﴾ [النساء: ٩٢]

[4:92] ... And whoever kills a believer by mistake, then the freeing of a believing slave and a compensation payment delivered to the deceased's family [is required], unless they forgive as charity. But if the deceased was from a folk who are your enemy and he was a believer, then [the only requirement is] the freeing of a believing slave. And if he was from a people with whom you have a treaty, then a compensation payment delivered to his family and the freeing of a believing slave. And whoever does not have the means, then fasting two consecutive months [instead], a way to repent offered by God ...



was claimed abrogated by,

﴿بَرَاءَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾ [التوبة : ١]

[9:1] Disavowal by God and His Messenger [is hereby announced]  
unto those whom you have covenanted of the polytheists.

by [Ibn Salama \[170\]](#) who limited the abrogation to the second part of verse 4:92 that starts with “But if the deceased was from a folk who are your enemy”. [Al-Andalusi \[19\]](#) agreed.

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

While Al-Andalusi and Ibn Salama did not mention why they thought verse 9:1 abrogated verse 4:92, the fact that they both specified the part that starts with “But if the deceased was from a folk who are your enemy” in 4:92 as the abrogated part sheds some light. Presumably, the conflict they saw is that verse 9:1 absolves Muslims from all covenanted obligations toward polytheists, so Muslims should not have to compensate those who are still polytheists for anything, including what verse 4:92 prescribes they should if a Muslim relative of those polytheists was killed by mistake.

### C) Reconciliation arguments:

The presumed conflict that we described above can be easily reconciled. The covenants that verse 9:1 refers to are non-aggression treaties as we elaborated in §6.2 when we discussed the “sword verse” claims. These treaties are between Muslims as a group and different groups of polytheists. Verse 4:92 has nothing to do with non-aggression treaties; it addresses an accident involving two individual Muslims, the killer and the victim, where the victim happens to have polytheist kin. These are two different situations.

The difference can be further seen when we examine the details of the ruling. What verse 4:92 prescribes is an expiation for the killer within the Muslim group. For example, the verse says “if the deceased was from a folk who are your enemy and he was a believer, then [the only requirement is] the freeing of a believing slave.” This does not involve the kin of the victim at all; it only relates to the expiation of the killer. Similarly, fasting for two months does not involve the kin of the victim, so it has no relation to whatever covenants exist or do not exist between groups.

### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

The claimants, Al-Andalusi and Ibn Salama, did not mention any evidence supporting this claim.

**E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:**

Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] rejected this claim and wrote that the majority has ruled that wrongful death of a Muslim by another Muslim is expiated by a compensation payment and emancipation of a Muslim slave. He mentioned some scholars who agreed, including Ibn Abbas (RA), Al-Sadusi, Al-Zuhri, Al-Shaabi, as well as Imams Abu-Hanifa and Al-Shafei.

**F) Conclusion:**

A reconciling statement can be made based on the above argument,

Notwithstanding animosity or covenants between groups, if an individual believer accidentally kills another believer, there is a prescribed expiation that the killer has to abide by. The specifics of this expiation depend on the particulars of the situation, as specified in verse 4:92.

## 7.8 Fighting Back (2:190)

**A) The claim:**

Al-Khazraji [63] made the claim that:

﴿وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ  
الْمُعْتَدِينَ﴾ [البقرة: ١٩٠]

[2:190] And fight in the way of God those who fight you and do not transgress. Indeed. God does not like transgressors.

was abrogated by:

﴿... فَمَنْ اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ  
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ﴾ [البقرة: ١٩٤]

[2:194] ... So whoever has transgressed against you, then return their transgression likewise, and watch out for God and know that God is with those who watch out for Him.

**B) Pinpointing the conflict:**

The perceived conflict is between the command **فَاعْتَدُوا** in verse 2:194 which linguistically means ‘transgress’ (albeit in response to transgression by the other side), and the command **لَا تَعْتَدُوا** (do not transgress) in verse 2:190.

**C) Reconciliation arguments:**

The reconciliation of this abrogation claim is linguistic. The above conflict is not what a literary Arab would perceive, since verse 2:194 uses a standard literary device called ‘likeness-by-accompanying style’ (أسلوب المشاكلة). In this style, a word is chosen to match accompanying words in the same sentence even if it is not the exact word that would convey the intended meaning.

In our case, the word ‘transgress’ in verse 2:194 just matches the first part of the sentence “whoever transgresses against you” and means “fight them back” rather than literally “transgress against them”. The style adds a literary quality to the sentence because of the element of surprise, where the use of a similar word draws attention first then the dissimilarity in meaning triggers thought and appreciation.

There are other examples of this style in the Quran. Verse 42:40 states ﴿وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِثْلُهَا ...﴾ [الشورى: ٤٠], literally “and the punishment of a sin is a sin like it.” That would obviously be a wrong translation. The meaning is “and the punishment of a sin is something unpleasant like it”. Another example from common expressions used by the Arabs refers to a minimal diet of dates and water as **الأسودان** (the two blacks). Dates may be black, but water is not.

Given this literary understanding, both verses in this abrogation claim advocate the same thing, namely not to start hostility but only attack those who attack you first. There is no conflict.

**D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:**

The claimant, [Al-Khazraji \[63\]](#), gave no evidence pertaining to the claim. Two other abrogation claims were separately made about verses in the same sequence of the two verses of this claim,

﴿وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوكُمْ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا تُقَاتِلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ حَتَّى يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ فَإِنْ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ كَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾ [البقرة: ١٩١]

[2:191] And kill them wherever you overtake them and expel them from wherever they have expelled you, and fitnah [religious persecution] is worse than killing. And do not fight them at the Sacrosanct

Mosque until they fight you there. But if they fight you, then kill them. Such is the recompense of the disbelievers.

was said to have abrogated 2:190, while

﴿وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ لِلَّهِ فَإِنْ انْتَهَوْا فَلَا عُدْوَانَ إِلَّا عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ [البقرة: ١٩٣]

[2:193] Fight them until there would be no persecution and the religion would be for God. And if they cease, then there is to be no aggression except against the oppressors.

was said to have abrogated 2:191. The reconciliation of these claims falls under the same argument that reconciles the bundle of fighting claims in §6.2; defend yourself vigorously, but do not initiate aggression.

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

We have not found any other pro-abrogation scholar who discussed this claim in the first place.

#### F) Conclusion:

This simple reconciliation statement settles the claim,

Never initiate hostility, but whoever transgresses against you fight them back in kind.



This takes care of the last abrogation claims that, in our view, warrant a discussion in some detail. In the next chapter, we cover the rest of the claims. These are weaker claims, and we will cover them more succinctly. It is worth noting that, outside of the major claims that we discussed earlier in detail, all other claims do not have enough credibility to affect the outcome of the debate about the Abrogation Doctrine. They are included mostly for completeness.

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## Chapter 8

# Weaker Claims

In this chapter, we present the remaining abrogation claims that were mentioned in the classic literature. Most of these claims had little support from the pro-abrogation scholars.

Some of the claims are easily refuted by one or more validation rules. We will group these by the validation rule they break. Some are blanket claims that are resolved by the same, simple argument. There are also claims that are rejected by most scholars as frivolous. We will group them by the reason they are seen as frivolous.

Scholars have had unkind words to say about a number of weak claims. [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#) commented on some claims by saying “*I avoided mentioning verses that were claimed abrogated in writings that do not accomplish other than wasting time most excessively*” (تضييع الزمان أفحش تضييع). We opted to include all claims for completeness. For easy reference, we include a table at the end of the chapter that lists all the claims in it and why they were dismissed.

### 8.1 Validation-Based Claims

We mention here the abrogation claims that were largely dismissed by pro-abrogation scholars because these claims did not meet the basic requirements for abrogation that were set by the scholars. The requirements were formalized in the validation rules presented in §3.3.

Some of these claims can be refuted in multiple ways, with different arguments or different validation rules. We will list them under the principal validation rule that they violate, and then mention other ways they can be refuted as well.

## • Elaboration

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Many abrogation claims were made because a verse elaborates what another verse stated in general, brief, or implicit terms. The majority of scholars have written that elaboration does not constitute abrogation because it does not result in an annulment of the rulings they elaborate (See the **Elaboration** validation rule). **Zeid** [206] dedicated 44 pages to refute these claims. **Ibn Al-Jawzi** [147] also addressed elaboration and dismissed many abrogation claims on that basis.

A common elaboration method is by *specification*. Specification may be done by stating to whom a ruling applies, or where or when it applies. Here is an example,<sup>1</sup>

﴿كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢١٦]

[2:216] Fighting has been enjoined upon you while it is hateful to you ...

The verse states that fighting an enemy is required, even though it is hated. **Al-Nahhas** [71] wrote that some whom he did not name said that it was abrogated by

﴿وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَافَّةً فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ ...﴾ [التوبة: ١٢٢]

[9:122] And it is not for the believers to mobilize all at once, for there should be a group that mobilizes from each community ...

which instructs Muslims to not go all out when the call to arms is sounded but rather to let some stay behind. Those claiming abrogation thought that the call to arms requires all able bodies to rush to the battlefield<sup>2</sup>. The fact is that whether all go out or some remain behind does not negate that fighting an enemy is required of Muslims as needed, a reasoning Al-Nahhas included. **Shula** [199] opined that verse 2:216 is general and verse 9:122 specifies it. He also wrote that the majority rejected this claim.

The abrogation claims against the following verses can all be refuted as specification, not abrogation: 2:216, 2:228, 2:236, 2:282, 4:7, 4:24, 4:29, 4:71, 5:42, 6:141, 9:2, 9:43-45, 16:91, 17:24, 18:29, 22:78, 24:4, 24:6, 24:27, 24:58, and 29:46. **Al-Nimr** [74] identified 48 of them.

<sup>1</sup>This abrogation claim is closely related to one of Al-Suyuti's claims, also about fighting. See page 150.

<sup>2</sup>Perhaps they interpreted verse 9:120 which rebukes those who stay behind and not follow the Prophet (PBUH) to imply that.

Elaboration may also be done by pointing out *exceptions*, i.e., stating to whom, where, or when a ruling does not apply. As an example, let us look at the claim against verse 2:221 which forbids Muslims from marrying polytheists. It was said to have been abrogated by verse 5:5 which allows Muslim men to marry chaste women from among the people of the Scripture, who are considered polytheist by some.<sup>3</sup>

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People of the Scripture are an exception from all non-Muslim communities when it comes to what is allowed. We have already seen an exception for their diet in §7.1, and verse 5:5 continues to include marriage as well. Thus, the verse elaborates verse 2:221 by pointing out an exception to a general rule (Al-Maqdesi [68]). The same argument also refutes the claim against verse 60:10 which prohibits Muslims from *continuing* to be married to polytheists. Indeed, a narration attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) calls verse 5:5 an exception from verse 2:221 and does not even mention the word *naskh* (Ibn Sallam [171]).

Many abrogation claims were made because a verse contained, or was followed by, an exception. Scholars have been unanimous that exception is not abrogation. The abrogation claims against the following verses can all be refuted on that basis: 2:159, 2:187, 2:221, 2:229, 3:86-88, 4:17, 4:71, 4:145, 5:5, 5:33, 5:95, 9:39, 9:41, 9:120, 16:106, 19:59, 22:30, 24:4, 24:31, 25:68-69, 26:224, 87:6, and 103:2.

## • Sameness

Rulings cannot abrogate each other if they address different subjects, people, places, or times. A good example of an abrogation claim that does not take that into consideration is the claim against verse 2:229 which was said to have been abrogated by verse 4:20. Here are the details.

Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] wrote that some claimed that verse 2:229, which allows a wife to divorce her husband and in return give him back the dowry he had paid her, was abrogated by verse 4:20 which forbids a husband from taking back the dowry if he divorces his wife and marries someone else.

The two verses address different subjects. Verse 2:229 speaks of *divorce initiated by the wife*, called ‘withdrawing’ in Islamic jurisprudence (*khul-a - الخلع*; see Sabeq [194]). It has different rules than divorce initiated by the husband, which is what verse 4:20 speaks about. Islamic law allows a wife to initiate divorce if she is willing to return her dowry. This is different from a husband taking the dowry back when he initiates divorce. That was Ibn Al-Jawzi’s argument for rejecting the claim. He also said that the majority said likewise. Makki [184] discussed the claim and then rejected it on the same basis.

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<sup>3</sup>Side note 25 shows Quranic evidence that people of the Scripture are not considered polytheist.

Another example of a claim that violates the **Sameness** validation rule is what **Ibn Al-Arabi** [144] reported and quickly dismissed on that basis, the claim that verse 60:8, which tells Muslims that they can be amicable with non-Muslims who do not fight them, was abrogated by verse 58:22, which forbids amity with hostile non-Muslims. Hostile and non-hostile are not the same.<sup>4</sup>

### • Statements of fact

The vast majority of scholars have said that statements of fact, including events of the past, may not be abrogated. A minority of scholars have made abrogation claims of verses that merely state facts.

The abrogation claims against the following verses can all be refuted on that basis: 2:3, 3:41, 3:111, 3:145, 8:33, 9:97-98, 11:15, 13:6, 16:67, 19:71, 21:78-79, 21:98-100, 25:68-70, 37:102, 42:5, 42:20, 59:3 and 103:2. **Al-Nimr** [74] identified 75 of them.

An example of those claims is the claim against verse 3:41, which we briefly mentioned on page 40. The claim cites verse 3:41, which tells the story of Prophet Zachariah (ؑ) when he asked God for a sign from Him that he will get a son, Yahya (John the Baptist), even though Zachariah was too old to beget a son. God told him in verse 3:41 that the sign shall be that Zachariah will not be able to speak for three days except by gesturing.

Both **Al-Khazraji** [63] and **Al-Nahhas** [71] mention the claim that Zachariah's silence was abrogated by a Prophetic narration<sup>5</sup> which prohibits being silent all day. Neither author mentioned who made the claim.

Verse 3:41 is unambiguously a statement of fact about an event that has already happened, so it cannot be subject to abrogation. Nonetheless, those who made the abrogation claim argued that if we accept that laws of prior nations apply to Muslims as well, which is a disputable doctrine, then the story of Zachariah's three-day silence would *imply* a practice that was allowed then but not anymore. However, even following this weak argument, Zachariah (ؑ) did not vow silence; God told him that his sign was going to be that he would not be able to speak for three days. There was no voluntary practice that would conflict with the narration.

To add to the refutation, what is claimed abrogating is not a verse in the Quran. A majority of pro-abrogation scholars have agreed that a Prophetic narration cannot abrogate a verse. **Al-Arnaoot** (**Abu-Dawoud** [3]) further asserted that the narration in question is inauthentic because of the lack of trust in several of its narrators.

<sup>4</sup>The claim also violates the **Contingency** validation rule, discussed in §3.3.1. In that discussion, verse 60:8 was used as an example.

<sup>5</sup>Reported by **Abu-Dawoud** [3] and authenticated by **Al-Albani** [10].



Indeed, the abrogation claim is widely rejected. Al-Nahhas [71] wrote that “*there is no abrogating nor abrogated here.*” Al-Khazraji [63] argued that “*stories and reports from past times would not be abrogated.*” Makki [184] also rejected this claim on the basis that it is a statement of fact.

## • Chronology

The chronology rule for abrogation claims, which is universally accepted, asserts that the abrogating verse must be revealed after the abrogated verse chronologically. We note that two of the five claims approved by Waliyullah [203] tolerate the fact that the verse claimed abrogating appears in the Quran *before* the verse claimed to be abrogated by it. Waliyullah acknowledged the chronology problem but said that “it is possible that the abrogator is ahead in recitation and to me it is more likely” - *يَحْتَمِلُ أَنْ يَكُونَ النَّاسِخُ مُقَدِّمًا فِي التَّلَاوَةِ، - وهو الأظهر عندي*.

We could not find in the literature anyone who could prove that the order of these pairs of verses in the Quran was not the same as the order of their revelation. This is why we alluded, when we discussed the **Chronology** validation rule, that the applicability of the rule in a given case can neither be proved nor disproved definitively, and it is why we don’t use this validation rule as a primary refutation tool.

## • Contingency

A ruling accompanied by a condition is not abrogated by another ruling that does not have the same condition. Contingent rulings could only be abrogated by rulings that maintain the same contingency. Because contingency is perhaps a bit subtle, most of the claims whose refutation is contingency-based are not seen as weak claims and therefore addressed in other chapters of this book. For completeness, we will give an example here of a weak claim whose refutation is contingency-based.

The example concerns three verses that have similar wording (Ibn Al-Jawzi [147]). The verses instruct the Prophet (ﷺ) to tell Muslims

﴿... إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّي عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾ [يونس: ١٥]

[10:15] “... verily I fear, if I disobey my Lord, the torment of a grand Day”

Verses 6:15 and 39:13 make the same statement.<sup>6</sup> These verses were claimed

<sup>6</sup>The imperative verb ‘say’ precedes the statement in all three verses, thus making it a command rather than a statement of fact.

to be abrogated by verse 48:2 which gives the Prophet (PBUH) the glad tidings that God is forgiving him all his infractions, past and future.

The reason there is no abrogation here is that the Prophet (PBUH) did not disobey his Lord, so the condition stated in verse 10:15 never happened. [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#) wrote in his discussion of this claim that what is meant in verse 10:15 by disobedience is replacing the Quran, attributing to God what He did not say, or appeasing the polytheists. This interpretation makes it even more obvious that the condition never happened.

### • Temporariness

A timed ruling is not abrogated when a subsequent ruling terminates the waiting period. Some abrogation claims were made without considering this logic. An example (see page 38) was a claim approved by [Al-Nahhas \[71\]](#) where he wrote that verse 2:109, which advises Muslims to let pass and pardon non-Muslims who wished they could drive Muslims away from Islam. That advice was timed, however, until “God brings His command”. Al-Nahhas still said that it was abrogated, presumably by the “sword verse”.

## 8.2 Blanket Claims

The most famous blanket abrogation claims are the “sword verse” claims, which we discussed in §6.2 and will not repeat here. We also discussed related claims of abrogation by other verses that command fighting in §6.2.1. Many of those claims are weak, even frivolous, and it is puzzling why some of them were made in the first place. For example, the claim that verse 7:199 about how to deal with different people was abrogated is described by [Ibn Salama \[170\]](#) as “among the most amazing”.

There is another, unrelated set of blanket claims worth addressing, which we discuss next.

### 8.2.1 The “Zakah Verse” Claims

The Arabic word for required almsgiving is *zakah*. The word literally means growth through purification. It is one of the five pillars of Islam and is mentioned countless times in the Quran together with prayer.

#### A) The claim:

Some scholars, e.g., Ikrima according to [Makki \[184\]](#), approved a blanket abrogation claim about almsgiving. These scholars said that the *zakah* verse,

by which most scholars meant verse 9:60, abrogated all charities in the Quran. [Shula \[199\]](#) wrote that Al-Dahhak was one of those who made this claim. Here is the verse,

﴿ إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ  
وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ  
حَكِيمٌ ﴾ [التوبة: ٦٠]

[9:60] Charities are only for the needy, the poor, charity administrators, new Muslims, toward freeing of the slaves, the debtors, in the cause of God, and for the stranded - a mandate from God, and God is All-Knowing and Wise.

### B) Pinpointing the conflict:

The perceived conflict is that *zakah* is the only spending that is mandated and all other spending mentioned in the Quran has become voluntary and not required. This was the view of Al-Dahhak according to [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#).

### C) Reconciliation arguments:

It should be noted upfront that verse 9:60 is not about the required almsgiving alone. It is about charity in general since it uses the word الصَّدَقَات (charities) and not الزَّكَاة (zakah; required almsgiving). There are different modes of giving money mentioned in different verses of the Quran, and it is important to understand the difference between these modes in order to assess whether there is conflict that warrants an abrogation claim.

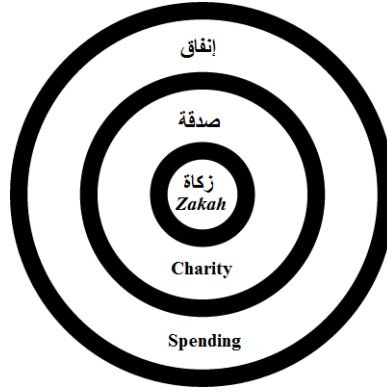
The three modes, starting from the most general, are spending, charity, and *zakah*. These modes differ in being required or optional, and in having specific or general recipients. For example, *zakah* is required, not optional, and its legitimate recipients are the ones specified in verse 9:60. Charity shares the same recipients as *zakah*, but it includes optional charity that is not part of *zakah*. Spending does not have restricted recipients.

Most of the spending is optional, e.g., discretionary spending, but some of it is required, such as spending on one's wife, children, and parents. This is how [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) viewed spending. Support for orphans is also required. Dowry and alimony are also required. Accommodation for widows is required as well.<sup>7</sup>

To illustrate how the three modes (spending, charity, and *zakah*) relate to each other, think of three concentric circles. The innermost circle represents required almsgiving (*zakah*). The middle circle, which encompasses the inner-

<sup>7</sup>See §4.1

most circle, represents charity. The outer circle, which encompasses the two other circles, represents spending, as shown in the following figure:



- Modes of Spending -

In other words, all required almsgiving is charity (same recipients in both), but not all charity is required almsgiving because some charity is optional. Also, all charity is spending, but not all spending is charity because some spending has different recipients. With that in mind, let us look more closely at what verse 9:60 says.

All that verse 9:60 does is define the legitimate recipients, i.e., *to whom* charity, including the required alms, is to be given (Makki [184]). Thus, the only credible claims of abrogation by it must logically be verses that specify different charity recipients. There are no such verses.

#### D) Evidence pertaining to the claim:

Makki referred to Ikrima and a narration by Ibn Wahb from Khalid ibn Imran. We could not find a narrator named Khalid ibn Imran. We tried to also look for Khalid ibn Abi-Imran and found him but could not find that narration to Ibn Wahb. We did, however, find the same text attributed to Ali (RA), but the narration encyclopedia (Al-Dorar Al-Saniyya [89]) rated it weak.

Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] wrote that Abu-Jaafar Yazid ibn Al-Qaaqaa said that the *zakah* verse abrogated all charities mentioned before it. We found that he was a trustworthy narrator but we could not find that narration attributed to him in a reliable source.

#### E) Scholars who did not approve the claim:

Al-Saadi [91] interpreted verse 9:60 as detailing the ways *zakah* money must be spent, and Shula [199] rejected the abrogation claim based on the same interpretation as these details do not conflict with the spending orders

in previous verses. Shula also wrote that the majority of exegetes rejected the claim.

Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] rejected this claim on the basis that other charities than the *zakah* remain and are rewarded.

Zeid [206] rejected this claim on the basis of no conflict.

## F) Conclusion:

Just as the “sword verse” claims can all be refuted with one reconciliation statement, so can all the *zakah* claims be refuted with this reconciliation statement,

*Zakah* is mandatory but is not the only form of spending that is. The “*zakah* verse” sets eight venues of *zakah* and other charities, and the *sunna* (Prophetic traditions) sets the amount of the *zakah*.

The above reconciliation statement refutes the abrogation claims against the following verses: 2:3, 2:215, 2:219, 7:199, 9:34, 47:36, 58:12, 63:10, 70:24, 70:25 and 87:14.

- **Day of the harvest (6:141)** There is one additional weak abrogation claim about *zakah* that is mentioned in the literature, this one has to do with the timing of giving required alms. The *sunna* of the Prophet (PBUH) specifies the amounts and the timing of paying the *zakah*. Verse 6:141 sets the timing for the specific case of harvested crops to be the day of the harvest itself, unlike the timing set by the Prophet (PBUH) to be once a year for other property such as cash, livestock, gold, and silver.

It is not clear where the conflict is that resulted in a claim of abrogation here. All aspects of the timing, whether in the Prophetic traditions or in verse 6:141, just elaborate the manner of paying required alms and do not conflict with one another. Certainly, no Quranic verse sets the timing for harvested crops differently from what verse 6:141 asserts. There is no evidence that the Prophet (PBUH) collected *zakah* on crops on any day other than the day of the harvest.

- **Voluntary spending (2:219)**

Another related claim concerns verse 2:219 which answers a question Muslims asked of the Prophet (PBUH) about what they may spend. The answer of the Quran is that what they may spend is excess money. The verse was said to have been abrogated by verse 9:103 which instructs the Prophet (PBUH) to collect from Muslims a charity with which they are cleansed and purified.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Ibn Salama [170] opined that verse 9:103 is the “*zakah* verse” rather than the more widely acknowledged verse 9:60.

So where is the conflict? The Arabic word that verse 9:103 uses for ‘purify’ is the verb from which *zakah* (required alms) is derived. The misperceived conflict here is thinking that voluntary spending of saved money has been overruled by the *zakah* mandate, but ‘excess’ means money left after all required spending which includes *zakah*. We put this claim under the *zakah* section because of its subject matter, but it can be viewed as one of the frivolous claims which are the subject of the next section.

## 8.3 Frivolous Claims

These are abrogation claims found in the literature where the rationale for claiming abrogation has been thoroughly rejected by the scholars. A good example is the claim that verse 87:6 abrogated verses 20:114, 22:52 and 75:16. All of these verses address the fidelity of conveying God’s words. The claim of abrogation is based on the fabricated story of *Gharaneeq* (الغرانيق - crane birds that the Arabs used as a metaphor for tall idols).<sup>9</sup> Other claims are so frivolous that they did not even cite a rationale for abrogation. We list in this section all the frivolous claims we encountered that were studied by the scholars and we classify them by the reason they are frivolous.

### • No conflict to resolve

The abrogation claims made against the following verses can all be refuted on the basis that there is no conflict to resolve: 2:217, 2:219, 2:228, 2:229, 2:286, 3:20, 4:2, 4:3, 4:6, 4:8, 4:10, 4:24, 4:64, 4:90, 4:91, 5:13, 5:106-108, 6:68-69, 6:152, 7:199, 8:15-16, 8:38, 8:61, 8:67, 9:5, 9:34, 9:80, 9:123, 16:106, 17:34, 17:35, 17:110, 20:114, 22:39, 22:52, 24:2, 24:3, 24:4, 24:32, 24:61, 33:49, 33:51, 33:52, 42:23, 42:39-42, 42:42, 46:9, 47:4, 47:36, 47:36-37, 51:19, 51:54, 52:48, 56:13-14, 60:8, 60:11, 67:16, 70:24-25, 73:1-2, 73:3, 73:5, 73:19, 75:16, 76:29, 80:12, 81:28, and 88:22. [Al-Nimr \[74\]](#) identified 63 of them.

Many abrogation claims were made on the basis of a misperceived conflict, hence no real conflict to resolve. We address some of the more noted ones next.

### The procession ritual (2:158)

This verse addresses a pilgrimage ritual, the procession between the Safa and Marwa hills of Mecca (السعي بين الصفا والمروة). The perceived conflict leading to the abrogation claim is that the words لا جناح عليه (“there is no blame on him”) in the verse seem to mean that this procession ritual is optional, not required. There is abundant evidence in the tradition of the Prophet (ﷺ) that

<sup>9</sup>The story will be elaborated in §12.3.1.

the ritual is a required pillar of the pilgrimage. Failure to do the procession between Safa and Marwa invalidates the pilgrimage altogether.

The view that verse 2:158 makes the ritual optional is misconstrued. The wording “there is no blame on him” in the verse means that doing the ritual is not blameworthy. The reason this statement had to be made is that in the pre-Islamic era, the Arabs placed two idols on top of the two hills and performed the procession ritual while the idols were so placed. In Islam, the two idols were removed, but some Muslims may have felt apprehensive about doing the ritual as the memory of its polytheist past was still fresh in their minds (Ibn Salama [170]).

### Spoils of war (8:1)

The misperceived conflict here is that the phrase **لله والرسول** (“to God and the Messenger”), mentioned in verse 8:1, would mean that the spoils of war are to be taken by God and His Messenger only, nothing to the soldiers. The phrase does not mean that at all. It simply means that the spoils of a battle must be left to God and His Messenger to distribute, not left to the soldiers to grab. That is what the verse claimed abrogating, verse 8:41, clarifies.

**Praying for hypocrites (9:103)** The misperceived conflict in this case is understanding verse 9:103 to encourage the Prophet (PBUH) to pray for the hypocrites among the Muslims, while verse 9:84 forbids that. Makki [184] did not agree with the claim as he saw verse 9:103 to be specific about three Muslims who sneaked out from joining the battle of Tabuk, felt bad about it and asked for forgiveness, and God revealed verse 9:118 to announce that He accepted their repentance.

Be that as it may, verse 9:103 is not actually specific. Its context is about Muslims who admit their misdeeds and repent. Makki acknowledged that in a following paragraph by pointing out the essence of the **Sameness** validation rule, namely that verse 9:103 is about praying for repenting Muslims, while verse 9:84 is about praying for deceased hypocrites.

### No entitlement on Judgment Day (53:39)

Are a believer’s children entitled to join him in Paradise? Does verse 52:21 about joining parents and children in the Hereafter abrogate verse 53:39 which asserts that “there is not for man except what he strove for”, and annul individual accountability through the mediation of parents for their children? This abrogation claim was made as a result of thinking that the answer to these questions is yes.

Many verses in the Quran have repeatedly said that the answer is no, that every soul is responsible for itself (74:38) and will be questioned individually (19:95). In fact, verse 52:21 confirms individual responsibility when it con-

tinues to say “Every person, for what he earned, is retained.” And it places a constraint on children joining their parents as it says “and their offspring followed them in faith.” The children will be joined with their parents because of the children’s faith, not because they are children of believers.

### Neglecting a duty (4:8 and 24:58)

Al-Suyuti initially included these two claims in his famous tally of twenty abrogation claims (see §6.3) then quickly dismissed them saying that they were not abrogated (Al-Suyuti [100]) but people neglected following them. Indeed, failure to follow a ruling is not a rationale to claim it was abrogated. These are good examples of frivolous claims.

The first claim was about paying inheritance charity, as instructed in verse 4:8. The second claim was about asking for permission to enter as part of home etiquette, as instructed in verse 24:58. Both instructions remain in place regardless of how often they were followed.

### Will enforcement (4:9)

According to Ibn Al-Jawzi [147], the verse,

﴿وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعَافًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا﴾ [النساء : ٩]

[4:9] And those who would worry about their weak offsprings if they left them behind, let them beware so they would watch out for God and say the proper thing.

was said to have been abrogated by

﴿فَمَنْ خَافَ مِنْ مُوَصٍّ جَنَفًا أَوْ إِثْمًا فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ [البقرة : ١٨٢]

[2:182] Then if one had feared from a testator a partiality or malfeasance then reconciled between them, then there is no sin upon him. Verily, God is much Forgiving and Merciful.

The misperceived conflict is that if those addressed by verse 4:9 are the executors of the will, and since the verse instructs them to be faithful in what they do, some saw that as conflicting with verse 2:182 which allows the executor to guard against injustice found in a will. Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] said that this is the opinion of his teacher, Ali ibn Ubaidillah.

Ibn Al-Jawzi went on to report several other opinions about who might be addressed in verse 4:9. If the addressed are the witnesses to the will telling



them to honor the will, which is the majority opinion, or if the addressed are the witnesses to the will prohibiting them from preventing the testator from giving a will, or are the guardians of orphans, then there is no conflict to justify abrogation.

Al-Saqqā [88] wrote that there is not even a relationship between the two verses. Verse 4:9 enjoins people to treat people right as they would worry about their weak offspring, while verse 2:182 speaks of wills in particular. Indeed, verse 4:9 addresses anyone who would worry about what will become of his weak offspring after he dies. It enjoins him, therefore, that he say the right thing and treat everyone like he would want his weak offspring to be treated after he dies.

The interpretation of the majority, e.g., Ibn Abbas (RA), Mujahid, and Al-Sadusi, of who is addressed by verse 4:9 leads to the conclusion of no abrogation (Ibn Al-Jawzi [147]). Ibn Al-Jawzi leaned toward these interpretations of 4:9 because, as he put it, *“If he (the testator) willed unjustly, it would not be enforceable - لأنه إذا أوصى بجور لم يجز أن يجري على ما أوصى*

### • Self abrogation

These are abrogation claims where the abrogating text and the abrogated text are in one and the same verse. Such claims are invalid because, as Chapter 9 will show, the abrogating verse must be another verse, not the same one.

The abrogation claims made against the following verses, therefore, can all be dismissed on that basis: 2:191, 2:196, 2:229, 2:233, 2:235, 2:282, 3:97, 4:19, 4:22, 4:23, 4:25, 4:29, 5:105, 16:106, 24:31, 40:77 and 42:40.

### • No reason stated

These are abrogation claims made without saying why or without naming the abrogating text. Seven claims with no abrogating text, of which we know, have been made. Appendix A.2 lists all abrogation claims, including those where no abrogating text has been cited. They are the claims with the “[Claimed Abrogating]” column saying “Not mentioned”, namely the claims about verses 2:104, 22:28, 23:96, 24:58, 39:53, 94:7 and 107:7. Additional claims where no reason was cited for abrogation are the claims made about verses 5:2, 6:66-67, 12:109, 14:34, 73:4, 73:5, and 76:26.

### • Other abrogating text

Lastly, in Appendix A.7, we discuss the types of abrogation in frivolous claims where the abrogating text is not a Quranic verse, such as abrogating a verse

by a Prophetic narration (covers the claims against verses 2:173, 2:180, 2:222, 3:41, 4:11-12, 4:19, 4:24, 4:101, 5:6, 5:38, 6:145, 12:109, 19:26, 21:78-79, 24:2, 31:14, 33:4-5, 38:33, and 65:6), a narration of others (covers the claim against verse 2:229), unanimity (covers the claims against verses 60:12 and 65:2) or analysis (covers the claim against verse 38:44).

Two claims, that verses 52:48 and 73:1-4 were abrogated by the regular prayers, are vague in specifying the abrogating text. Presumably, that refers to the *sunna* (Prophetic traditions) which detailed the regular prayers.

We now tabulate all the weak claims mentioned in this chapter and the reason they are weak. We will refer to claims where the abrogating text is outside the Quran as *extraneous*. If there are multiple refutations, we will mention all of them.

#### Abbreviations:

A: Analysis abrogating a verse

ex: Exception

N: A narration abrogating a verse

N/A: No abrogating text or practice mentioned

N/C: No conflict

N/R: No reason stated

P: A Prophetic narration abrogating a verse

S: *sunna* (Prophetic traditions) abrogating a verse

self: Self abrogation

sp: Specification

U: Unanimity abrogating a verse

[Claimed abrogated]	[By]	[Refutation]
2:3	9:60	Elaboration
2:104	Not mentioned	Frivolous: N/A
2:115	2:150	Frivolous: N/R
2:158	2:130	Frivolous: N/R
2:159	2:160	Elaboration: ex
2:173	Prophetic Narration	1. Elaboration: ex 2. Extraneous: P
2:178	17:33	Frivolous: N/R
2:180	Prophetic Narration	Extraneous: P
2:187	2:222	Frivolous: N/R
2:191	2:191	Frivolous: self
2:191	2:193	Frivolous: self
2:194	17:33	Frivolous: N/R
2:196	2:196	Frivolous: self
2:216	2:286	Elaboration: sp
2:216	9:122	Elaboration: sp

[Claimed abrogated]	[By]	[Refutation]
2:217	9:36	Frivolous: N/C
2:219	9:60	Frivolous: N/C
2:219	9:103	Frivolous: N/C
2:221	5:5	Elaboration: ex
2:222	Prophetic Narration	Extraneous: P
2:228	2:229-230	Frivolous: N/C
2:228	33:49	Elaboration: sp
2:228	65:4	Elaboration: sp
2:229	2:229	Frivolous: self
2:229	4:4	1. Elaboration: ex 2. Frivolous: N/C
2:229	4:20	1. Sameness 2. Elaboration: ex
2:229	65:1	Frivolous: N/C
2:229	Narration	Extraneous: N
2:233	2:233	Frivolous: self
2:235	2:235	Frivolous: self
2:236	2:237	Elaboration
2:240	4:12	Frivolous: N/R
2:256	9:73	Frivolous: N/R
2:282	2:282	Frivolous: self
2:282	2:283	Elaboration
2:284	Prophetic Narration	Extraneous: P
2:286	2:185	Frivolous: N/C
3:20	16:125	Frivolous: N/C
3:41	<i>sunna</i>	Extraneous: S
3:86-88	2:160	Elaboration: ex
3:86-88	3:89	Elaboration: ex
3:97	3:97	Frivolous: self
3:111	9:29	Facts
3:145	17:18	Facts
4:2	2:220	Frivolous: N/C
4:3	4:129	Frivolous: N/C
4:6	4:10	Frivolous: N/C
4:6	4:29	Frivolous: N/C
4:7	4:11	Elaboration: sp
4:8	4:11	Frivolous: N/C
4:9	2:182	Frivolous: N/C
4:10	2:220	Frivolous: N/C
4:10	4:6	Frivolous: N/C
4:11-12	Prophetic Narration	Extraneous: P
4:17	4:18	Elaboration: ex
4:19	4:19	Frivolous: self

[Claimed abrogated]	[By]	[Refutation]
4:19	Prophetic Narration	Extraneous: P
4:22	4:22	Frivolous: self
4:23	4:23	Frivolous: self
4:24	2:228	Elaboration: sp
4:24	23:5-7	Elaboration: sp
4:24	65:1	Frivolous: N/C
4:24	Prophetic Narration	Extraneous: P
4:25	4:25	Frivolous: self
4:29	4:29	Frivolous: self
4:29	24:61	Elaboration: sp
4:64	9:80	Frivolous: N/C
4:71	9:91	Elaboration: sp
4:90	9:1-11	Frivolous: N/C
4:91	2:191	Frivolous: N/C
4:101	Prophetic Narration	1. Extraneous: P 2. Frivolous: N/C
4:145	4:146	Elaboration: ex
5:2	9:17	Frivolous: N/R
5:5	6:121	Elaboration: ex
5:6	Prophetic Narration	Extraneous: P
5:13	8:58	Frivolous: N/C
5:13	9:29	Frivolous: N/R
5:33	5:34	Elaboration: ex
5:38	Prophetic Narration	1. Elaboration: ex 2. Extraneous: P
5:42	5:49	Elaboration: sp
5:95	5:96	Elaboration: ex
5:105	5:105	Frivolous: self
5:106-108	65:2	Frivolous: N/C
6:15	48:2	Contingency
6:66-67	9:36	Frivolous: N/R
6:68-69	4:140	Frivolous: N/C
6:141	9:60	Elaboration: sp
6:145	Prophetic Narration	Extraneous: P
6:152	2:220	Frivolous: N/C
7:199	9:60	Frivolous: N/C
8:15-16	8:66	Frivolous: N/C
8:33	8:34	Facts
8:38	8:39-40	Frivolous: N/C
8:61	9:29	Frivolous: N/C
8:67	47:4	Frivolous: N/C
9:2	8:58	Elaboration: sp
9:5	9:29	Frivolous: N/C

[Claimed abrogated]	[By]	[Refutation]
9:5	47:4	Frivolous: N/C
9:34	9:60	Frivolous: N/C
9:34	9:103	Frivolous: N/C
9:39	48:17	Elaboration: ex
9:39	9:91	Elaboration: ex
9:39	9:122	Elaboration: ex
9:41	48:17	Elaboration: ex
9:41	9:91	Elaboration: ex
9:41	9:122	Elaboration: ex
9:43-45	24:62	Elaboration: sp
9:80	9:84	Frivolous: N/C
9:80	63:6	Frivolous: N/C
9:97-98	9:99	Facts
9:103	9:84	Elaboration: ex
9:120	9:122	Elaboration: ex
9:123	9:36	Frivolous: N/C
10:15	48:2	Contingency
11:15	17:18	Facts
12:109	87:6	Frivolous: N/R
12:109	Prophetic Narration	Extraneous: P
13:6	4:48	Facts
14:34	16:18	Frivolous: N/R
16:67	5:90	Facts
16:91	5:89	Elaboration: sp
16:106	4:48	Elaboration: ex
16:106	16:110	Frivolous: N/C
16:106	16:106	Frivolous: self
17:24	9:113	Elaboration: sp
17:34	2:220	Frivolous: N/C
17:34	3:77	Frivolous: N/C
17:35	83:1	Frivolous: N/C
17:110	7:205	Frivolous: N/C
17:110	15:94	Frivolous: N/C
18:29	76:30	Elaboration: sp
18:29	81:29	Elaboration: sp
19:26	Prophetic Narration	Extraneous: P
19:59	19:60	Elaboration: ex
19:71	19:72	Facts
20:114	87:6	Frivolous: N/C
21:78-79	<i>sunna</i>	Extraneous: S
21:98-100	21:101-103	Facts
22:28	Not mentioned	Frivolous: N/A
22:30	5:3	Elaboration: ex

[Claimed abrogated]	[By]	[Refutation]
22:39	39:22	Frivolous: N/C
22:52	87:6	Frivolous: N/C
22:78	2:286	Elaboration: sp
22:78	64:16	Elaboration: sp
23:96	Not mentioned	Frivolous: N/A
24:2	4:25	Frivolous: N/C
24:2	Prophetic Narration	Extraneous: P
24:3	24:32	Frivolous: N/C
24:4	24:5	Elaboration: ex
24:4	24:6	Elaboration: sp
24:4	24:7	Frivolous: N/C
24:6	24:7,9	Elaboration: sp
24:27	24:29	Elaboration: sp
24:31	24:60	Elaboration: ex
24:31	24:31	Frivolous: self
24:32	24:3	Frivolous: N/C
24:58	24:59	Elaboration: sp
24:58	Not mentioned	Frivolous: N/A
24:61	4:29	Frivolous: N/C
25:68-69	25:70	Elaboration: ex
25:68-70	4:48	Facts
25:68-70	4:93	Facts
26:224	26:227	Elaboration: ex
29:46	9:29	Elaboration: sp
31:14	Prophetic Narration	Extraneous: P
33:4-5	Prophetic Narration	Extraneous: P
33:49	2:237	Frivolous: N/C
33:51	33:50	Frivolous: N/C
33:52	33:50	Frivolous: N/C
37:102	32:107	Facts
38:33	<i>sunna</i>	Extraneous: S
38:33	Narration	Extraneous: N
38:44	Analysis	Extraneous: a
39:3	22:39	Frivolous: N/R
39:13	48:2	Contingency
39:53	Not mentioned	Frivolous: N/A
40:77	40:77	Frivolous: self
42:5	40:7	Facts
42:20	17:18	Facts
42:23	34:47	Frivolous: N/C
42:40	42:40	Frivolous: self
42:39-42	42:43	Frivolous: N/C
42:42	23:96	Frivolous: N/C

[Claimed abrogated]	[By]	[Refutation]
42:42	41:34	Frivolous: N/C
46:9	33:47	Frivolous: N/C
46:9	48:2	Frivolous: N/C
46:9	48:5	Frivolous: N/C
47:4	8:57	Frivolous: N/C
47:36	9:60	Frivolous: N/C
47:36	47:37	Frivolous: N/C
47:36-37	47:38	Frivolous: N/C
51:19	9:60	Frivolous: N/C
51:19	9:103	Frivolous: N/C
51:54	51:55	Frivolous: N/C
52:48	Regular prayers	1. Frivolous: N/C 2. Elaboration
53:39	52:21	Frivolous: N/C
56:13-14	56:39-40	Frivolous: N/C
59:3	9:29	Facts
60:8	9:1-11	Frivolous: N/C
60:11	9:1	Frivolous: N/C
60:11	<i>sunna</i>	Frivolous: S
60:12	Unanimity	Extraneous: U
60:39	52:21	Frivolous: N/C
63:10	9:60	Frivolous: N/C
65:2	Unanimity	Extraneous: U
65:6	Prophetic Narration	1. Elaboration: ex 2. Extraneous: P
67:16	54:46	Frivolous: N/C
70:24-25	9:60	Frivolous: N/C
73:1-2	73:3	Frivolous: N/C
73:1-4	Regular prayer	Elaboration
73:3	73:4	Frivolous: N/C
73:4	20:2	Frivolous: N/R
73:5	4:28	Frivolous: N/R
73:19	76:30	Frivolous: N/C
75:16	87:6	Frivolous: N/C
76:26	17:79	Frivolous: N/R
76:29	76:30	Frivolous: N/C
80:12	76:30	Frivolous: N/C
80:12	81:29	Frivolous: N/C
81:28	76:30	Frivolous: N/C
81:28	81:29	Frivolous: N/C
87:6	87:7	Elaboration: ex
87:14	9:60	Frivolous: N/R
88:22	9:73	Frivolous: N/C

[Claimed abrogated]	[By]	[Refutation]
94:7	Not mentioned	Frivolous: N/A
103:2	103:3	1. Elaboration: ex 2. Facts
107:7	Not mentioned	Frivolous: N/A

These are more than 200 weak claims, in addition to 160 “sword verse” claims which were refuted in §6.2. Together, they constitute the overwhelming majority of the 432 abrogation claims in the literature we surveyed. Appendix A.2 has pointers to all of them.



Having refuted all individual abrogation claims in this part of the book, we are now in a position to debate the Abrogation Doctrine itself. We will discuss Quranic evidence and other evidence for and against the doctrine, then reflect on how the doctrine survived over the centuries with widespread support.



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## Part III

# The Doctrine

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**I**N Part II, we refuted all the abrogation claims that we found in the literature. What does that do to the Abrogation Doctrine as a whole? We answer this question in detail in this part of the book.

To do this, we debate the case for the doctrine in Chapters 9 and 10, and present the case against it in Chapter 11. After that, we reflect on some pertinent issues in Chapter 12; how the abrogation doctrine was formed in the first place, how it was sustained over the centuries, how the doctrine affected Muslims in the past, and how its refutation might affect them in the future.

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## Chapter 9

# Quranic Evidence

Outside of individual abrogation claims, which have been addressed in detail in Part II, the main body of evidence used to support the Abrogation Doctrine comes from statements in the Quran itself. There are Quranic passages that are seen as supporting or even establishing the doctrine. The two main passages are the abrogation verse 2:106 which we have already seen, and the ‘substitution verse’ 16:101 which we will present shortly. There are other passages that are seen by some as further evidence for the doctrine, which we will also discuss.

Having refuted the individual abrogation claims, a question naturally arises: Why would these Quranic passages be there if the Abrogation Doctrine did not hold? Scholars answered this question by presenting different interpretations of these passages that we will discuss in detail.

It is worth reiterating that the case against the Abrogation Doctrine *has already been made* since the refutation of all abrogation claims renders the doctrine moot. This chapter is only meant to allay concerns that this outcome might contradict what the Quran says. There is no such contradiction.

### 9.1 The Passages

The two main Quranic passages that are used as evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine are the abrogation verse 2:106 and the substitution verse 16:101. These two Quranic passages<sup>1</sup> are:

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<sup>1</sup>In this chapter, we refer to 2:106 and 16:101 as *passages* or just by their numbers in order to avoid confusion with *verses* that are themselves the object of abrogation.

27

﴿ مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴾ [البقرة: ١٠٦]

[2:106] Whatever verse We may abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring better than it or similar to it. Did you not know that God is quite capable of everything?

which is *the abrogation verse* that we have discussed before, and:

﴿ وَإِذَا بَدَلْنَا آيَةً مَكَانَ آيَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُنْزِلُ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُفْتَرٍ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ [النحل: ١٠١]

[16:101] And when We have substituted a verse in the place of another verse - and God knows best what He sends down - they would say: you are but a pretender. Rather, most of them do not know.

which we will refer to as *the substitution verse*.

These two passages are by far the most cited as Quranic evidence that abrogation has occurred. Almost all pro-abrogation scholars take these passages as evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine, not just for abrogation in some form such as between scriptures for example. What is abrogated or substituted per 2:106 or 16:101 is interpreted as a verse in the Quranic script whose ruling has been annulled and replaced by another ruling. A full discussion of 2:106 and 16:101 will be presented later in this chapter after some of the key points in their interpretation are carefully examined in the next two sections.

There are three other passages that are sometimes cited in pro-abrogation literature. To a lesser extent, some scholars consider them as evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine. These passages are

﴿ يَمْحُو اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثَبِّتُ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ ﴾ [الرعد: ٣٩]

[13:39] God erases what He wills and confirms [what He wills], and with Him is the Origin of the Book.

which is discussed in §9.6 along with:

﴿ سَنُقْرِئُكَ فَلَا تَنْسَى ۖ إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْجَهْرَ وَمَا يَخْفَى ﴾ [الأعلى: ٦-٧]

[87:6-7] We will make you recite such that you do not forget - except what God willed. Verily, He knows what is manifest and what hides out.

The next passage<sup>2</sup> is mentioned in the abrogation literature mainly because it contains the Arabic word *naskh*, but it is hardly used as evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine *per se*. We will discuss it in §11.4.

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا إِذَا تَمَنَّيَ الشَّيْطَانُ فِي  
أُفْنِيَّتِهِ فَيَنْسَخُ اللَّهُ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ ثُمَّ يُحْكِمُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾  
[الحج : ٥٢]

[22:52] And never did We send before you a messenger or prophet except that when he recited, Satan cast into his recitation. But God promptly abrogates what Satan casts; then God firms His verses. And God is much Knowing, very Wise.

Our main focus here is the abrogation verse 2:106 and the substitution verse 16:101. Before we address the full interpretation of these two passages, we are going to look at critical aspects for their interpretation, namely the circumstances of their revelation and a key word that they both use. We are going to address the circumstances of revelation in the next section and then address the key word *aaya* (آية) in the section after that. Once these two aspects are clarified, we will be ready to delve into the detailed interpretation of the two passages in the two sections that follow.

A word about organization in this chapter, which is perhaps the most technical chapter of the book given the precision needed for its subject. Throughout the next two sections, there will be points and counterpoints about specific details. We will highlight these points and counterpoints with labels such as [Point A] and [Response to A] in order to have a structured discussion. The point and the response to it may not be contiguous in the text since the logical flow may necessitate further information and analysis before a response can be properly articulated (the symbol □ designates end of response).

## 9.2 Circumstances of Revelation

A frequently cited basis for the pro-abrogation interpretation of 2:106 and 16:101 is the circumstances of their revelation.<sup>3</sup> The wording of these two passages can bear more than one interpretation, and the circumstances of revelation tilt the balance in favor of one interpretation over the others. An example of such effect can be seen in Farghali [136], a staunch pro-abrogation scholar who conceded that 2:106 could be interpreted in other ways, then

<sup>2</sup>Different translations of this passage are based on different understandings of a key word.

<sup>3</sup>Referred to in Arabic as ‘events leading to the revelation’ (أسباب النزول). The word ‘أسباب’ is commonly used to mean ‘reasons’.

specifically cited the circumstances of revelation saying that they make the pro-abrogation interpretation the correct one.

The role of the circumstances of revelation in interpreting the Quran is not to be underestimated. The author of the foremost book on the compilation of these circumstances asserts that they should be given the utmost attention “because of the inability to know the interpretation of a verse and what it aims at without ascertaining its story and accounting for its revelation.” (Al-Wahidi [116]). With that in mind, let us look at the circumstances of revelation that he reports for 2:106 and 16:101 and how they relate to the pro-abrogation interpretation of these two passages.

**[Point A]** Al-Wahidi [116] gives the following account of the circumstances of revelation of 2:106: *The polytheists said “Don’t you see that Muhammad orders his companions to do something then orders them not to do it and do something different instead, and says something today and takes it back tomorrow?! This Quran is but the words of Muhammad that he says on his own, and it contradicts itself.”*

He also gives the following account of the circumstances of revelation of 16:101: *The polytheists said “Muhammad is surely making fun of his companions; he orders them to do something today and orders them not to do it tomorrow, or brings them what is easier on them. He is but a pretender saying things on his own.”* (Al-Wahidi [116]).

These circumstances support the interpretation of the two passages as evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine.

Before we respond to this point, we note the similarity between the two sets of circumstances even though 2:106 and 16:101 were revealed at two different times in two different cities.<sup>4</sup> In fact, in the section about 2:106, Al-Wahidi follows the circumstances of revelation by saying that God then revealed 16:101, even before he says “and also 2:106.” He is not alone in discussing the circumstances of the revelation of both passages together. This is the reason we are addressing this common issue here rather than in the detailed interpretation of each of the two passages later in the chapter.

**[Response to A]** The main issue here is the authenticity of the quoted statements in Point A. Circumstances of revelation happen at the time of revelation, so the persons who can make authoritative statements about them

<sup>4</sup>Scholars agree that 16:101 was revealed in the Meccan era while 2:106 was revealed in the Medinite era. Some have remarked that mentioning ‘polytheists’ in the circumstances of revelation of 2:106 is suspect since polytheists are associated with Mecca, not Medina.

are those who were there at the time. [Al-Wahidi \[116\]](#) himself stated that *“it is not allowed to talk about the circumstances of revelation except by narrating and hearing from those who witnessed the revelation and ascertained the circumstances”* (ممن شاهدوا التنزيل).

So what was the source of the statements of Point A? Al-Wahidi attributed his account of the circumstances of revelation of 2:106 to what ‘the exegetes’ said, without providing more specifics. The verifier of Al-Wahidi’s book noted that this account is without sourcing.<sup>5</sup> The verifier made a similar comment that Al-Wahidi’s account of the circumstances of revelation of 16:101 is also without sourcing. Al-Wahidi does not mention the exegetes in the 16:101 section as he did in the 2:106 section. He just quotes the statement without any attribution.

The total absence of a first-hand source for these statements raises legitimate concerns about their origin. Since Al-Wahidi attributed the first statement to the exegetes, we checked books of exegesis that predated him. Some of them did include similar statements, also unattributed. Most notably, [Al-Thaalabi \[110\]](#) who was Al-Wahidi’s teacher on the subject of exegesis used the same statement about the circumstances of revelation of 2:106 that Al-Wahidi used, and a similar statement about 16:101 ([Al-Thaalabi \[110\]](#)), both without attribution.

To add to the uncertainty caused by this lack of attribution, the most notable exegete of that era who predated Al-Wahidi by more than a century did not include these statements at all. [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) wrote a lengthy section about the interpretation of 2:106, but he did not mention any version of Al-Wahidi’s accounts. He did not mention any in his interpretation of 16:101 either ([Al-Tabari \[107\]](#)). It is worth noting that Al-Tabari had regular sections called ‘Mention of who said that’ after he made a statement, so he tended to include only the statements that he would attribute to a source.

Centuries after Al-Wahidi, famous exegete Ibn Kathir did not mention any version of Al-Wahidi’s accounts either ([Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#) for 2:106 and [Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#) for 16:101). Similar to Al-Tabari, Ibn Kathir tended to state the chain of narration of the quotes that he included. These two exegetes are among the most respected in the history of Quranic exegesis.

Many other exegetes who came after Al-Wahidi did mention a variation of his statements, but still without attribution, and some of them cited Al-Wahidi when they did. Among those exegetes were [Al-Zamakhshari \[124\]](#), [Al-Baghawi \[23\]](#), [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#), [Al-Nasafi \[72\]](#), [Al-Khazen \[62\]](#), and [Al-Ghornati \[47\]](#).

Without attribution, the statements about the circumstances of revelation in Point A cannot be considered valid if we apply the criterion set forth by the scholar who himself presented those statements. Let us reiterate Al-Wahidi’s

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<sup>5</sup>The Arabic word used is (مَعْد) which linguistically means ‘backing’.

criterion: “it is not allowed to talk about the circumstances of revelation except by narrating and hearing from those who witnessed the revelation and ascertained the circumstances.” The statements in Point A do not have such ‘narrating and hearing’ at all. □

It is precisely these statements about the circumstances of revelation that Farghali [136] invokes when he chooses the pro-abrogation interpretation of 2:106. It is not clear how many other scholars have also based their pro-abrogation interpretation, at least in part, on these unattributed statements. In the next point, we discuss an attribution that some have suggested.

**[Point B]** In spite of the majority of exegetes mentioning these circumstances of revelation without attribution, there are some who attributed them to Ibn Abbas (RA), e.g., Al-Razi [83], Ibn Adel [143], and Ibn Ashur [153], among others. They cited variations of the following narration:

*Ibn Abbas (RA) said “When a verse was revealed that had hardship, then a more lenient verse was revealed, the polytheists of Quraish<sup>6</sup> would say: By God, Muhammad is making fun of his companions; today he orders something and tomorrow he forbids it; he just makes up these things on his own.”*

A version of this narration that Al-Samarqandi [86] included mentions abrogation explicitly: “so God Almighty abrogates this hardship and brings what is more lenient” (فينسخ).

It should be noted that the exegetes mentioned this narration in connection with 16:101, not 2:106. Al-Razi [83], Ibn Adel [143], and Ibn Ashur [153] included similar circumstances of revelation for 2:106 but without attribution, while Al-Samarqandi [86] did not include any.

**[Response to B]** It is true that these exegetes attributed this narration about the circumstances of revelation of 16:101 to Ibn Abbas (RA). However, this narration is patently inauthentic. Let us elaborate.

Pro-abrogation scholar Zeid [206] was blunt in rejecting the authenticity of this narration. He asks the question “do the exegetes have evidence that would make us accept the attribution of this story to Ibn Abbas?” He laments those who attributed it to Ibn Abbas (RA) without a chain of narration, then goes into a list of prominent books that do not mention that narration at all. Another thorough search was conducted by Al-Mazini [70] who wrote a doctoral dissertation on the subject of circumstances of revelation. He laments

<sup>6</sup>Quraish was the prominent tribe in Mecca at the time of the Prophet (PBUH).



“the prevalence of weak narrations in the books of exegesis” and eliminates all accounts of the circumstances of revelation of 2:106 and 16:101.

We independently verified that this narration is not authentic by conducting our own search within recognized scholarly references that compile and rate different narrations. To do this, we employed several searches based on different combinations of keywords that appear in the narration. We searched through the narration encyclopedia published by [Al-Dorar Al-Saniyya](#) [89] and several other online databases of narrations, as well as general searches of the open literature. Not a single reference had any version of this narration. Notice that these references also include narrations that are rated ‘weak’ (ضعيف) or ‘unrecognized’ (منكر). Nonetheless, this narration did not even make it to these rating classifications. It is simply non-existent in the narration references.

It should not come as a surprise that this narration is not authentic. Two other troubling aspects about it raise doubts independently of the lack of a chain of narration:

1. The revelation of 16:101 happened in Mecca before the first *hijri* year, so Ibn Abbas (RA) was at most 3 years old at the time of its revelation.
2. Many scholars, e.g., pro-abrogation scholar [Hasaballah](#) [139], point out that there were no changes in Quranic rulings during the Meccan era that would give reason to the polytheists to make the accusation quoted in the narration.<sup>7</sup> They cite another narration attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA), and this one is included in narration books, that says that the first case of abrogation in the Quran was the change of the *qibla* (direction of the prayers).<sup>8</sup> There is no doubt that this event happened in Medina,<sup>9</sup> i.e., after 16:101 was revealed.

Therefore, the inescapable conclusion here is that the narration in Point B is inauthentic. □

The other incidents in the literature that mention circumstances of revelation of 2:106 or 16:101 have been discredited. We include these incidents in side note 28 for completeness. We conclude that there is no authentic version of the circumstances of revelation of 2:106 or 16:101 that would support any particular interpretation, including the pro-abrogation interpretation.

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<sup>7</sup>The claim that verses 73:1-4 were abrogated one year after they were revealed would go against this point. See the refutation of that claim in §5.3.

<sup>8</sup>See Narration number 1 in Appendix A.3

<sup>9</sup>Reportedly, it happened 17 months after the Muslims moved to Medina ([Al-Nimr](#) [74]).

### 9.3 The Word ‘aaya’

A key to analyzing the two Quranic passages about abrogation is a word that appears in both passages. It is the Arabic word *aaya* (آية), which is a polyseme.<sup>10</sup> It can mean a *guiding sign*, which is why a verse in scripture is called *aaya*. It can also mean a *cause for awe*, such as a physical miracle from God. In addition to these linguistic meanings, there are interpretations of the two passages that do not take the word *aaya* literally, but treat it as a metaphor.

The reason this is particularly important is that *aaya* is the object of abrogation and substitution in these two Quranic passages that are considered the main evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine:

﴿ مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴾ [البقرة: ١٠٦]

[2:106] Whatever **verse** We may abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring better than it or similar to it. Did you not know that God is quite capable of everything?

and:

﴿ وَإِذَا بَدَّلْنَا آيَةً مَكَانَ آيَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُنَزِّلُ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُفْتَرٍ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ [النحل: ١٠١]

[16:101] And when We have substituted a verse in the place of another **verse** - and God knows best what He sends down - they would say: you are but a pretender. Rather, most of them do not know.

Therefore, which meaning of *aaya* applies in these passages determines what object is being abrogated. Notice that there are additional references in each of these passages to *aaya* but in the role of what replaces the abrogated; explicitly in 16:101 (“substituted a **verse** in the place of another verse”), and implicitly in 2:106 (“We bring **better than it** or **similar to it**”). We focus here on the two instances where *aaya* is the object of abrogation and substitution since the critical issue in the Abrogation Doctrine is what is abrogated rather than what replaces it.

Since the meaning of *aaya* is key to interpreting 2:106 and 16:101, we are going to spend some time analyzing the alternative meanings of the word as it appears in these passages and the evidence for and against each meaning.

<sup>10</sup>This means that it has more than one meaning, as detailed in [Al-Zarkashi \[125\]](#).

One at a time, and in detail, we will address the meanings that are widely recognized in the literature. This analysis will impact the evidentiary value that the two Quranic passages provide for the Abrogation Doctrine.

### 9.3.1 Physical Miracle?

If the word *aaya* in 2:106 and 16:101 signifies a physical miracle, rather than a verse, that would clearly alter the pro-abrogation interpretation of these passages since *aaya* is the object of abrogation and substitution. Some scholars we will cite support this view, but the majority do not. Let us now mention the points in support of interpreting *aaya* as miracle.

**[Point C]** The ending of 2:106 "Did you not know that God is quite capable of everything?" is befitting of the 'miracle' interpretation of *aaya* since miracles attest to God's capability, whereas an interpretation of *aaya* as a verse that came to replace another would have likely called for an ending that mentions God's wisdom instead.

This point is attributed to Muhammad Abduh. It was presented by [Rida \[193\]](#) and was cited by [Al-Zalimi \[123\]](#) who agrees with the point. [Abu-Elela \[4\]](#) makes the same point, apparently independently. [Ataya \[132\]](#), who agrees with the premise that *aaya* means miracle here, argues that capability includes wisdom. So, he seems unconvinced of the reasoning in this point.

**[Point D]** In a verse that comes shortly after 2:106, there is another reference to miracles that provides contextual support for the interpretation of *aaya* as miracle in 2:106. God says:

﴿ أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَسْأَلُوا رَسُولَكُمْ كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوسَىٰ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ﴾  
[البقرة: ١٠٨]

[2:108] Or do you intend to ask your Messenger as Moses was asked before? And whoever substitutes disbelief for faith has certainly strayed from the soundness of the way.

Why is this considered a reference to miracles? It is because of other passages in the Quran where Moses (ؑ) was asked by the Israelites (verse 4:153) and by the folk of Pharaoh (verse 7:106) to produce miracles.

This point is also attributed to Abduh according to Rida [193]. M. Al-Ghazali [46] agrees with the point, and so does Al-Zalmi [123]. Hasaballah [139] also agrees with this point but gives a different angle on Abduh’s interpretation.

What is the response then to the above points made in support of the ‘miracle’ interpretation? There are compelling responses.

**[Response to C]** The ending of 2:106 about God’s capability fits the earlier part where God says “We bring better than it” as He states what He would do if He abrogated a verse. The notion that something would be better than a divine verse, even another divine verse, proved difficult for many to conceive. It is therefore befitting that God would remind His creatures that He is capable of anything, in the context of bringing a verse that is better than another.

This response derives from more than one source. Al-Razi [83] comments on the ending of 2:106 as “signifying that who brings that good is the one who is special in the capability over all good, and that is God Almighty.” Al-Zamakhshari [124] comments on this ending by saying “He is capable of [bringing] good, and what is better than it, and what is similar to it in goodness.” Al-Arid [20] says “replacing a verse with another is not lesser than replacing a miracle with another.” □

The issue of a verse being better than another verse will be addressed again when we discuss another angle on the interpretation of *aaya* in §9.3.3.

**[Response to D]** Is it miracles that God is referring to when He mentions what Moses (PBUH) was asked in 2:108? There is evidence that it is not. Another passage in the Quran gives a compelling alternative; what was asked for was an idol to worship, not a physical miracle:

﴿وَجَاوَزْنَا بِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْبَحْرَ فَأَتَوْا عَلَى قَوْمٍ يَعْكُفُونَ عَلَى أَصْنَامٍ لَهُمْ قَالُوا يَا مُوسَى اجْعَلْ لَنَا إِلَهًا كَمَا لَهُمْ آلِهَةٌ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ﴾ [الأعراف: ١٣٨]

[7:138] And We took the Children of Israel across the sea; then they came upon a folk consecrating to idols of theirs. They said, “O Moses, make for us a god just as they have gods.” He said, “Indeed, you are a folk behaving ignorantly.”

Why is this a compelling alternative? Because verse 2:108 that refers to what was asked of Moses (PBUH) goes on to say “And whoever substitutes disbelief for faith has certainly strayed from the soundness of the way” and that fits what Moses was asked for in 7:138, namely idols to worship. The context of 2:108 further reinforces this, since the verse just before it says:

﴿ ... مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴾ [البقرة: ١٠٧]

[2:107] ... you have not besides God any protector or any helper.

thus the idols that Moses was asked for won't protect or help, and the verse just after it says:

﴿ وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِكُمْ كَفَّارًا ... ﴾ [البقرة: ١٠٩]

[2:109] Many of the people of the Scripture wish they could turn you back to disbelief after you have believed ...

The context befits the issue of switching from worshiping God to worshiping idols, as 2:108 is interpreted here. Therefore, the reasoning in point **D** that interpreted 2:108 as supportive of the “miracle” interpretation of *aaya* in 2:106 is doubtful. □

In addition to these responses, there is a counterargument against the interpretation of *aaya* in 2:106 and 16:101 as miracle, in favor of the more conventional interpretation as verse. In 2:106, *aaya* is mentioned as the object of abrogation (Whatever verse We may abrogate or cause to be forgotten). It is difficult to conceive of a miracle being abrogated. Forgotten, yes; substituted, yes; but not abrogated.

It is not impossible to interpret abrogation in a way that would apply to miracles as well, but that would be more labored than the conventional interpretation. Similarly, the mention of *aaya* in 16:101 is followed in 16:102 by relating it to the delivery of the Quran to the Prophet (ﷺ) by Archangel Gabriel. This makes *aaya* more logically interpreted as verse rather than a physical miracle.

Another angle is reported by [Al-Banna \[29\]](#) who tallied the occurrences of the word *aaya* in the Quran. He argued that the word is always used in the Quran in the sense of a guiding sign or physical miracle, not in the sense of verse. He concludes that this makes it more likely that *aaya* in 2:106 does not mean verse either. While this suggests likelihood, the evidence is compromised by the fact that some of the instances in his tally can be interpreted as verse.

What is the conclusion about interpreting *aaya* as physical miracle in 2:106 and 16:101? This interpretation which was spearheaded by Abduh would support the anti-abrogation view. However, we have to agree with the assessment that [Zeid \[206\]](#) made of this interpretation as he stated “*the phenomena that he considered as evidence to support it are not sufficient in our view to consider it the correct interpretation*”.

### 9.3.2 Previous Scripture?

The second alternative meaning of *aaya* in 2:106 and 16:101 is related to the majority view that what is abrogated or substituted is indeed a verse, except for a key difference: It is not a Quranic verse but a verse that belongs to previous scripture such as the Torah or the Gospel. Is it possible that *aaya* could mean a verse in previous scripture?<sup>11</sup> More scholars believe in the scripture interpretation than those who believe in the ‘miracle’ interpretation we have just discussed.

Even some pro-abrogation scholars accepted the scripture interpretation, at least as a possibility. For example, [Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#) elaborated on that interpretation after focusing on the abrogation of Quranic verses. [Al-Khazen \[62\]](#) mentioned it as one of three interpretations, and then he chose another one of the three as his preferred interpretation. [Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#) discussed the abrogation of previous divine messages by the Quran in his interpretation of 2:106 then moved to the abrogation of Quranic verses.

Notice that we are not addressing the full interpretation of 2:106 and 16:101 yet, but just the question of whether the word *aaya* is legitimately used in Arabic to refer to previous scripture. Let us look at the points that some scholars raised *against* this possibility and the response to their points.

**[Point E]** The word *aaya*, when it signifies verse, has not been formally used in Arabic to refer to a verse in previous scripture, so there is no basis for claiming that it could mean that in 2:106 and 16:101.

**[Response to E]** This is not true. The word *aaya*, when it means verse, is not restricted to verses of the Quran but is formally used for verses in previous scripture as well. There are instances of such use *in the Quran itself*. For example, the following Quranic passage talks about verses from all scripture, not just from the Quran:

﴿ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ إِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِنْكُمْ يَقُصُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِي فَمَنْ اتَّقَى وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴾ [الأعراف : ٣٥]

[7:35] O children of Adam, if there should come to you messengers from you telling you My **verses**, then whoever watches out [for God] and does right - there shall be no fear upon them, nor shall they grieve.

<sup>11</sup>Unlike the English word ‘verse’ which is used for all scripture and even for poems, the word *aaya* is more specific. For instance, it is never used for poems; another word *bayt* is used in that case. This leads to the question of whether *aaya* is limited to the Quran or covers previous scripture as well.

Indeed, this is how major exegetes interpret the passage:

1. [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) interprets this passage as saying that messengers of God from among you and from your groups and your tribes “*recite for you the verses of My book*” (يتلون عليكم آيات كتابي). Which book? Since only one messenger of God recited the Quran, namely Muhammad (PBUH), the rest of the messengers referred to in the passage must be reciting other scripture, and what they are reciting is referred to as *aaya*.
2. [Rida \[193\]](#) points out that this passage is explicit in talking about all messengers and addressing all people, and interprets the words of the passage as saying “*messengers from among your mankind reciting to you My verses that He revealed to them*” (يتلون عليكم آياتي التي أنزلها عليهم). This leaves no doubt that he interprets *aaya* as referring to a verse in any divine scripture, not just the Quran.
3. [AIRA \[131\]](#), which is co-authored by more than 10 scholars, interprets the verb يَقْصُونَ which was translated in the above Quranic passage to ‘telling’, and whose object is *aaya*, as meaning ‘reciting’ (يتلون). It goes on to say that the passage addresses “*every nation of the nations of the messengers, not particular to the nation of Muhammad (PBUH).*”

Notice that the mere fact that these scholars are referring to a verse in previous scripture as *aaya*, even if others disagree with their interpretation of this particular Quranic passage, is in and of itself evidence that this meaning is legitimate in Arabic. These are authoritative Arabic speakers, in addition to being scholars, and the question we are asking here is linguistic at heart.

Independently of this Quranic passage, other scholars have used the word *aaya* to refer to verses in previous scripture in their writings. In his commentary on 2:106, [Al-Qasimi \[77\]](#) interprets that God is saying “*as Our abrogation of the verses of the Torah by the verses of the Quran*” using the plural of *aaya* (كُنْصَحْنَا آيَاتِ التَّوْرَةِ بِآيَاتِ الْقُرْآنِ). Commenting on another passage in the Quran, [Al-Baghawi \[23\]](#) mentions “*verses of the Torah and the Gospel*” using the same word (آيَاتِ التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ). Similarly, [Al-Khazen \[62\]](#) mentions “*verse in the Torah*” using the word *aaya* (آيَةٍ فِي التَّوْرَةِ) when he comments on a third passage.

We note that the use of *aaya* to mean verse in reference to the Torah or to the Gospel is commonplace in contemporary Arabic. We included the above evidence in order to leave no doubt that such use is linguistically authentic. □

Given the abundant evidence that *aaya* can refer to a verse in a previous scripture, what basis did pro-abrogation scholars use for rejecting this interpretation in 2:101 and 16:101? It turns out that they avoided the words “verse

in a previous scripture” altogether, and argued against the interpretation by posing the question using different words.

The words they argued that *aaya* cannot linguistically mean are ‘body of rulings’ (شريعة). It is certainly true that *aaya* does not mean ‘body of rulings’, but that is irrelevant since the meaning of *aaya* that is needed for the above interpretation is ‘verse in a previous scripture’ and that is a linguistically valid meaning as we have shown.

Perhaps they based their choice of words on the Abrogation Doctrine’s focus on rulings as opposed to the verses that contain those rulings. When Al-Asfahani [21] argued in favor of the above interpretation, he used the words “the bodies of rulings that are in the old books of the Torah and the Gospel” (الشرائع التي في الكتب القديمة من التوراة والإنجيل) to depict what was abrogated. When pro-abrogation scholars countered his argument, they also focused on the ‘body of rulings’ wording.

**[Point F]** The word *aaya* does not signify ‘body of rulings’ (شريعة) in Arabic. Al-Arid [20] asserts that neither the Arabs nor the Quran have used *aaya* to mean ‘body of rulings’. In his commentary on 16:101, Zeid [206] asserts that Arabic dictionaries do not mention ‘body of rulings’ as one of the meanings of *aaya*. Therefore, *aaya* cannot be interpreted in 2:106 and 16:101 as referring to the ‘body of rulings’ in previous scripture.

**[Response to F]** It is true that *aaya* does not mean ‘body of rulings’ (شريعة) in Arabic. However, this does not rule out the ‘previous scripture’ interpretation of 2:106 and 16:101. If *aaya* can linguistically mean a previous scripture or a verse in it, then abrogating it would abrogate its rulings as well.<sup>12</sup> The rulings do not have to be explicitly the object of abrogation from a linguistic point of view. Zeid himself, who objected in Point E to this linguistic usage, went on to adopt it as a valid metaphor when he interpreted a reference to *aaya* in another Quranic passage (see page 237). □

In their objections, neither Al-Arid nor Zeid addressed whether *aaya* could otherwise mean a verse in previous scripture. They only talked about the rulings that the scripture embodies.

Historically, the ‘scripture’ interpretation of *aaya* in 2:106 and 16:101 has posed the most serious challenge to the Abrogation Doctrine. Al-Asfahani, who was the first known serious dissenter from the doctrine, introduced this

<sup>12</sup>See the discussion of “abrogation of recitation but not the ruling” in Appendix A.7. In the case of previous scripture, it is not recited by Muslims so abrogating it can only mean abrogating its rulings.



interpretation as part of his dissent. Many anti-abrogation scholars followed suit and rejected the doctrine in large part based on this interpretation.

There are also pro-abrogation scholars such as [Al-Nimr \[74\]](#) and [Hasaballah \[139\]](#) who fully adopted the scripture interpretation. They do not see 2:106 and 16:101 as related to the Abrogation Doctrine even though they accept the doctrine itself.

### 9.3.3 Ruling in a Verse?

The last issue about the word *aaya* in 2:106 and 16:101, and perhaps the most polarizing, is whether the word refers to a verse proper or can refer to just the ruling contained in a verse. This is not a linguistic issue; scholars are not claiming that *aaya* can linguistically mean ruling in a verse. The issue is whether it *metaphorically* means that.

Where does the notion ‘ruling in a verse’ come from? It originates in the ‘abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation’ premise of the Abrogation Doctrine. This leaves the verse itself an integral part of the Quran that we recite in our worship. The only consequence of abrogation under this premise is that the mandate to follow the ruling in the verse is gone.

We again emphasize that we are not addressing the full interpretation of 2:106 and 16:101 yet. We are just focusing on the legitimacy of understanding *aaya* as ‘ruling in a verse’, similar to previous discussions about understanding it as a ‘miracle’ or ‘previous scripture’. Clearly, understanding it as ‘ruling’ is crucial to the Abrogation Doctrine. Let us look at the points pro-abrogation scholars made in support of this understanding.

**[Point G]** It is possible that *aaya* is used metaphorically in 2:106 and 16:101 to mean the ruling in a verse. The Quran uses metaphors like that, e.g.,

﴿... قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَأُشْرِبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ  
يَكْفُرِهِمْ...﴾ [البقرة: ٩٣]

[2:93] ... They said, “We heard but disobey.” The calf was absorbed in their hearts because of their disbelief ...

In this passage, the disbelievers took to worshipping a calf, and that was described by the Quran as “The calf was absorbed in their hearts” whereas what was absorbed in their hearts is *worshipping* the calf.

This example is used as evidence of Quranic metaphors in general, and

in the context of justifying the ‘ruling in a verse’ interpretation of 2:106 and 16:101 in particular. Exegete [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) used this example in his commentary on 2:106.

**[Response to G]** The example of the calf is self-evident since the calf itself cannot be ‘absorbed in their hearts’. Therefore, interpreting the expression as a metaphor is a necessity here. There is no such necessity in interpreting ‘verse’ in 2:106 or 16:101 metaphorically as ‘ruling in a verse’. □

This response follows an established principle in Quranic exegesis, which is “taking the absolute of the language” (الأخذ بِمُطْلَقِ اللُّغَةِ) which means that the linguistic meaning of the words takes precedence ([M. Al-Zahabi \[118\]](#)). It also follows a related principle in religious Foundations of Deduction (أصول الفقه) called ‘Indication by Necessity’ (دلالة الاقتضاء), which means that a metaphor cannot be invoked unless the meaning would not be viable without it ([Ibrahim \[178\]](#)).

Pro-abrogation scholar [Hasaballah \[139\]](#) specifically rejected the interpretation of *aaya* as ‘ruling in a verse’ in 16:101 saying that “those who are pro-abrogation resorted to it without necessity”, appealing to the Indication-by-Necessity principle.

[Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) did raise the issue of necessity as part of his discussion of ‘ruling in a verse’ and then proceeded to answer it as follows.

**[Point H]** There is in fact a necessity to invoke a metaphor. The word *aaya* in 2:106, and by extension in 16:101, cannot mean an actual Quranic verse because of the part that says “We bring better than it” ﴿... نَأْتِي بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٠٦]. No verse can be better than another in the Quran, as they are all God’s words.

The point that no verse in the Quran can be better than another is frequently mentioned by scholars in their commentary on 2:106, e.g., [Al-Jassas \[57\]](#), [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#), [Al-Baghawi \[23\]](#), and [Al-Khazen \[62\]](#).

**[Response to H]** Human beings should not decide on their own that one Quranic verse is better than another, and this is perhaps what scholars had in mind when they made the assertion of Point H. However, there is an abundance of evidence that a Quranic verse can indeed be better than another in the eyes of God, as reported to us by the Prophet (PBUH).

One example is when the Prophet (PBUH) answered the question “so which among what God revealed to you is the greatest?” by identifying it as verse 2:255, the verse that exalts God’s stature and His throne ([Ibn Hibban \[161\]](#)).

In another narration, the Prophet (PBUH) asserts that Quranic Chapter 1 “The Opener” is the greatest chapter in the Quran (Al-Bukhari [35]). A third narration spells out the first verse of Chapter 112 that declares the oneness of God and states that it<sup>13</sup> is equivalent to one-third of the Quran (Muslim [189]).

Some of this and similar evidence is used by A. Al-Ghazali [44] in a short chapter entitled “*How some verses in the Quran can be better than others even though it is all God’s speech*” as he challenges those who do not accept that premise. Ibn Al-Hassar is reported by Ibn Al-Najjar [149] and Al-Suyuti [100], among others, to wonder how some would reject that premise despite the available quotes that support it. Ibn Taymia [172] states that “*Saying that parts of God’s speech are better than other parts is what is established of the predecessors, and it is what the leading jurists of the four schools of thought and others have settled on.*” He even cites what 2:106 says about better verse as supporting evidence.

Verses are not the only instance where God can make preferences that we, as humans, are not allowed to make. The following Quranic passage that compares prophets is mentioned by Al-Qurtubi [81]:

﴿ تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ ... ﴾ [البقرة: ٢٥٣]

[2:253] Those Messengers - some of them We gave preference over others ...

The preference here is made by God. We as humans are directed to treat the prophets as equals. In the following Quranic passage, God describes the believers as saying

﴿ ... لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ ... ﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٥]

[2:285] ... we do not differentiate between any of His messengers

...

As Ibn Kathir [163] phrases it, “*the platform of preference is not for you, but it is for God Almighty.*” The issue is not the preference itself, but *who makes it*.

Therefore, the objection that one verse cannot possibly be better than another is not valid. God can make that preference, so there is no necessity to invoke a metaphor as we interpret the ‘better verse’ part of 2:106. □

One final point put forward by those who advocate the ‘ruling in a verse’ interpretation:

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<sup>13</sup>This may be pointing to the verse by itself, or to that entire short chapter, as that chapter is often referred to by the wording of its first verse.

**[Point I]** The interpretation of *aaya* to mean ‘ruling in a verse’ in 2:106 is supported by the fact that it is the only interpretation made by the predecessors.

**[Response to I]** It is not. Some predecessors did interpret it this way, and some did not. As [Ataya \[132\]](#) points out, the ‘ruling’ interpretation of *aaya* is traced back to one source, the fellows of Ibn Masoud (not Ibn Masoud (RA) himself). The 3 specific chains of attribution of the ‘ruling’ interpretation that [Zeid \[206\]](#) lists, all of them identify the original source as the fellows of Ibn Masoud.<sup>14</sup>

The exegesis of Ibn Abbas (RA) does not have the ‘ruling’ interpretation, but instead interprets 2:106 as saying “*Whatever verse We may substitute*” ([Al-Rajjal \[82\]](#)). Another predecessor of the first *hijri* century, Mujahid, interpreted 2:106 to mean “*Whatever verse We may erase*” ([Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#)). Mujahid was also quoted as reporting the ‘ruling’ interpretation attributing it to the fellows of Ibn Masoud ([Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#)), so if he was correctly quoted he was aware of it.

Another early interpretation does not have ‘ruling’ either. According to [Ibn Sallam \[171\]](#), Ataa interpreted 2:106 as referring to copying verses of the Quran from the Divine source. No mention of ‘ruling’ there.<sup>15</sup>

The exegesis of Al-Tabari is sometimes credited with the propagation of the ‘ruling’ interpretation ([Ataya \[132\]](#)). It is the oldest complete exegesis of the Quran that remained intact, and it had a significant impact on all exegeses that followed over the centuries. Al-Tabari included the quote of Ibn Abbas (RA) that did not interpret *aaya* as ‘ruling’, but he fully adopted the ‘ruling’ interpretation attributed to the fellows of Ibn Masoud as he discussed the Abrogation Doctrine in detail.

In his own words, [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) used the objection to ‘better verse’, which we discussed extensively in the response to Point H, as the *only reason* that he gave for not interpreting *aaya* as ‘verse’, hence opening the door for the metaphoric interpretation as ‘ruling’. Therefore, Al-Tabari’s stated basis for not interpreting *aaya* as verse is something that was debunked by many major scholars, as we have shown in the response to Point H. □

<sup>14</sup>More details are presented in §10.1

<sup>15</sup>All the very early exegeses of the Quran have issues with authenticity ([M. Al-Zahabi \[118\]](#)). Here, we quoted what has been widely mentioned by the scholars.

### Key Point



It is up to God to make a verse better than another verse (Ibn Taymia [172] and A. Al-Ghazali [44]). Therefore, no necessity exists for interpreting the word *aaya* (verse) in 2:106 as a metaphor for ‘ruling in a verse’, which is the interpretation that gave rise to the notion of *abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation*.

We have focused in this section on the key points raised in support, and in opposition, to different understandings of the word *aaya* in 2:106 and 16:101. In the previous section, we discussed key points related to the circumstances of revelation of these two passages. We will refer back to these points and their responses as needed when we address the full interpretation of the passages, which comes in the next two sections.

## 9.4 The Abrogation Verse (2:106)

We start the detailed interpretation of the Quranic passages<sup>16</sup> that are used as evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine. The first passage is the abrogation verse 2:106 which we discuss here. The other prominent passage, the substitution verse 16:101, will come next.

Although 2:106 is the cornerstone of the Abrogation Doctrine, there is a plausible interpretation of this passage that does not support the doctrine at all. We will present and elaborate this interpretation first. We will then present legitimate reservations about the pro-abrogation interpretation of the passage as a rebuttal of that interpretation. The goal here is to show that there is no contradiction between the refutation of all abrogation claims which was done in Part II and what 2:106 is saying.

### 9.4.1 Anti-Abrogation Interpretation

Interpreting 2:106 in a way that does not support the Abrogation Doctrine is not a novelty. In fact, many pro-abrogation scholars recognized this anti-abrogation interpretation<sup>17</sup> in their writings. For example,

<sup>16</sup>Recall that we are referring to 2:106 and 16:101 here as ‘passages’ or just by their numbers in order to avoid confusion with ‘verses’ that are themselves the object of abrogation.

<sup>17</sup>Recall that we use the expression ‘anti-abrogation’ for denying that there are abrogated verses within the Quranic script as the Abrogation Doctrine claims, not for denying other types of abrogation such as between scriptures.

1. Al-Khazen [62], Ibn Kathir [163], and Qutb [191] mentioned it as part of the interpretation, but chose the pro-abrogation interpretation over it.
2. Al-Shaarawi [92] and Ibn Ashur [153] adopted this anti-abrogation interpretation in detail, then added abrogation of verses in the Quranic script as also falling under the umbrella of 2:106.
3. Hasaballah [139] and Al-Nimr [74] adopted it as *the* interpretation of 2:106 even though they are pro-abrogation; they just did not consider 2:106 to be part of the evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine.

Let us start. If you look at 2:106 in its context, what it says flows naturally from the previous verse:

﴿ مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴾  
[البقرة: ١٠٥]

[2:105] Neither those who disbelieve from the people of the Scripture nor the polytheists wish that any good should be sent down to you [Muslims] from your Lord. But God selects for His mercy whom He wills, and God is the possessor of great bounty.

What is the ‘good’ that is sent down to Muslims from their Lord according to 2:105? Almost all exegetes, pro- and anti-abrogation, interpret that to be the Quranic revelation. Among them are Al-Tabari [107], Al-Baghawi [23], Al-Zamakhshari [124], Al-Razi [83], Al-Qurtubi [80], Al-Baydawi [31], Al-Nasafi [72], Al-Khazen [62], Al-Ghornati [47], Ibn Kathir [163], and Al-Maqdesi [68].

It is not surprising that there is such universal agreement about this<sup>18</sup> since the expression ‘sent down’ used in this verse is the standard expression that is used in the Quran numerous times to describe the mechanism of divine revelation to the Prophet (ﷺ). It is also logical that those selected by God to receive His divine revelation are privileged by the honor and trust that God bestowed upon them, so other groups may develop jealousy and animosity toward them. This reaction was described in the Quran a few verses earlier (2:89-91).

<sup>18</sup>Some accounts of the circumstances of revelation of 2:105 support this interpretation, but these accounts were not found to be authentic so we did not appeal to them.

## point of interest

There is a prevailing theme that runs through this chapter of the Quran (Chapter 2, سورة البقرة) about the animosity toward Muslims in Medina. Chapter 2 is the first chapter in the Quran that was revealed after Muslims immigrated from Mecca to Medina. As newcomers, they faced resistance from those who used to have the upper hand before Muslims arrived. That theme moves to an emphasis on jealousy and envy from 2:105 to 2:112.

The foremost group that the verse warns against is ‘those who disbelieve from the people of the Scripture’. The group is understood to be the Jews in Medina who did not accept Muhammad (PBUH) as a messenger of God. They felt that the privilege of divine revelation that was theirs through the Torah was being taken away, and they did not like it. God then makes the key assertion that it is up to Him whom He chooses for such privilege. Up till this ending of 2:105, the interpretation is straightforward and near-unanimous among exegetes. In this context, the words of 2:106 follow:

﴿ مَا نُنْسخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنْسىهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلِهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴾ [البقرة: ١٠٦]

[2:106] Whatever verse We may abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring better than it or similar to it. Did you not know that God is quite capable of everything?

What verse (*aya* - آية) is the object of abrogation and what is to be brought to replace it? This is the central issue in the abrogation debate, and it is why we dedicated an entire section (§9.3) to discuss it in detail. Three alternative views about what *aya* means in 2:106 were analyzed, covering the most common pro- and anti-abrogation interpretations. The conclusion of §9.3.2 is that *aya* can linguistically refer to previous scripture. This is also what the flow from 2:105 to 2:106 suggests. It is a seamless narrative as articulated by pro-abrogation scholar Al-Shaarawi [92] when he addresses the transition from 2:105 to 2:106,

*“... People of the Scripture and polytheists do not want good for the Muslims in their religion because they felt that what Muhammad (PBUH) brought in his time is better than what Moses had brought that survived till the time of Muhammad (PBUH) and better than what Jesus brought, at the time of Muhammad (PBUH). This does not mean that we are trying to minimize what previous messengers brought, but we emphasize that previous messengers brought what was best at their time. Every message before the message of Muhammad (PBUH) came for specific people and specific duration, then a new prophet came to abrogate what was in the previous message” (لينسخ ما في الرسالة السابقة)*

Another pro-abrogation scholar, [Ibn Ashur \[153\]](#) makes a similar comment about 2:106 based on its context: “The way this verse fits the verses before it is that the Jews justified not believing in the Prophet (PBUH) by saying<sup>19</sup> ‘we believe in what was sent down on us’ and what they meant is that they disbelieve in the rest and, in their justification, they claim that their scripture cannot be abrogated ...” (أَن شَرِيعَتِهِمْ لَا تُنْسَخُ).

[Asad \[130\]](#), who is anti-abrogation,<sup>20</sup> also interprets 2:106 based on its context: “if we read this verse in conjunction with the preceding one, which states that the Jews and the Christians refuse to accept any revelation which might supersede that of the Bible: for, if read in this way, the abrogation relates to the earlier divine messages and not to any part of the Quran itself.”

The interpretation of *aaya* as previous scripture dates back to [Al-Asfahani \[21\]](#) more than a millennium ago. Al-Asfahani specifically based his interpretation on the flow from 2:105 to 2:106, treating them both in the same paragraph. This was a contrarian view to the conventional wisdom at the time which supported the Abrogation Doctrine, and he was attacked for centuries because of it. It should be noted that the attacks were not about the connection between 2:106 and 2:105 being flawed, but rather about the pro-abrogation evidence being strong enough to dismiss the alternatives. We will address this aspect in detail shortly in §9.4.2.

The specific wording of 2:105 and 2:106 supports the above interpretation, as Al-Shaarawi may have been alluding to in his quote. Let us look at both verses together and highlight a particular word:

﴿ مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴾ مَا  
نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ  
قَدِيرٌ ﴿ [البقرة: ١٠٥-١٠٦]

[2:105-106] Neither those who disbelieve from the people of the Scripture nor the polytheists wish that any **good** should be sent down to you [Muslims] from your Lord. But God selects for His mercy whom He wills, and God is the possessor of great bounty. Whatever verse We may abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring **better** than it or similar to it. Did you not know that God is quite capable of everything?

The Arabic word *khair* (خَيْرٌ) signifies both the noun ‘good’ and the comparative adjective ‘better’, so it is the same word used in 2:105 to describe what

<sup>19</sup>This is in verse 2:91 that talks about the Jews in Medina rejecting the Quran.

<sup>20</sup>Asad is the scholar who introduced the English expression “doctrine of abrogation”.



people of the Scripture don't want God to send down to Muslims, and in 2:106 to describe what will be brought to replace what God abrogates. This gives credence to the interpretation that 2:106 is about the Quran abrogating previous scripture (Al-Jabri [54]).

- This also explains why 2:106 is phrased as a conditional statement, i.e., what would happen *if* God abrogated something. The statement that 2:106 makes is not about abrogation *per se*, but about what would be brought if something was abrogated. The majority opinion of Islamic scholars is that previous scripture was abrogated by the Quran. What 2:106 adds is the assurance about goodness; God makes the statement that the Quran is unquestionably good because He would not abrogate a previous scripture except with something that is at least as good. This is a direct rebuttal to people of the Scripture who do not want good to be sent down to Muslims, as 2:105 reported.

- While the anti-abrogation interpretation of 2:106 connects it to 2:105, the pro-abrogation interpretation pointedly separates the two. For example, Zeid [206] treats 2:105 as the culmination of a discussion about animosity toward Muslims, then uses the phrasing of the circumstances of revelation that were discredited in our response to Point A to justify treating 2:106 as starting a new topic about defending the abrogation of Quranic verses against enemy attacks.

Exegete Al-Baghawi [23] also grouped 2:105 in a block of verses separately from the block containing 2:106, and gave the pro-abrogation interpretation of 2:106 without any reference in it to what 2:105 said. It is possible that this grouping was affected by the standard division of the Quran into segments<sup>21</sup> that happens to group 2:105 and 2:106 separately. There is nothing significant or authoritative about this particular, man-made grouping which was not practiced by the Prophet (PBUH) or his Fellows (RA), but it is universally used nonetheless.

point of interest

There is some length uniformity in the division of the Quranic script into segments.<sup>21</sup> An interesting observation about the two segments that separate 2:105 from 2:106 is that if the division is modified by pulling 2:106 into the segment that contains 2:105, the lengths of the two segments will be closer to each other than they are now, both in terms of the number of verses and the number of words, and even the number of letters. Why an uneven partition that separates the two verses was chosen over a more even partition that would put them together is not clear.

<sup>21</sup>The division is hierarchical and consists of 30 'parts' of 2 'hizbs' each, where each *hizb* consists of 4 segments called *quarter-hizbs*.

When the previous-scripture interpretation of 2:106 is discussed in pro-abrogation literature, the continuity from 2:105 to 2:106 is not addressed. The discussion focuses on whether *aaya*, the object of abrogation in 2:106 which we translated to ‘verse’, can legitimately refer to previous scripture. That was discussed in detail in §9.3, and the analysis in our [response to Point E](#) shows that *aaya* is a valid Arabic word for verse in previous scripture, not just in the Quran.

- Two other aspects of 2:106 fit this anti-abrogation interpretation as well:
  1. A previous scripture that is still available can be abrogated simply by withdrawing the divine authority from it. This applies to the Torah and the Gospel which are still there, even if not in their original form. On the other hand, a previous scripture that was lost, e.g., the scripts of Abraham (PBUH), would not be meaningfully ‘abrogated’ since there is nothing left to abrogate. Instead, it would fall under the provision of ‘caused to be forgotten’ in 2:106. [Al-Nimr \[74\]](#) describes it as a message that had been abandoned until its features were lost, and now gets renewed by another scripture.
  2. Another assertion in 2:106 is that what is brought to replace the abrogated or the forgotten is not always better than it, but is sometimes similar to it. As [Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#) explains, the similar part pertains to the basic tenets of religion included in the old scripture such as the oneness of God. These tenets are just reiterated by subsequent scriptures, so what is brought in this case is similar to what was there before.

Now that we have presented the anti-abrogation interpretation of 2:106, we move to a rebuttal of the pro-abrogation interpretation to complete our argument.

### 9.4.2 Pro-Abrogation Interpretation

The role of 2:106 as Quranic evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine is paramount. The main premise of the Abrogation Doctrine which is the *abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation* of a verse in the Quranic script originated from an interpretation of 2:106 attributed to the fellows of Ibn Masoud (not Ibn Masoud (RA) himself). This was reported in [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) when he quoted their view “We affirm its script and substitute its ruling” as an interpretation of the opening part of 2:106, “*Whatever verse We may abrogate*”.

The expression ‘abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation’ is not found in any tradition that dates back to the time of the Prophet (PBUH). It is an interpretation that originated decades after his death. It is not the only interpretation of that era as shown in our [response to Point I](#). Nonetheless,

it is the interpretation that was chosen by Al-Tabari and was widely adopted afterward. Let us look at the evidence that the exegetes cited when they interpreted 2:106 this way. This can shed light on some of the reasons why they chose this particular interpretation.

- As we elaborated in §9.3.3, the biggest leap in ‘abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation’ is that the word ‘verse’ which is the object of abrogation in 2:106 is made to mean *ruling in a verse*, not the verse itself. The wording of 2:106 does not mention ‘ruling’ or any synonym of it. To inject something that is not explicit in the verse, a compelling reason is needed per the established theological principles (M. Al-Zahabi [118] and Ibrahim [178]) of “*taking the absolute of the language*” (الأخذ بِمُطْلَقِ اللُّغَةِ) and *indication by necessity* (دلالة الاقتضاء). What was the reason that Al-Tabari gave?

Al-Tabari gave one reason only. His reason was that 2:106 says that something ‘better than it’ will be brought when a verse is abrogated, and nothing can be better than a Quranic verse, not even another Quranic verse since they are all God’s words. Therefore, it must be something other than the verse itself that is being abrogated, something that can be replaced with what is better. This made him accept ‘ruling in the verse’ as the intended object of abrogation in 2:106. As we have seen in our [response to Point H](#), the reasoning that no Quranic verse can be better than another was debunked with clear evidence by key figures such as A. Al-Ghazali [44] and Ibn Taymia [172].

This reasoning - that was debunked - was the basis that Al-Tabari used in justifying the ‘ruling in a verse’ interpretation and not taking the word ‘verse’ in 2:106 at face value. Many other exegetes that came after him used the same refuted reasoning, e.g., Al-Baghawi [23], Al-Qurtubi [80], Al-Nasafi [72], Al-Khazen [62], and Al-Maqdesi [68].

- Another piece of evidence used by the exegetes in justifying the pro-abrogation interpretation of 2:106 is the circumstances of its revelation. They invariably cited accusations by the enemies of Islam that the rulings that the Prophet (PBUH) brought contradicted each other, thus projecting that 2:106 came as a vindication of the Prophet by implying that contradictions are in fact abrogations mandated by God. We have shown that these narrations of circumstances of revelation are inauthentic in our [response to Point A](#).

Among the exegetes that cited this inauthentic evidence are Al-Baghawi [23], Al-Zamakhshari [124], Al-Razi [83], Al-Qurtubi [80], Al-Baydawi [31], Al-Nasafi [72], Al-Khazen [62], Al-Ghornati [47], and Al-Maqdesi [68].

## p o i n t   t o   p o n d e r

Many exegetes, when they interpreted 2:106 as supporting the Abrogation Doctrine, cited more than one piece of evidence that was later refuted as we have shown. More examples of that will be presented in Chapter 10.

- The third common piece of evidence that many exegetes used was to cite examples that they believed were actual instances of abrogation, thus showing that the pro-abrogation interpretation of 2:106 had tangible evidence. [Al-Baghawi \[23\]](#) and others cited the abrogation claim about the widow's residence that was repeatedly refuted by later scholars. We discussed this claim in §4.1. Others cited instances that were not about abrogated verses in the Quranic script, e.g., [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) who mentioned abrogating the requirement of facing Jerusalem in the prayers and replacing it with a requirement to face Mecca. However, facing Jerusalem was not a Quranic mandate, so nothing *in the Quranic script* was abrogated here.

Other exegetes also cited evidence that abrogation has occurred in general, where the object of abrogation is not verses in the Quranic script. This evidence is not false, just irrelevant to the pro-abrogation interpretation of 2:106. Interestingly, [Al-Khazen \[62\]](#) and others cited abrogation of previous scripture by the Quran, which is in fact the core of the anti-abrogation interpretation of 2:106 presented in §9.4.1.

- What is the conclusion? We have discussed two alternatives<sup>22</sup> for interpreting 2:106,

1. The anti-abrogation interpretation in §9.4.1 which is based on the context set in 2:105. It shows that 2:106 is not talking about the abrogation of verses in the Quranic script, but rather the abrogation of previous scripture by the Quran.
2. The pro-abrogation interpretation which asserts that the object of abrogation in 2:106 are verses in the Quranic script. We showed that this interpretation is built on key pieces of evidence that have been refuted.

Therefore, one cannot take 2:106 as proof that there are abrogated verses in the Quranic script.

Interestingly, there is another way of reaching this conclusion directly. It is self-evident that the wording of 2:106 does not, in and of itself, prove that abrogation *of any kind* has occurred ([Zuhair \[207\]](#)). This is because what 2:106 states is that if abrogation happens, then what is brought is better or similar.

<sup>22</sup>There is a third alternative supported by some scholars that 2:106 is about physical miracles, not verses of any scripture. See §9.3.1 for details.

This does not affirm that abrogation has to happen, but rather what will take place if it does ([Al-Razi](#) [83] and others).

For our purposes, where we only need to show that refuting all abrogation claims as was done in Part II does not contradict what 2:106 is saying, this conditional aspect of 2:106 is patently sufficient for that. We opted to go through the other details in order to cover all angles and leave no doubt about the conclusion.

## 9.5 The Substitution Verse (16:101)

The second Quranic passage often cited as evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine is also phrased as a conditional statement,

﴿وَإِذَا بَدَّلْنَا آيَةً مَكَانَ آيَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُنَزَّلُ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُفْتَرٍ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ [النحل: ١٠١]

[16:101] And when We have substituted a verse in the place of another verse - and God knows best what He sends down - they would say: you are but a pretender. Rather, most of them do not know.

saying what would happen conditioned on a verse being replaced. In addition, the passage does not use the word ‘abrogation’ (*naskh*), but uses ‘substitution’ instead. Why is it taken then as evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine? Pro-abrogation scholars see two reasons:

1. Substituting a verse in place of another can be seen as a manifestation of abrogation ([Al-Shaarawi](#) [92]). Also, the passage mentions attacks on the authenticity of the Prophet (ﷺ) which match the purported circumstances of revelation of the abrogation verse 2:106 (see §9.2).
2. Although the passage 16:101 is conditional, it uses a more definitive conditional article than 2:106 does ([Al-Arid](#) [20]). This conditional article (إِذَا) is more suggestive that the condition actually occurred, hence our translation of it in the passage to ‘when’ rather than ‘if’.

There are counterpoints to both of these reasons:

1. The reference to substitution in the passage is specific: “substitute a verse in the place of another verse” (verse being *aya*). The wording ‘in the place of’ suggests that the original verse is gone and replaced by the new verse. This would imply that the verse that was replaced is no longer in the Quranic script, contrary to what the Abrogation Doctrine asserts.

Supporting this view, [Al-Ghornati \[47\]](#) states that “*the appearance is that this substitution lifted a verse in letter and in meaning.*” This means that 16:101 is unrelated to the Abrogation Doctrine if its wording is taken at face value.

2. It is true that the conditional article **إِذَا** used in 16:101 suggests that the condition (substitution of a verse) actually occurred, but what kind of verse is it? There are two mentions of the word ‘verse’ - *aaya* in 16:101, what was replaced and what replaced it. The pro-abrogation interpretation asserts that both are Quranic verses, and the anti-abrogation interpretation asserts that only one of them belongs to the Quran; the other belongs to previous scripture.

Even staunch pro-abrogation exegete [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#) mentions the anti-abrogation possibility: “*We substituted an earlier body of rulings with a later body of rulings.*” Pro-abrogation scholar [Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#) also comments on the substitution mentioned in 16:101 by saying: “*We brought a verse pointing to a ruling that differs from what was in the Torah.*”

Does the context shed light on these two interpretations? The passage that comes after 16:101 allows both possibilities:

﴿قُلْ نَزَّلَهُ رُوحُ الْقُدُسِ مِنْ رَبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيُثَبِّتَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾ [النحل: ١٠٢]

[16:102] Say, “The spirit of holiness sent it down from your Lord in truth to affirm those who have believed and as guidance and good tidings to the Muslims.”

It is clearly talking about the Quran. The object in ‘sent it down’ (نَزَّلَهُ) relates to the previous passage 16:101, and the subject is Archangel Gabriel (the spirit of holiness) bringing it to Muslims. However, this could be referring to the substituting verse only, or to both substituting and substituted verses. It is further context that clarifies which is it, in favor of the anti-abrogation interpretation.

## Anti-Abrogation Interpretation

The context that favors the anti-abrogation interpretation comes in the passage right after 16:101-102,

﴿وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِي وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُبِينٌ﴾ [النحل: ١٠٣]

[16:103] And We certainly know that they say, "It is only a human being who teaches [the Prophet]." The tongue of the one they refer to is foreign, and this Quran is [in] a clear Arabic language.

The subject matter of 16:103 is a common accusation that the polytheists in Mecca made toward the Prophet (PBUH) to explain away how a sophisticated and articulate book like the Quran can come from a man who does not read or write<sup>23</sup> (PBUH). Their theory was that someone who was knowledgeable in previous scripture must have been teaching him, and they even identified some individuals the Prophet (PBUH) knew as the possible culprits. The rebuttal within 16:103 is compelling; the Arabic literary quality of the Quran did not exist in previous scripture, and that literary quality is what puzzled the polytheists the most as proficient Arabic speakers.

This steers the interpretation of "they would say: you are but a pretender" (قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُفْتَرٍ) in 16:101 towards the objection to the Quran as a whole in relation to previous scripture. [Hasaballah \[139\]](#) and [Al-Nimr \[74\]](#) reached that conclusion despite being pro-abrogation scholars. They just do not consider 16:101 as part of the evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine.

Although previous scripture was not significant to the polytheists in and of itself, as they did not believe in any Abrahamic religion, in their minds it was a convenient way to explain the rich content of the Quran. Previous scripture shared similar beliefs and practices with the Quran, and this is something the polytheists were familiar with. They were exposed to Abrahamic religions when they encountered Jews and Christians in their regular commercial travels, and some in Mecca itself.

This consolidates a common theme that runs through 16:101-103. The polytheists are attacking the truthfulness of the Prophet (PBUH) while they still have to contend with the inexplicable quality of the Quran. How do they manage that? Their chosen line of attack was that the Prophet (PBUH) was just reproducing those older scriptures. Let us take another look at 16:101-103 in this light.

In 16:101, they raised doubts about the need to reproduce old scriptures; why would God substitute one scripture for another that is similar? It is not that they were trying to protect old scripture; they were just playing devil's advocates.<sup>24</sup> Then in 16:103, they capitalized again on the similarity, this time by raising doubts about the authenticity of the Quran; it must be plagiarized from old scripture. This is the common theme.

God's response in 16:102 is not the only instance in the Quran where He reassures Muslims in the face of similar attacks on the authenticity of the

<sup>23</sup>The Prophet (PBUH) was nonliterate his entire life. The Quran was conveyed by him orally.

<sup>24</sup>In this case, literally. The attackers were pre-identified in 16:100 as allegiants to Satan.

Quran and of the Prophet (PBUH). [Hasaballah \[139\]](#) tallied ten instances in the Quran that account for explicit accusations toward the Prophet (PBUH) that he is a pretender, and nine of them were in the Meccan era like 16:101-103. For example,

﴿وَمَا كَانَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ أَنْ يُفْتَرَى مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَكِنْ تَصْدِيقَ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ مِنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ ... ﴿[يونس : ٣٧-٣٨]

[10:37-38] And it was not [possible] for this Quran to be pretended and not from God. Rather, [it is] a confirmation of what was before it and a detailed explanation of the Book. There is no doubt in it. [It is] from the Lord of the worlds. Or do they say [about the Prophet], “He is a pretender of it”? Say, “Then bring forth a chapter like it ...

The ingredients are the same; to assure the authenticity of the Quran and put it in the context of previous scripture. The passage also challenges the Meccan polytheists as fluent Arabic speakers to create even one chapter of the same literary quality as the Quran.

The plausibility of this anti-abrogation interpretation<sup>25</sup> of 16:101 is more than sufficient to allay concerns that the refutation of the abrogation claims within the Quranic script that was done in Part II contradicts what 16:101 is saying, which is all we set out to do here.

By contrast, the pro-abrogation interpretation of 16:101 follows the same debunked evidence used in the pro-abrogation interpretation of 2:106,

1. **False necessity** of the ‘ruling in a verse’ interpretation: Although predecessor quotes about 16:101 only talk about erasing a verse and bringing another without reference to ‘ruling in a verse’, the ‘ruling’ interpretation is adopted in 16:101 by the exegetes who just refer it back to 2:106. There, it was based on misconceived necessity<sup>26</sup> as mentioned before; [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) chose the ‘ruling in a verse’ interpretation of *aaya* over just ‘verse’ based on his perception that no Quranic verse can be better than another, as 2:106 would otherwise imply. Other exegetes followed the same reasoning. This perception was later debunked with clear evidence by key figures such as [Ibn Taymia \[172\]](#) and [A. Al-Ghazali \[44\]](#).

<sup>25</sup> [Al-Jabri \[54\]](#) and [Al-Khatib \[61\]](#) have another anti-abrogation interpretation that is less touted. They view 16:101 to be about changes in the order of verses within the Quran.

<sup>26</sup> As explained earlier, the applicable principle is *indication by necessity* (دلالة الاقتضاء) elaborated in [Ibrahim \[178\]](#).



## p o i n t   t o   p o n d e r

Most pro-abrogation scholars interpreted the word for ‘verse’ (*aaya* - آية) in 16:101 as a metaphor for ‘ruling in a verse’. This made it possible in their view for a verse to be substituted by another verse while still remaining in the Quran, which the Abrogation Doctrine requires. Unlike 2:106, no claim of necessity was made in the case of 16:101 to justify this metaphorical interpretation.

2. **Inauthentic statement** of the circumstances of revelation: In the case of 16:101, there is an added component compared to 2:106; exegetes sometimes attributed the circumstances of revelation to a narration by Ibn Abbas (RA) ([Al-Samarqandi \[86\]](#) and [Al-Razi \[83\]](#), among others). As in the case of 2:106, the circumstances of revelation provide a strong basis for the pro-abrogation interpretation. However, the attribution to Ibn Abbas (RA) was shown to be inauthentic in our [response to Point B](#), as the unattributed version was shown to be inauthentic in our [response to Point A](#).

As we can see, the pro-abrogation interpretation of 16:101 suffers from the same shortcomings as its counterpart in 2:106.

### 9.5.1 Difference between 2:106 and 16:101

There are significant differences between the abrogation verse, 2:106, and the substitution verse, 16:101, that are worth noting since the two passages are often mixed together. They were revealed in different eras; 16:101 belongs to the Meccan era while 2:106 was revealed in Medina after the Muslims immigrated from Mecca.<sup>27</sup> The circumstances they dealt with were quite distinct even though they were both billed as just a proof for the Abrogation Doctrine.

The passages defend the Quran and the Prophet (PBUH) against different attacks by those threatened by Islam. The polytheists in Mecca feared that Islam would diminish their privilege and revenue as *Kaaba* hosts,<sup>28</sup> while the Jews in Medina feared that Islam might diminish their religious stature. This led to their attacks as highlighted in the following box.

<sup>27</sup>See Appendix [A.6](#) for the order of revelation of the 114 chapters of the Quran.

<sup>28</sup>*Kaaba* is the cubic black shrine in Mecca that Abraham (PBUH) and his son Ishmael (PBUH) built. It became a pilgrimage destination even for idol worshippers before it reverted to Muslims as the pilgrimage destination and the direction they face in prayers.

**Substitution Verse 16:101 versus Abrogation Verse 2:106**

- 1) Two different dilemmas colored the attacks on Islam:
  - The polytheists in Mecca were puzzled by the literary quality of the Quran. Religion itself mattered less; they knew of Abrahamic religions and disbelieved them.
  - The Jews in Medina were puzzled that the Quran elaborated guarded details in Judaism. The literary quality of the Quran mattered less; Arabic was not their passion.
- 2) The attacks tried to impeach these puzzling aspects:
  - The polytheists insinuated that someone must be coaching Muhammad (ﷺ) to make up the Quran. God reassured Muslims that the Quran is “from your Lord in truth” (16:102).
  - The Jews depicted the religious merit of the Quran as inferior to the Torah. God reassured Muslims about the goodness He conferred in the Quran: “better than it or similar to it” (2:106).
- 3) Abrogation/substitution figured differently in the two cases:
  - 16:101-102 explained why God substituted one scripture for another: as affirmation for believers and guidance for Muslims.
  - 2:105-106 explained how an abrogation by God assures the goodness of the Quran in relation to previous scripture.

## 9.6 Other Verses

In addition to the abrogation verse and the substitution verse, two other Quranic passages are sometimes cited as evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine. These are verses 13:39 and 87:6 which we will discuss in this section. A third passage, verse 22:52, is often cited in the context of abrogation but not as evidence for the doctrine, and we will address that verse in §11.4.

### 9.6.1 The Erase-and-Confirm Verse (13:39)

Verse 13:39 is often mentioned as evidence for abrogation in the books that are dedicated to the subject. For example, Makki [184] cites it before any other Quranic evidence, saying “*this is evidence that abrogation is permitted according to what the Quran says.*” In most cases, it is not clear whether the authors consider it evidence for abrogation in general, e.g., abrogation between

different scriptures, or evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine in particular.

By contrast, most exegetes tilt toward other interpretations of 13:39 that have nothing to do with abrogation. Let us look at the verse:

﴿يَمْحُو اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثَبِّتُ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ﴾ [الرعد : ٣٩]

[13:39] God erases what He wills and confirms [what He wills], and with Him is the Origin of the Book.

What is erased and what is confirmed are understood by many exegetes to be matters of fate, either as the exclusive or at least prominent interpretation. Among them are [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#), [Al-Thaalabi \[110\]](#), [Al-Baghawi \[23\]](#), [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#), [Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#), [Al-Thaalabi \[111\]](#), and [Ibn Ashur \[153\]](#).

With so many prominent exegetes interpreting 13:39 in a way that does not support the Abrogation Doctrine, we have enough evidence to argue that there is no contradiction between refuting all claims of abrogation in the Quranic script as was done in Part II and what 13:39 is saying. Not only that, but there is in fact a plausible argument that 13:39 may be talking about the Quran abrogating previous scripture, which is the anti-abrogation interpretation of 2:106 and 16:101 that we presented in §9.4.1 and §9.5. Once more, the context is what substantiates this interpretation as the verse before it, 13:38, says<sup>29</sup>

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ ..... وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِآيَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ لِكُلِّ أَجَلٍ كِتَابٌ﴾ [الرعد : ٣٨]

[13:38] And We have already sent messengers before you ..... And it was not for a messenger to come with a verse except by permission of God. For every era there is a Book.

Under this interpretation, 13:38 is specifically referring to scriptures that previous messengers received from God, and asserting that each of these scriptures was for a particular era ([Qutb \[191\]](#)). When 13:39 follows with the statement that God erases what He wills and confirms what He wills, the correspondence to previous scripture being abrogated by the Quran prevails.

Pro-abrogation scholar [Zeid \[206\]](#) concurs. When he interprets 13:38, he sees the word *aaya* (which we translated to ‘verse’) as ‘miracle’ that refers to the body of legislation that a scripture embodies, then specifically cites this context as he adopts the previous-scripture interpretation of 13:39,

*“What does the context assert in indicating what is meant by erasing and confirming in this verse? ...The purview of erasure and*

<sup>29</sup>We are only quoting the part of the verse that provides the context.

*confirmation is the bodies of legislation then, and these are the miracles of the messengers that God has sent to His creatures as an invitation to monotheism and to worship Him; He erases one miracle of a messenger to confirm in its place another miracle of the messenger that comes after him.”*

Zeid [206] also rejects pro-abrogation interpretations of 13:39, pointing out that narrations that imply that it is about abrogation within the Quran, including a narration attributed to Ibn Abbas, are inauthentic. He expresses reservations as well about the interpretation of 13:39 as addressing matters of fate, which was advocated in the exegeses we cited.

point to ponder

The three Quranic passages 2:106, 16:101, and 13:39 are widely cited by pro-abrogation scholars as evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine. However, each of the three passages has the same alternative interpretation; the Quran abrogated previous scripture rather than abrogating verses within the Quran itself. This interpretation is keyed to the context and exact wording of each passage and has support from both pro- and anti-abrogation camps.

One final remark. The Origin of the Book that is held by God as mentioned in 13:39 is also mentioned elsewhere in the Quran. In particular, the following passage talks about the stature of the Quran in the Origin of the Book:

﴿إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ﴾ وَإِنَّهُ فِي أُمِّ الْكِتَابِ لَدَيْنَا لَعَلِّي حَكِيمٌ ﴿[الرَّحُفُ : ٣-٤]

[43:3-4] Indeed, We have made it an Arabic Quran so that you might comprehend. And indeed it is, in the Origin of the Book with Us, exalted and full of wisdom.

This fits the interpretation that this origin has all the scriptures that were sent down to different prophets, including the Quran. The fact that the Quran is exalted among them means that no other scripture is better than it, which reaffirms what 2:106 is saying according to its anti-abrogation interpretation.

As we mentioned, verse 13:39 is not counted as evidence for abrogation by many books of exegesis, but it is often interpreted in a pro-abrogation fashion by books that are dedicated to the subject of abrogation. This contrast goes in the other direction for verse 87:6 which we discuss next.

### 9.6.2 The Forgetfulness Verse (87:6)

A number of exegetes see verse 87:6 in conjunction with the verse that follows it as evidence of abrogation. Here are the two verses:

﴿سَنُقْرِئُكَ فَلَا تَنْسَى ۖ إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْجَهْرَ وَمَا يَخْفَى﴾  
[الأعلى : ٦-٧]

[87:6-7] We will make you recite such that you do not forget - except what God willed. Verily, He knows what is manifest and what hides out.

Verse 87:6 reassures the Prophet (PBUH) that he will not forget the Quranic revelations that he receives, something he was concerned about in the early days of the revelation. The reason this issue may be related at all to abrogation is that the exception in the next verse, “except what God willed”, seems to leave room for forgetfulness of some parts of the Quranic revelation.

Exegetes who saw this as evidence of abrogation interpreted the exception to be about verses that are abrogated. Among these exegetes are [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#), [Al-Thaalibi \[111\]](#), [Al-Khazen \[62\]](#), and [Ibn Ashur \[153\]](#).

Some exegetes saw it differently. They interpreted the exception to be figurative, a way to reiterate the supremacy of God’s will but without an implication that such exception will actually take place. They often quoted a similar example from the Quran about those who are going to Paradise:

﴿... فَنَجِي الْجَنَّةَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا مَا دَامَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ رَبُّكَ﴾  
[هود : ١٠٨] ...

[11:108] ... they are in Paradise, immortal in it as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except what your Lord willed ...

In this case, the exception for God’s will is patently figurative since God has promised elsewhere that the reward of Paradise is permanent. Among the exegetes who agree with this view and conclude that verse 87:6 is unrelated to abrogation are [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#), [Al-Razi \[83\]](#), and [Qutb \[191\]](#).

However, neither opinion has a bearing on *the Abrogation Doctrine* itself, and indeed the verse is seldom used as evidence in abrogation books. If 87:6-7 are related to abrogation at all, the abrogated verses in this case would be forgotten and would not have made it to the Quranic script. They could perhaps be under the “cause to be forgotten” provision in 2:106 or under the “abrogation of both ruling and recitation” category which is discussed in Appendix [A.7](#). However, that would not pertain to abrogation of verses in the Quranic script which is the sole scope of the Abrogation Doctrine.

With that out of the way, let us examine the exception in 87:7. It is befitting that God would include it whether it is figurative or literal. The express purpose of verses 87:6-7 is to reassure the Prophet (PBUH) who was worried about forgetting any of the revelations, a terrifying thought given his enormous responsibility. Since the goal is to alleviate his worries, it fits that purpose that God would say “such that you do not forget except what God willed” thus telling the Prophet that any forgetfulness that could possibly take place would be the express will of God. The Prophet can then put his mind at ease with such reassurance.

31

There is an example of forgetfulness reported in a Prophetic narration where the Prophet (PBUH) skipped a verse in his recitation of the Quran during the prayers and was asked if the verse he skipped was abrogated. The Prophet (PBUH) responded (in a version of that narration)<sup>30</sup> that he was ‘made to forget it’. In another version, the Prophet (PBUH) lamented that people did not remind him during the recitation.

In spite of the wording “made to forget it” being a direct conjugation in Arabic of the wording in 2:106 “cause to be forgotten”, the narrative suggests that the skipped verse was not forgotten forever since it was recognized and discussed, so it was a simple case of human forgetfulness on the part of the Prophet (PBUH) rather than a case related to abrogation. It is possible, and we have no way of knowing one way or the other, that the Prophet’s expression “made to forget it” is based on 87:6-7 where forgetfulness is attributed to the will of God. Chronologically, Chapter 87 (سورة الأعلى) was one of the earliest chapters to be revealed in the Quran, so it probably predated this incident.

#### point of interest

In the extensive abrogation literature, there is an endless debate about which interpretation of the Quranic passages that relate to abrogation is more compelling. This debate is less critical here because our starting point in this chapter was that all individual abrogation claims had already been refuted in Part II of the book. Our task was to show that the above passages do not *necessitate* that there are abrogated verses in the Quranic script.

As we have seen in this chapter, the two main Quranic passages 2:106 and 16:101 that have been interpreted as evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine have a compelling alternative interpretation as addressing abrogation of previous scripture by the Quran. The two other Quranic passages 13:39 and 87:6 do

<sup>30</sup>This version, originally not included among authentic narrations, was reexamined by Al-Albani [10] who judged it to be *sahih* (authentic in the sense of having a reliable chain of narration).

not provide evidence for the doctrine since the mainstream interpretation of these verses is unrelated to the abrogation of verses in the Quranic script. A fifth Quranic passage 22:52 that is sometimes mentioned in the context of abrogation has not been claimed to support the doctrine and in fact, as we will see in §11.4, may provide some evidence *against* it.



The Quranic passages that were interpreted as supportive of the Abrogation Doctrine have been considered the strongest evidence for the doctrine by pro-abrogation scholars. Their interpretation was challenged in this chapter, and another, compelling interpretation that does not support the doctrine was presented. Other evidence outside of the Quran is also used by pro-abrogation scholars to bolster their case. We will attend to that evidence next.

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## Chapter 10

# Other Evidence

In the previous chapter, we discussed Quranic evidence that is put forward by pro-abrogation scholars in their support of the Abrogation Doctrine. There is additional evidence from sources other than the Quran that is also cited by pro-abrogation scholars. Most of this evidence is in the form of narrations by early Muslims that are interpreted as supportive of specific abrogation claims or of the Abrogation Doctrine in general.

We have already addressed the narrations about specific abrogation claims in the sections discussing those claims in Part II, with reference to the full list of authentic narrations among them in Appendix A.3. In this chapter, we will focus more on additional narrations that talk about abrogation in general without reference to a specific abrogation claim.

We will also address the assertion of unanimity about the Abrogation Doctrine that is sometimes invoked as superseding all other evidence and arguments regarding the validity of the doctrine.

We reiterate that the case against the Abrogation Doctrine *has already been made* through the refutation of individual abrogation claims. We continue the rebuttal of evidence that is put forward to support the doctrine just to allay concerns that such evidence contradicts the case that has already been made.

### 10.1 Separation of Recitation and Ruling

The first piece of evidence we address is the narration that started the notion that abrogation can apply to the ruling in a verse without applying to the verse as a whole. This notion is the cornerstone of the Abrogation Doctrine. The narration quotes the fellows of Ibn Masoud (not Ibn Masoud (RA) himself) interpreting the opening part of verse 2:106 “Whatever verse We may abrogate”

to mean “We fix its script and substitute its ruling” - نُثَبِّتُ خَطَّهَا، وَنُبَدِّلُ حُكْمَهَا (Al-Tabari [107]).

It is this separation between including a verse in the Quranic script and following its ruling that Al-Tabari adopted in his highly influential exegesis, allowing abrogation to apply to the ruling of a verse but not to its recitation as part of the Quran.<sup>1</sup> Countless authors adopted this interpretation afterward.

#### point of interest

Separating the ruling of a verse from its recitation was never mentioned in any authentic narration that belongs to the Prophetic era. The narration in question originated decades after the death of the Prophet (PBUH).

So what was the basis for separating the ruling of a verse from its recitation? There is no account of the reasoning in the narration; just the brief interpretation “We fix its script and substitute its ruling” of verse 2:106 is available to us. Neither the word ‘ruling’ nor any of its synonyms appears in verse 2:106.

Al-Tabari [107] and others tried to justify why ‘ruling’ was injected into the interpretation of 2:106 despite not being mentioned in it. He asserted that it was necessary because 2:106 talks about a verse being better than another verse which is not possible since both are words of God. Hence, he concluded that ‘verse’ must mean something else such as ruling in a verse. As we have seen in §9.3.3, a verse can patently be better than another verse as shown by direct evidence from key figures such as Ibn Taymia [172] and A. Al-Ghazali [44]. Therefore, Al-Tabari’s assertion that it is necessary to inject ‘ruling’ into 2:106 is not justified.

Nonetheless, the narration of the fellows of Ibn Masoud is considered evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine by numerous pro-abrogation authors, including Zeid [206] in his comprehensive modern book on the subject. Because of the importance of this narration in establishing the Abrogation Doctrine, we will analyze its wording and its sourcing in detail.

In terms of wording, it is unambiguous that the narration interprets verse 2:106 to mean separation of recitation and ruling in matters of abrogation. Even though the wording is unambiguous, it is just an opinion of its author, and that author is not the Prophet (PBUH) or his Fellows (RA), so it should be weighed accordingly.

Who is the author of this wording? The narrators did not identify whom among the fellows of Ibn Masoud they were quoting; there are at least six

<sup>1</sup>This also gave rise to another type of abrogation that is outside the Abrogation Doctrine, which is *abrogation of the recitation but not the ruling*. This is discussed in Appendix A.7.

known fellows of Ibn Masoud (RA). It is unusual for a narration to collectively quote them without specifying any of them. We conducted a search in [Al-Dorar Al-Saniyya \[89\]](#) which covers the main narration books. There were no authentic narrations that *quote* the fellows of Ibn Masoud (rather than tell a story that involves them<sup>2</sup>) without identifying any of them.

In terms of sourcing, this narration is reported through three chains. All three of them go through the same person, Ibn Abi-Najeeh ([Afana \[7\]](#)). Therefore, the narration is a *single*; its authenticity hinges on the reliability of one person. Ibn Abi-Najeeh was a religious figure and narrator in Mecca who died in the *hijri* year 131. Let us look at what we know about him.

On the positive side, most evaluations of narrators describe him as a trustworthy figure. There is a caveat, though. He is reported to have frequently quoted the contemporary exegete Mujahid without actually hearing these quotes from him. According to Ibn Hibban, everyone who quoted Mujahid in matters of exegesis took those quotes from the writings of Al-Qasim Ibn Abi-Bazza, the scholar who did hear Mujahid directly ([Ibn Hajar \[159\]](#)).

Two of the three versions of the narration that separates ruling and recitation has Ibn Abi-Najeeh quoting Mujahid who in turn quotes the fellows of Ibn Masoud. Based on the doubts about what Ibn Abi-Najeeh narrated from Mujahid, the only version of the narration that [Zeid \[206\]](#) accepted is the one where Ibn Abi-Najeeh quotes the fellows of Ibn Masoud directly.

These doubts also led Al-Nasai, one of the six major narrations scholars, to classify Ibn Abi-Najeeh as one of the ‘imposers’ - مُدَلِّسِينَ (S. [Al-Zahabi \[119\]](#)), namely those who quote someone as if they heard the quote from him when in fact they did not. [Ibn Hajar \[158\]](#), who is highly regarded in the subject of narrators, ranked the imposers into five levels based on all available evidence. He put Ibn Abi-Najeeh in the middle; the third level which [Ibn Hajar \[158\]](#) described as “*imposed a lot*” (أَكْثَرَ مِنَ التَّدْلِيسِ) and “*some rejected their narrations in the absolute and others accepted them*”. One cannot escape the conclusion that this characterization raises some doubt about the authenticity of the narrations that Ibn Abi-Najeeh reported.

An even more serious concern that most assessments of Ibn Abi-Najeeh raised, even those that generally praised him, is that he was a ‘Fatalist’ (*qadari* - قَدَرِي).<sup>3</sup> *Fatalism* was a religious sect that deviated from the consensus of mainstream Islam in that it cast doubt on God’s prior knowledge of the future. This stems from a philosophical effort to reconcile man’s free will with God’s prior knowledge ([Amin \[129\]](#)).

A strict version of Fatalism denied God’s knowledge of the future alto-

<sup>2</sup>Sometimes, they are referred to as ‘fellows of Abdullah’, using the first name of Ibn Masoud (RA).

<sup>3</sup>Although the term is derived from the word قَدَر (fate), it was based on a close word قُدْرَة (ability, that is of the human being to make choices).

gether, asserting that what man will do only becomes known to God after it is done. A more moderate version, if it can be so described, believed that the deeds of man are man's own work, and not created by God. The mainstream consensus finds both views unacceptable as they violate explicit Quranic text which states that God created everything and knows everything. While it is evident that Ibn Abi-Najeeh was a Fatalist, there is no evidence that pins down what exactly he believed or whether he later changed his views. May God accept him according to his best deeds.

Trustworthiness as a narrator is a separate issue from philosophical beliefs, but there is a legitimate concern in this case because of the subject matter of the narration in question. Abrogation fits the false notion that God's knowledge is not complete, which is precisely why abrogation was attacked as a manifestation of *Al-badaa* (البداء - 'getting a better idea') which we discussed on page 12. While equating abrogation with *Al-badaa* is false as we argued in detail, believing in *Al-badaa* necessitates abrogation within the Quran itself to remedy situations where Quranic rulings had unforeseen consequences – God forbid.

This means that a Fatalist, who does not believe in God's prior knowledge, would be biased toward accepting the Abrogation Doctrine. We do not know whether such bias affected Ibn Abi-Najeeh in phrasing the narration that is the foundation of the Abrogation Doctrine. However, between this potential bias and the imperfect assessment of him as a narrator, there are legitimate concerns about the accuracy of this narration.

The Fatalism issue does not stop at Ibn Abi-Najeeh. The next person in the chain of this narration, Issa Al-Jurashi who quoted Ibn Abi-Najeeh, was also a Fatalist (Ibn Hajar [159]). Shibl Ibn Abbad, who quoted Ibn Abi-Najeeh in one of the other two versions of the narration, was a Fatalist as well (Ibn Hajar [159]). The third version of the narration does not include the language that separates recitation from ruling (see side note 32).

One final circumstantial issue about this narration. There are no narrations in the literature where Ibn Abi-Najeeh or Mujahid quotes any of the six fellows of Ibn Masoud. S. Al-Zahabi [119] lists for each narrator the recognized names of those who narrated from him, and neither Ibn Abi-Najeeh nor Mujahid appears on the lists of the six fellows of Ibn Masoud. This is not a surprise since Ibn Abi-Najeeh and Mujahid lived in Mecca, more than a thousand miles away from Iraq where the fellows of Ibn Masoud lived. So, this makes the narration about the separation of recitation and ruling an anomaly among the narrations attributed to either Ibn Abi-Najeeh or Mujahid.

As we have seen, the evidentiary value of the narration in support of the Abrogation Doctrine is compromised by multiple issues. It is further compromised by the fact that even if accurate, what is narrated does not explain why the fellows of Ibn Masoud came to the opinion of injecting 'ruling' into

the interpretation of verse 2:106 which has no mention of ruling. As we noted before, Al-Tabari tried to justify the injection of ‘ruling’, but his justification was refuted in §9.3.3 with direct evidence from key figures such as Ibn Taymia [172] and A. Al-Ghazali [44].

We believe that the adoption by Al-Tabari [107] of what the narration says when he interpreted verse 2:106 is what brought the separation of recitation and ruling to prominence. Not only is the narration he relied on questionable, but his justification of that separation is also refutable.

Furthermore, there is independent counter-evidence in the Quran itself; the notion of reciting a ruling and not following it goes in the face of a Quranic command to do as we say:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ۚ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾ [الصَّافَّ: ٢-٣]

[61:2-3] O you who have believed, why do you say what you do not do? It is greatly detested in the sight of God that you say what you do not do.

Al-Tabari [107] himself interpreted these verses in the generality that the Quranic words convey, saying: “*why do you say something then not follow it up with deed? Your deeds are different from your words. God greatly detests your saying something that you don’t do.*” Exegete Ibn Atiya [154] is explicit about the generality of verse 61:3 as he comments on other specialized interpretations, saying “*the ruling in this verse remains for all times, and everyone who says what he does not do would be detested, contaminated in what he says*” (حكم هذه الآية باق غابر الدهر، وكل من يقول ما لا يفعل، فهو ممقوت مذق) (الكلام), which Al-Thaalibi [111] quotes in his exegesis as well.

Notwithstanding the questions raised about the narration reported by Ibn Abi-Najeeh, it is unique in its specificity about the Abrogation Doctrine; abrogating the ruling but not the recitation of a Quranic verse. Other evidence for abrogation lacks this specificity. Because of this, we will highlight the important issue of conflation in the next section before we analyze the rest of the evidence.

## 10.2 Conflated Evidence

We turn our attention to an important theme that runs through the rest of this chapter; conflation. This issue colors much of the evidence presented by pro-abrogation scholars in support of the Abrogation Doctrine. Conflation means using the evidence of one thing to argue for something else. It is very prevalent in the abrogation literature, and it falls into two main categories:

1. Using evidence of other types of abrogation, e.g., abrogation of previous scripture, as proof for abrogation of verses in the Quranic script which is the exclusive scope of the Abrogation Doctrine.
2. Using evidence that uses the Arabic word (*naskh* - نَسَخَ) for meanings other than abrogation as proof for abrogation. [Tahir \[202\]](#) notes that the predecessors who used the word for broader meanings did not err, but “*the ones who erred are those who did not understand what [the predecessors] meant*”.

In this section, we put the spotlight on these two categories of conflation which will affect different pieces of evidence for the rest of this chapter. [Al-Zalmi \[123\]](#) gives a more detailed account of the different modes of conflation in a long list, with instances of abrogation claims that exemplify such conflation.

Let us start with the first category of conflation; using evidence of other types of abrogation to support the Abrogation Doctrine. The doctrine, namely abrogation of the ruling of a Quranic verse while the verse remains in the Quranic script, deals with a very specific type of abrogation. Let us look at a stark example of conflating evidence of other types of abrogation to argue for the Abrogation Doctrine.

In his book which asserts that it is about abrogation of verses in the Quranic script ([Shula \[199\]](#)), the author lists five pieces of evidence in support of abrogation. Three of them are “*what Muslims have agreed upon about the legislation of [different] prophets abrogating each other, and that the legislation of Muhammad (PBUH) abrogated prior legislation, and what is well known among them about the abrogation that switched the direction of prayers [from Jerusalem to Mecca]*” ([Shula \[199\]](#)). The objects of abrogation in these three examples are not Quranic verses. Rather, they are previous scripture and Prophetic tradition.

Almost all scholars, including anti-abrogation scholars,<sup>4</sup> would agree with these three examples. The problem is that these examples are not relevant to the Abrogation Doctrine; they have no bearing on whether *Quranic verses* have been abrogated. Here are two instances of abrogation that fit these examples, which we also mentioned in §1.3:

1. Jesus (PBUH) is quoted in the Quran saying:

﴿وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَلَا حِلَّ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي هُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
...﴾ [آل عمران : ٥٠]

<sup>4</sup>Recall that ‘anti-abrogation’ in this book is defined as ‘against the abrogation of verses in the Quranic script’. The definition was chosen to avoid conflation with other types of abrogation.

[3:50] And [I have come] confirming what was before me of the Torah and to make lawful for you some of what was forbidden to you  
...

which is a clear case of abrogation of rulings of a previous religion.

2. There is a narration that quotes the Prophet (PBUH) saying “*I [Muhammad] had forbidden you from visiting the graves; now visit them*” which is a clear case of abrogation of a Prophetic tradition.

Although these are compelling examples of abrogation, their object of abrogation is not a verse in the Quranic script. If one type of abrogation has occurred, this does not mean that all types of abrogation have occurred.

#### point to ponder

Unlike all other types of abrogation, the claim of abrogation of a verse in the Quranic script is unique; the object of abrogation is a ruling by God with unquestionable authenticity that has been preserved for us *word for word* through specific directives of the Prophet (PBUH), and that we continue to recite regularly.

Conflating the evidence of different types of abrogation is quite prevalent in the abrogation literature. The second category of conflation is also prevalent. The use of the word *naskh* in early narrations oftentimes meant something other than abrogation, yet these narrations have been widely used as evidence of abrogation. This has been repeatedly observed by major pro-abrogation scholars over the centuries. Here are some examples of their comments, in chronological order:

- **Ibn Taymia [172]** stated that the predecessors included in the definition of *naskh* other situations that needed to be reconciled “*such as specializing a generality and restricting an absolute.*” (كتخصيص العام وتقييد المطلق).
- **Al-Shatibi [95]** lists numerous narrations of early Muslims that use the word *naskh* where the meaning is other than abrogation, including narrations by Ibn Abbas (RA) and Ibn Masoud (RA) as well as other narrations by the following generation of scholars.
- **Waliyullah [203]** enumerates the meanings of *naskh* other than abrogation that early Muslims employed, and laments “*the widening of the naskh category with them, the plenty of wandering of the mind in it, and the widening of the circle of disagreement among them.*”
- **Zeid [206]** dismisses an abrogation claim by a fellow of the Prophet (PBUH) who used the word *naskh* in a situation that is not abrogation, but specialization. He then asserts that the meaning of *naskh* for the fellows of

the Prophet (PBUH) “includes specialization of the general” (يشمل تخصيص العام).

A case in point of this conflation is a narration authenticated by [Al-Nasai \[73\]](#) about two Quranic verses that deal with people who experience religious coercion. In the narration, Ibn Abbas (RA) describes the effect of one verse on the other using the words “so He did *naskh* and made an exception from that [ruling]” (فنسخ واستثنى من ذلك), which makes it explicit that he used the word *naskh* in cases where a verse was not abrogated, but where an exception was made from its ruling.

Conflating the different meanings of the word *naskh* by early Muslims is exhibited in one of the earliest surviving books about abrogation. [Ibn Sallam \[171\]](#), who lived in the second *hijri* century<sup>5</sup> defines *naskh* unambiguously as abrogation when he describes the effect on the two verses: “the abrogated among them is not to be used, and the abrogating is the one that God Almighty mandated on people to follow and to apply.” He then lists various ‘abrogation’ claims by different early scholars, many of which are clearly not abrogation.

The verifier of that book added a table listing the claims pertaining to Quranic verses ([Ibn Sallam \[171\]](#)). In the table, he put a column that classifies the claims according to the “meaning of *naskh*”, including meanings that are not abrogation.

It was a contemporary scholar of Ibn Sallam who fixed the definition of *naskh* to that of abrogation once and for all. Imam Al-Shafei did that as part of formalizing the Foundations of Deduction in Islam ([Zeid \[206\]](#)). However, almost all narrations cited as evidence of abrogation belong to the era before Al-Shafei and use the word *naskh* for various meanings other than abrogation.

Because of the prevalence of conflated meanings of the word *naskh* in the abrogation literature, many authors on the subject include sections dedicated to differentiating between abrogation and other common notions such as specialization and exception. [Zeid \[206\]](#) dedicated more than 50 pages in his book to tackling this issue. In Chapter 3 of the present book, the [Elaboration](#) validation rule was articulated as a direct result of this conflation.

In conclusion, the two categories of conflation about types of abrogation and meaning of *naskh* play a key role in parsing the evidence presented by pro-abrogation scholars. The mention of *naskh* by itself may signify some type of elaboration rather than abrogation. If it does signify abrogation, the type of abrogation may or may not be about verses in the Quranic script. This will be a recurring theme in the remainder of this chapter.

<sup>5</sup>Ibn Sallam died in the *hijri* year 224.



## 10.3 Unanimity Claim

One of the consequences of the conflation issues that we presented in the previous section is the claim of unanimity about the Abrogation Doctrine that is put forward by some pro-abrogation scholars. Before we address the substance of this claim, let us briefly discuss the principle of unanimity in Islamic jurisprudence.

The principle of unanimity (إجماع) asserts that if there is unanimity about a juristic issue, it becomes a binding rule in the religion that is not subject to further argument (Shaltout [198]). The principle has had wide agreement among Muslim scholars over the centuries.<sup>6</sup>

However, what constitutes unanimity does not have the same level of agreement. The most common view is that unanimity happens when all scholars at a certain time agree about a ruling, and that this unanimity precludes future scholars from disagreeing. There is a variety of other opinions that consider regional unanimity or sect unanimity, among other restrictions, and even a debate about whether unanimity is at all possible.

Discussing the unanimity principle itself is beyond the scope of this book. The only point we are addressing here is whether unanimity has occurred regarding the validity of the Abrogation Doctrine, namely abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation of verses in the Quranic script. We will consider the most common definition of unanimity for this purpose; unanimity is agreement of all Muslim scholars at some point in time.

It is important to understand the technical nature of this topic. The claim that there is unanimity about something is not the same as saying that the vast majority of scholars agree with it. In the case of a majority, one can still reason and debate, and the outcome of that debate is not predetermined. In the case of unanimity, the principle dictates that the issue in question is no longer subject to discussion of any kind. It is taken as a tenet of the religion and cannot be challenged regardless of the reasoning.

With this in mind, let us discuss the claim of unanimity about the Abrogation Doctrine. One example comes from Farghali [136] who asserts unanimity in a detailed statement:

*“abrogation has been established with unanimity of the fellows [of the Prophet (PBUH)] and [their] followers and those who followed until Abu-Muslim Al-Asfahani came and deviated from that unanimity, therefore his opinion must be expounded till it agrees with the scholars and does not deviate from their unanimity, otherwise he would be an anomaly whose disagreement is not taken*

<sup>6</sup>There are reservations by some key scholars, e.g., Al-Zahiri [121] who states that “It is not possible at all that there would be unanimity of the scholars of the community that is not based on a text” (لا يمكن البتة أن يكون إجماع من علماء الأمة على غير نص). Waliyullah [204] makes a similar statement.

*seriously because unanimity occurred before him.”*

Two remarks about this claim are worth highlighting:

1. Farghali did not specify what type of abrogation the unanimity is about. He bundled all types in one statement, thus conflating the issues. The conflated evidence used by Shula [199] to support abrogation is another example of this bundling. It is easy to claim unanimity that *some type* of abrogation has occurred, e.g., abrogation of previous scripture. It is also easy to claim unanimity if it is about *naskh* in its broader use, e.g., exception and qualification. However, the only relevant question for us is whether there is unanimity that there are *abrogated verses within the Quranic script*, which is what the Abrogation Doctrine is about.
2. Most pro-abrogation scholars did not claim unanimity like Farghali did. Many mentioned that it is the majority view, but they did not invoke the unanimity principle as such. This is worth noting since these scholars supported the Abrogation Doctrine with various arguments. If they believed that there was unanimity, it would be the easiest way to support the doctrine since they knew unanimity would end all arguments as the doctrine becomes a tenet of the religion that is not subject to further debate.

The mention of Al-Asfahani in Farghali’s statement is inevitable, since Al-Asfahani gave the first well-publicized anti-abrogation views, so he cannot be counted in the claimed unanimity about the Abrogation Doctrine. Statements about unanimity on abrogation invariably point to the time before Al-Asfahani’s dissenting view came about.

It is worth noting that Al-Asfahani agrees with the abrogation of previous scripture, and nothing in what we have of his writings addresses the question of abrogation among Prophetic traditions. His dissenting opinion is specifically about the abrogation of verses in the Quranic script. Therefore, the unanimity that Farghali claims Al-Asfahani deviated from must be about the abrogation of verses in the Quranic script. Before we present evidence that there was no unanimity on this specific issue, it is worthwhile to address the basis of Farghali’s claim.

What evidence did Farghali offer to establish unanimity? None. In fact, among all scholars who claimed unanimity on this issue, none has presented any concrete evidence (Nada [190]). They may have relied on the fact that *they do not know* of dissenting views that preceded Al-Asfahani, but they did not present evidence that none existed.

*There is a difference between not knowing of dissent and knowing that there is no dissent.* Al-Zarkashi [126] shows compelling examples. He reports two instances of distinguished scholars who have not heard of dissenting opinions

about certain issues that they addressed, then shows that there had in fact been well-known dissenting views that preceded them. These scholars are of the highest stature; they are Imam Malik and Imam Al-Shafei, two pillars of Islamic scholarship. In the case of Imam Malik, he was quite convinced that there was no dissent and said “*and this is among what has no disagreement between anyone, anywhere*” (وهذا مما لا خلاف فيه بين أحد من الناس، ولا بلد من البلدان).

It is not surprising that even distinguished scholars may not have heard the opinions of some scholars. We are talking about an era where travel and communication were slow and primitive. Before Al-Asfahani, there were three centuries worth of Islamic scholars who spanned vast Islamic territories from Asia to the Middle East, all the way to Spain.

Not all these scholars are known to us by name, much less published for us to recognize. Not all of them were famous enough to be quoted in narrations that survived. Written books were almost unheard of in the first *hijri* century, and were poorly preserved in the subsequent two centuries. There were entire schools of thought that became extinct. Even Al-Asfahani’s writings were barely saved, and he died in the fourth *hijri* century.

Another factor that complicates tallying the dissenters is the repercussions they face when they dissent. After witnessing the revolt against an established scholar as he expressed a dissenting view, Al-Qaradawi [76] laments: “*how many opinions and new, daring views remain imprisoned in the chests of those who have them, until they die with them without anyone hearing about it or anyone conveying it to others*” (كم من آراء واجتهادات جديدة وجريئة تبقى حبيسة في صدور أصحابها، حتى تموت معهم، ولم يسمع بها أحد، ولم ينقلها أحد عنهم).

A case in point is the reaction to the dissent of Al-Asfahani himself about the Abrogation Doctrine. He has been the object of insults and personal attacks over the centuries because of his differing opinion. It is understood why some scholars may choose not to share their dissenting opinion when they disagree, opting to focus on other areas of their scholarship that are less controversial. Even in modern times, Al-Ghali [43] recounts the pressures he personally faced in writing his anti-abrogation book.

With no way of knowing the opinions of every scholar in that era, a claim of unanimity about the Abrogation Doctrine is entirely baseless. As Jumaa [182] phrases it, “*they claimed unanimity where unanimity cannot be established*” (ادعوا الإجماع فيما لا يثبت الإجماع في مثله).

This may be why most pro-abrogation scholars who strongly defended the Abrogation Doctrine never used a claim of unanimity as part of their defense. For example, Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] starts his exposition of abrogation by asserting that it is agreed by the majority (جمهور) and reasons about it without invoking the unanimity principle.

Not only do the claimants of unanimity have no case to support their claim, but there is also some evidence dating back to the time of the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) that suggests that there was no unanimity about the notion of abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation of Quranic verses. We start with a narration that was authenticated by [Al-Bukhari](#) [35].

In the narration, Abdullah Ibn Al-Zubair (RA) asks Uthman ibn Affan (RA), who had tasked the transcription of the entire Quran, about verse 2:240,<sup>7</sup> saying “*the other verse abrogated it, so why do you write it or leave it [in the Quranic script]?*” Uthman (RA) responds: “*O son of my brother,*<sup>8</sup> *I do not change anything of it from its place.*” قُلْتُ لِعُثْمَانَ بْنِ عَفَّانَ: وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا [البقرة: ٢٤٠]، قَالَ: قَدْ نَسَخْتُهَا آيَةً أُخْرَى. فَلِمَ تَكْتُبُهَا أَوْ تَدْعُهَا؟ قَالَ: يَا ابْنَ أَخِي، لَا أُغَيِّرُ شَيْئًا مِنْهُ مِنْ مَكَانِهِ.

In analyzing this narration, there is one question to ask here. Does the narration show that Ibn Al-Zubair (RA) accepts the notion of abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation of a Quranic verse? If he did, he would not ask Uthman (RA) to exclude a verse that he believed was abrogated from the Quranic script. This is the only point we are making here.

Whether Ibn Al-Zubair (RA) was right or wrong that this particular verse is abrogated, or that it should be included in the Quranic script, is not the issue here. The issue is that he disagreed with the *notion* of an abrogated verse within the Quranic script. This shows that there was no unanimity on this issue going back to the era of the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH). That era was almost three centuries before Al-Asfahani’s famous dissent.

There is other scattered evidence of dissent. [Al-Jassas](#) [56], who died less than fifty years after Al-Asfahani died, mentions in his book “[those] who disallow the existence of abrogation in the Quran mentioned ...” (وذكر من ... أبي وجود النسخ في القرآن ...) before he articulates their view and counters it with his own view. He is not talking about Al-Asfahani since their view that *naskh* signifies ‘copy’ not ‘abrogate’ is different from Al-Asfahani’s view about ‘abrogation of previous scripture’. Al-Jassas does not specify who these dissenters are or when they mentioned this view.

The final example of dissent is more specific about who dissented but less specific about the type of abrogation that is subject to dissent. It is referred to briefly in [Farghali](#) [136] where he quotes some researchers arguing against abrogation in the Quran then saying “*and this is Ubayy ibn Kaab (RA), and he belongs to the glorious fellows [of the Prophet (PBUH)], and he does not speak [approvingly] of abrogation in the Quran*”.

What is the basis of this assertion? If we look at narrations about abroga-

<sup>7</sup>Verse 2:240 is about residence rights of widows. See the discussion in §4.1.

<sup>8</sup>Customary term of endearment, not an actual nephew.

tion that are attributed to Ubayy (RA), many of them have not been found to be authentic. However, we have a narration attributed to Umar (RA) that was authenticated<sup>9</sup> by Al-Bukhari [35]. In the narration, Umar (RA) says:

*“The best reader [of the Quran] among us is Ubayy ... and we leave out of the words of Ubayy since Ubayy says ‘I do not leave out anything I heard from the Messenger of God (PBUH)’, and God Almighty said ‘Whatever verse We may abrogate or cause to be forgotten’.”* (أَقْرَأُونَا أُبَيًّا، وَأَقْضَانَا عَلِيًّا، وَإِنَّا لَنَدْعُ مِنْ قَوْلِ أُبَيٍّ؛) (وَذَاكَ أَنَّ أُبَيًّا يَقُولُ: لَا أَدْعُ شَيْئًا سَمِعْتُهُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَقَدْ قَالَ تَعَالَى: مَا (نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا

It is clear that the disagreement between Ubayy (RA) and Umar (RA) is about *abrogation* of Quranic verses, rather than verses that were ‘caused to be forgotten’. If they were forgotten, Ubayy (RA) would not be able to include them even if he wanted to.

Al-Aini [8] comments on this narration by saying that *“Ubayy does not speak [approvingly] of the abrogation of a thing from the Quran”* (لا يقول) (أُبَيٍّ بِنَسْخِ شَيْءٍ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ). Al-Aini further comments that Umar (RA) countered by quoting verse 2:106 *“whatever verse We may abrogate”* as evidence that abrogation happened in some cases.

There are parallels between this narration and the previous narration by Ibn Al-Zubair (RA). Both Ibn Al-Zubair (RA) and Umar (RA) wanted to keep abrogated verses out of the Quran. This goes against the core premise of the Abrogation Doctrine, namely *“abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation”* since keeping an abrogated verse out of the Quran means that it will not be recited.

In the case of Ibn Al-Zubair (RA), he was talking about verse 2:240 that is claimed abrogated in ruling only. Therefore, the Abrogation Doctrine would mandate including it in the Quranic script contrary to what he suggested.

In the case of Umar (RA), he used the Quranic passage *“Whatever verse We may abrogate”* in 2:106 to argue for excluding the abrogated verses. This means that he interpreted the passage differently from the pro-abrogation interpretation of including the abrogated verses but substituting their ruling.

Based on all the points we discussed, the conclusion is that the claim of unanimity about the validity of the Abrogation Doctrine does not hold. The claimants did not provide evidence, and there is more than one piece of counter-evidence as we have shown. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon in the literature for a claim of unanimity to be made without merit as a way to settle an argument. For example, in his support of the abrogation claim of

<sup>9</sup>Although the chain of narrators contains Sufyan Al-Thawri who has been criticized as we elaborate in §10.4.1, we are taking Al-Bukhari’s judgment that the narration is authentic.

verse 2:240, [Al-Qurtubi](#) [80] asserts: “so unanimity has been attained” (فانعقد الإجماع) that the abrogation claim is valid. It is a matter of record that this abrogation claim is opposed by many major scholars and is now commonly rejected (see §4.1).

In this section, we have addressed the claim of unanimity about the Abrogation Doctrine, which would be treated as a binding juristic tool if it were established. The fact that there is no unanimity does not mean that there is no majority opinion. In fact, a clear majority of scholars approve of the Abrogation Doctrine, even if there is now a notable minority that rejects it as we will detail in §11.3.

How could such a clear majority be all wrong in their opinion? This is a legitimate question that needs to be addressed in its own right, even when there is no unanimity and even when the doctrine has been refuted based on evidence. We will address this question in the dedicated final chapter of this book (Chapter 12), properly titled *How Did This Happen?*

## 10.4 Narrations by Early Muslims

The bulk of the remaining evidence used to support the Abrogation Doctrine is the body of narrations about abrogation by early Muslims. We have already discussed three of these narrations in the previous sections. Let us summarize the conclusions about them.

The narration that separates recitation from ruling (see §10.1) was the only one that shows an opinion that directly supports the Abrogation Doctrine. In addition to being an opinion and not being attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) or his Fellows (RA), its evidentiary value is further compromised because of issues with its sole narrator, Ibn Abi-Najeeh. The narrations by Ibn Al-Zubair (RA) and Umar (RA) in §10.3 had no issues with authentication, but provided no direct support for the Abrogation Doctrine.

We will go through the remaining narrations to evaluate their evidentiary value. The bulk of these narrations are attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA), and we have a subsection dedicated to them. We will address the rest of the narrations in another subsection. As a special case, we will dedicate the first subsection to a narration that is cited in almost all the early books about abrogation (the ‘doomed and dooming’ story), where we will analyze it in detail.

It should be emphasized that none of these narrations quotes the Prophet (ﷺ).<sup>10</sup> Some quote his Fellows (RA), and others quote the next generation of early Muslims. In our rebuttal of the evidentiary value of these narrations,

<sup>10</sup>There are purported Prophetic narrations, with questionable authenticity, that are often cited by pro-abrogation scholars which address verses that were not included in the Quranic script (see side note 33), hence they are not relevant to the Abrogation Doctrine.

there are three compelling issues:

1. **Conflation.** This issue which we discussed in detail in §10.2 strongly affects every narration by early Muslims that uses the Arabic word *naskh*. The issue also affects narrations that use more specific words for abrogation but do not state that the object of abrogation is a verse in the Quranic script.
2. **Authenticity.** In many cases, pro-abrogation scholars put forward narrations of questionable authenticity that support the Abrogation Doctrine. A case in point is the narration attributed to Ali (RA) about verse 58:12 that we discussed in detail in §5.1.1. There are many other examples. While we normally do not address narrations that have not been found to be authentic by narration scholars, we will have to address some of these narrations that are widely cited for completeness.
3. **Authority.** Narrations by early Muslims that do not quote the Prophet (PBUH) directly, even if they quote his Fellows (RA), may be expressing their personal opinions which would not be binding. The fact that these opinions are not binding is agreed upon even by pro-abrogation scholars, e.g., [Al-Amidi \[18\]](#). Some pro-abrogation scholars go further; they specifically *require* an authentic quote from the Prophet (PBUH) himself to accept any claim of abrogation ([Zeid \[206\]](#) and [Al-Arid \[20\]](#)).

These three issues, and particularly the first one about conflation, will be repeated often as we discuss individual narrations and rebut their evidentiary value. We will not repeat the narrations already addressed in Part II when we discussed individual abrogation claims.

### 10.4.1 ‘Doomed and Dooming’ Story

We start with a narration that merits its own section, not because of its evidentiary value, but because of its prominence in almost every book about abrogation since the early centuries. For example, it appears on the first page of the book by [Al-Andalusi \[19\]](#), on the third page of the book by [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[148\]](#), and on the second page of the book by [Al-Karmi \[60\]](#).

There is usually a comment in these books that the narration proves the importance of knowing the abrogated and abrogating verses in the Quran, so it is considered evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine. We will address two questions here: Is this narration authentic? If so, what does it signify?

- **Is this narration authentic?** The most reliable version of the narration appears in [Abu-Khaythama \[5\]](#), a book that was verified by narration scholar Al-Albani who authenticated that narration in a footnote. In the narration,

it is reported that Ali (RA) “passed by a storyteller and said ‘can you tell the abrogating from the abrogated?’ He answered ‘no’ so he [Ali (RA)] said: ‘you are doomed, and you are dooming [those who are listening to you].’ ” (مرّ بقاصٍّ). (، فقال : أتعرفُ النَّاسِخَ مِنَ الْمَنْسُوخِ ؟ قال : لا ، قال : هلَكْتَ وأهلكْتَ). It is perhaps the stern warning in the words ‘doomed’ and ‘dooming’ that makes this narration frequently cited in the context of how important abrogation is.

Al-Albani, who authenticated this version, is a modern scholar. Some earlier scholars had reservations about two persons in the chain of narrators. Sufyan Al-Thawri is classified by narration scholar Ibn Hajar [158] as an imposer,<sup>11</sup> and described by Al-Suyuti [103] as ‘famous for imposing’. The other narrator is Abu-Hasseen who Ibn Hajar [157] says he may have imposed.

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There are various other versions of this narration of questionable authenticity. Not only are there issues with the chains of narrators, but there are also three issues in the texts of these narrations that raise further doubt about their authenticity as a whole:

1. In some versions, the story involves Ibn Abbas (RA), not Ali (RA). It is not credible that the same exact event with such a unique dialog happened twice with two different persons.
2. There is also confusion about who the storyteller was; more than one name was mentioned.
3. Sometimes the person being addressed is not a storyteller, but a judge. This aspect is particularly suspect since the Arabic words for storyteller (قاص - *Qass*) and judge (قاض - *Qadd*) have distinct pronunciations, but have identical script except for a single dot. This may suggest that someone in the chain of narrators misread it from a document rather than actually hearing it from the person he claims to be narrating from.

Anyway, we at least have the above version of the narration that is somewhat reliable. We will focus on this version when we analyze what the narration signifies and what evidentiary value it may provide in support of the Abrogation Doctrine.

• **What does the narration signify?** First, let us elaborate on the notion of a storyteller. In Islamic tradition, storytellers are people who tell religious stories to their audiences, mainly about the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Fellows (RA). Storytellers are not highly regarded in the literature, as there are persistent accusations that they lie to make the stories more interesting and appeal to their audiences. There are books written about their lies, including one by

<sup>11</sup>As mentioned earlier, the term ‘imposers’ is used to describe those who quote someone as if they heard the quote from him when in fact they did not.



[Ibn Taymia \[174\]](#) that focuses on made-up narrations that storytellers falsely attributed to the Prophet (PBUH).

What was the reason that Ali (RA) asked the storyteller about the abrogated and abrogating? It is not clear from the wording of the narration, but what is relevant to the Abrogation Doctrine is whether the question pertains to abrogated verses in the Quranic script or to something else. This cannot be ascertained from the wording of the narration.

However, we have a clue from what is known about storytellers. As we have just mentioned, storytellers tell stories about the Prophet (PBUH) and often invoke narrations, so this would be consistent with the abrogation question being about Prophetic narrations. [Al-Jaabari \[53\]](#) talks about the reprimand of storytellers who do not know the abrogated and abrogating, and the context he mentions is interpreting the Quran *and Prophetic traditions*.

In addition to the rationale that the abrogation type involving a storyteller would be about Prophetic narrations, nothing in the wording that Ali (RA) used would indicate that he was talking about the abrogation of Quranic verses. Furthermore, *naskh* may well be used for meanings other than abrogation, as was customary in that era. Counting this as evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine is a leap; another manifestation of conflated evidence.

What is striking about the ‘doomed and dooming’ narration is how prominently it is featured in pro-abrogation books as if the evidence it provides *for the Abrogation Doctrine* is strong. Between the questionable authenticity of the various versions of the narration, the vagueness of what type of abrogation it is talking about, and whether *naskh* is used in the sense of abrogation, the evidentiary value of the narration is much weaker than the importance it is given.

This may be the reason why the most comprehensive book about abrogation in the Quran, written by pro-abrogation scholar [Zeid \[206\]](#) in the modern era, cited and sourced numerous narrations about abrogation, but did not mention the ‘doomed and dooming’ narration at all; not once in almost 1000 pages of material.

### 10.4.2 Narrations by Ibn Abbas (RA)

The narrations about abrogation that are attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) outnumber the rest of the narrations on the subject by all other early Muslims. There are issues with the authenticity of many of these narrations. For example, [Zeid \[206\]](#) provides a lengthy critique of the credibility of Al-Kalbi and Muqatil ibn Sulayman, two of the narrators of Ibn Abbas (RA) about abrogation. Similarly, [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#) laments that narrators change the wording of what they quote according to their understanding as he rejects a narration attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA).

When we consider only those narrations that have been authenticated by narration scholars, Ibn Abbas (RA) still has the majority of them. For example, among the authenticated narrations about a specific abrogation claim in Appendix A.3, Ibn Abbas (RA) has 67 out of 83.

Given his stature as a revered fellow of the Prophet (PBUH), this body of narrations is a major part of the evidence that pro-abrogation scholars use in support of the Abrogation Doctrine. The main issue that diminishes the evidentiary value of these narrations is conflation; Ibn Abbas (RA) routinely used the word *naskh* to mean any amendment that a verse makes about another, such as exception or qualification which are not abrogation.

The evidence of this is overwhelming, including the explicit evidence that we mentioned before: Al-Nasai [73] reports a narration by Ibn Abbas (RA) saying “so He did *naskh* and made an exception from that [ruling]” (فنسخ واستثنى من ذلك) in an abrogation claim of verse 16:106. This is not the only instance. Abu-Dawoud [3] reports another narration attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) about an abrogation claim of verse 24:31 where he uses the exact same words.<sup>12</sup>

Numerous scholars pointed this out and took it into consideration as they evaluated the opinions of Ibn Abbas (RA) about many abrogation claims. As pro-abrogation scholar Zeid [206] phrases it,

*“...it is not of scholarly fidelity at all to quote a narration by Ibn Abbas (RA) –or anyone else– in which he states that a verse abrogated another although there is no relation between the two verses other than one being an exception from the other, then use that to deduce the abrogation of one verse by the other in the sense that has later become the conventional definition of abrogation.”*

Conflation, mainly, but also questionable authenticity and other issues caused a number of pro-abrogation scholars to go against narrations attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) about abrogation. For example,

- Ibn Al-Jawzi [147] rejects the abrogation claim of verse 4:71 even after including a narration that supports it by Ibn Abbas (RA), as he casts doubt about its content. He rejects another narration claiming abrogation of verse 9:39 that is attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) and two other early Muslim scholars (Ibn Al-Jawzi [147]). He does not mince words as he describes the opinion expressed in the narration as “*this is not correct*” (هذا ليس بصحيح), and points out that there is no conflict that warrants a claim of abrogation.

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<sup>12</sup>The verifiers of the book mentioned in a footnote that the narration about verse 24:31 is rated ‘sound’ (حسن); not quite the ‘authentic’ level of the narration about verse 16:106.

- Another claim of abrogation, that of the forgiveness aspect of verses 25:68-70, was supported by narrations of Ibn Abbas (RA) that assert that verse 4:93 is the final word in the matter (thus superseding forgiveness). However, this conclusion is rejected by most pro-abrogation scholars<sup>13</sup> even though two of these narrations were authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#) and [Muslim \[189\]](#).
- An entire list of narrations that are attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) are dismissed by [Al-Shatibi \[95\]](#), one by one, based on the conflation issue and other issues such as the object of abrogation being a statement of fact, not a ruling (see the [Facts](#) validation rule).
- Even earlier scholars made similar remarks. [Makki \[184\]](#) concludes that there are many statements attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) where exception is presented as abrogation which is “*figurative, not true*” (مجاز لا حقيقة).

### Key Point



The use of the word *naskh* for meanings other than abrogation was a legitimate linguistic use in the era of early Muslims, including Ibn Abbas (RA). What is not legitimate is for others to use narrations from that era that include the word *naskh* as evidence of abrogation.

The conflation issue colors all narrations about specific abrogation claims. We have already discussed the most important of these narrations when we analyzed individual abrogation claims in detail in Part [II](#) of this book. We will now address two narrations by Ibn Abbas (RA) about abrogation in general.

The first narration reports the interpretation by Ibn Abbas (RA) of the first part of verse 2:106 “Whatever verse We may abrogate”. He interprets it as ‘whatever verse We may substitute’ ([Al-Tabari \[107\]](#)). He interprets the next part of the verse “or cause to be forgotten” as ‘or leave it, not substitute it’ ([Al-Tabari \[107\]](#)). Nothing in this wording separates the ruling from the recitation, so no evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine can be inferred.

This observation is not unique to the interpretation of verse 2:106 by Ibn Abbas (RA). In fact, other than the interpretation attributed to the fellows of Ibn Masoud that was discussed in detail in [§10.1](#), none of the interpretations of that era separates the ruling from the recitation. To the contrary, some go against that separation as we will present in the evidence *against* the Abrogation Doctrine in Chapter [11](#).

The second narration is cited by [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) as he interprets part of verse 2:269 “... and whoever is given wisdom has certainly been given much

<sup>13</sup>See the discussion in [§7.6](#).

﴿... وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ...﴾ [البقرة : ٢٥٩] "good ..." In the narration, Ibn Abbas (RA) interprets 'wisdom' to mean "knowing the Quran, its abrogating and abrogated, ..." where he uses the word *naskh* that was translated to abrogation. Given the customary uses of the word *naskh* by Ibn Abbas (RA), this could mean 'knowing the verses that amend other verses' through specialization, exception, etc. Certainly, the wording does not provide *evidence* for the Abrogation Doctrine.

This last narration is somewhat similar to the version of the 'doomed and dooming' story that is attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) (§10.4.1) in that it shows the importance of knowing about 'naskh'. Authenticity issues aside, there is no evidence that either narration uses that word to mean actual abrogation rather than other forms of qualification.

### 10.4.3 Other Narrations

We now address the rest of the narrations cited by pro-abrogation scholars as evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine. For some of these narrations, it is clear that they do not address the abrogation of verses within the Quranic script. A famous example is a narration attributed to Aisha (RA) where she mentions verses about nursing a child that are not in the Quranic script (Muslim [189]). Among other examples are narrations attributed to Ubayy (RA) about verses that are no longer in Quranic Chapter 33 - سورة الأحزاب (Ibn Hanbal [160]).<sup>14</sup> We will not go through these narrations here since they are not relevant to the Abrogation Doctrine as we defined it.

The remaining narrations by early Muslims that arguably provide evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine mostly belong to the generation that followed the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH). Respected scholar Mujahid belongs to that group and he is often cited in matters of abrogation.

The verifier of the book that collected the exegesis of Mujahid [187] includes five abrogation claims in narrations that are attributed to Mujahid and concludes that Mujahid counts "specifying a generality, detailing a brief, restricting an absolute, and emphasizing a point, counts all of that as *naskh*, the same way the scholars of his era do." (تخصيص العام، وتفصيل المجمع، وتقييد المطلق،) (وتوكيد الأمر، يُعدُّ ذلك كله نسخاً، شأنه في هذا شأن علماء عصره).

Mujahid died at the onset of the second *hijri* century. He had interacted with Ibn Abbas (RA) and was still alive when Imam Abu-Hanifa was born, so he spanned an early era in Islamic scholarship. The above statement "counts all of that as *naskh*, the same way the scholars of his era do" would cover almost all narrations about abrogation by early Muslims. Thus the conflation

<sup>14</sup>These narrations have questionable authenticity and will be discussed under other types of abrogation in Appendix A.7.

issue that was prominent in the narrations of Ibn Abbas (RA) in the previous subsection applies as much to the narrations of this subsection; perhaps even more because of an added facet to this conflation.

This facet is using *naskh* for “emphasizing a point” that was included in the list of meanings that abrogation narrations of that era use. This is corroborated by Al-Nahhas [71] when he dismisses a narration about an abrogation claim of verse 42:5. He postulates that what the narration meant by *naskh* is in fact ‘copy’ not ‘abrogate’. Linguistically, *naskh* can certainly be used to mean ‘copy’, but conflating ‘copy’ with ‘abrogate’ is extreme in the sense that they point in opposite directions; ‘copy’ implies that the verse was reiterated rather than annulled.

Finally, other than the narrations that were discussed in Part II, we are now left with two narrations by early Muslims that address abrogation in general, which pro-abrogation scholars have put forward as evidence of the Abrogation Doctrine.

The first narration is attributed to a fellow of the Prophet (PBUH). Huza-yfa Ibn Al-Yaman (RA) asserts that anyone who issues edicts for people must be qualified, and one of the qualifications is to “*know the abrogated in the Quran*” (Al-Nahhas [71]). Again, the word *naskh* is used and Huzayfa (RA) may be talking about verses that were qualified by other verses. This narration is another example of the theme about the importance of knowing *naskh*. However, like the other narrations, it does not provide specific evidence that it is talking about *abrogation*.

The second narration was authenticated by Muslim [189] and quotes Ibn Al-Shakhrir saying “the Prophet (PBUH) had narrations abrogate each other like parts of the Quran abrogate each other,” using the word *naskh* which we translated as ‘abrogate’ (كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَنْسَخُ حَدِيثَهُ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا، كَمَا (يَنْسَخُ الْقُرْآنُ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا)). Ibn Al-Shakhrir was not a Fellow of the Prophet (PBUH); he died in the early second *hijri* century. In the narration, he is expressing his own view, and he may well be using *naskh* not in the sense of abrogation as was common in his generation.



In this chapter, we have presented a rebuttal for evidence put forward by pro-abrogation scholars from sources other than the Quran in support of the Abrogation Doctrine. This complements the previous chapter where we discussed evidence from the Quran itself. In the next chapter, we look at the other side of the coin, namely the evidence *against* the Abrogation Doctrine from all sources. In the final chapter, we address the compelling question of how a doctrine that is readily refutable managed to survive in Islamic thought for more than fourteen centuries.

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## Chapter 11

# Counter-Evidence

The refutation of all abrogation claims in Part II proved the case in principal: the Abrogation Doctrine is not valid. The goal of Part III has been to alleviate concerns about other evidence outside of individual abrogation claims that seems relevant to whether the doctrine is valid.

In the previous two chapters, we addressed concerns that the pro-abrogation camp may have about evidence *for* the doctrine; how the doctrine could not be valid given that evidence. In this chapter, we address concerns that the anti-abrogation camp has had all along about evidence *against* the doctrine; how the doctrine could be valid given that evidence.

Counter-evidence to the Abrogation Doctrine comes from the Quran itself, from a Prophetic narration, and from the lack of designation of abrogated verses. We will present each of these elements in detail. In addition, we will highlight the many anti-abrogation voices after having given the pro-abrogation voices the lion's share of our attention in all previous chapters.

It should be emphasized that we are not trying to *prove* anything here. All the proof that is needed to refute the Abrogation Doctrine has already been done in Part II.

### 11.1 Quranic Verses

Whether you accept the Abrogation Doctrine or reject it, there is no dispute that the doctrine has implications about the Quran. It implies that there is a conflict between some verses within the Quranic script that cannot be reconciled, otherwise none would be abrogated. It also implies the annulment of some verses as a result, so they need not be followed any longer.

The question here is not whether there is wisdom that would justify these implications. We are only addressing the fact that these are inescapable implications of the Abrogation Doctrine, for better or for worse.

Because of this, if there is evidence that no conflict exists between verses or that no verses are annulled, that would be evidence against the Abrogation Doctrine. It turns out that such evidence exists, actually within statements in the Quran itself. We will discuss these Quranic statements in detail in this section.

A third implication that we will also discuss is the uncertainty that the Abrogation Doctrine has caused, and what the Quran says about such uncertainty. A fourth piece of evidence from the Quran, verse 22:52 about Satanic cast, will be discussed in its own section (§11.4) because of its unique role.

### 11.1.1 Verse Against Conflict

The first implication of the Abrogation Doctrine that we address here is that some verses in the Quranic script would have to have irreconcilable conflict. Otherwise, there would be no reason to invoke abrogation. As we have seen in Part II, the conflicts are only perceived and can be reconciled upon careful analysis of what the verses say precisely.

If the Abrogation Doctrine had held, the implication would have been that such conflicts exist and are real. There is a statement in the Quran itself that goes against this implication, hence it goes against the Abrogation Doctrine in principle,

﴿ أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْفُرْقَانَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ﴾ [النساء : ٨٢]

[4:82] Don't they ponder the Quran? If it had been from [any] other than God, they would have found in it much disagreement.

First, a linguistic remark about not finding “much disagreement” in the Quran. Taken literally as written in English, that would seem to imply that there may still be *some* disagreement. In Arabic, however, the negation of emphasis functions as an emphasis of the negation, so “not much disagreement” actually signifies “no disagreement at all”.

For example, ﴿ ... وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا ﴾ [مریم : ٦٤] [19:64] “... and God is not ‘very forgetful’ ”. Here, the phrase ‘not very forgetful’ semantically signifies ‘not forgetful at all’, which is obvious since this is about the Almighty. Another example is ﴿ ... وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ ﴾ [فُصِّلَتْ : ٤٦] [41:46] “... and God is not ‘very unjust’ toward the worshippers”, which obviously means He is ‘not unjust’



at all'. The same construct is sometimes used in English, e.g., saying "I am not very happy about this" to mean "I am not happy at all". It is sometimes called 'emphasis by understatement'.

Thus, verse 4:82 is saying that the Quran does not have disagreements at all and that those who ponder what it says will arrive at that conclusion. The perception of conflicts is because of a failure to think deeply about the verses to see that there is no real conflict. Indeed, some abrogation claims need that level of deep thinking to understand the subtleties that lead to proper reconciliation, as we have seen in the 10 claims we discussed from §3.4 to §6.1 for example.

Although this is an anti-abrogation view, the words of some pro-abrogation exegetes when they interpret verse 4:82 align with this view:

- [Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#) states that "*the contradiction is in your understanding; the contradiction is not in the Quran*" (التناقض في فهمك أنت وليس التناقض في القرآن).
- [Al-Khazen \[62\]](#) interprets the verse and concludes "*shouldn't they cogitate on the Quran so that they know that there is no contradiction in it*" (أفلا يتفكرون في القرآن فيعرفوا بعدم التناقض فيه).

Other pro-abrogation exegetes make statements that focus on the conclusion that there are no conflicts within the Quran:

- [Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#) interprets the verse, saying that the Quran has "*neither contrast nor conflict*" (لا تضاد ولا تعارض).
- [Ibn Atiya \[154\]](#) interprets the verse, stating that the Quran is pure from "*contradiction and negation that cannot be reunited*" (التناقض والتنافي الذي لا يُمكن جَمْعُهُ). [Al-Thaalibi \[111\]](#) concurs, using the same words.
- [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) quotes two statements as he interprets the verse. The first statement says that if the Quran had been from someone other than God, "*its rulings would have had disagreement*" (لاختلفت أحكامه). The specific mention of 'rulings' which are what the conflicts are about in the Abrogation Doctrine is notable. The second statement says that "*the Quran does not have a part that belies another part, and does not have a part that contradicts another part*" (إن القرآن لا يُكذِّب بعضه بعضاً، ولا يَنقُضُ بعضه بعضاً).

Therefore, there is clearly a legitimate interpretation of the verse that goes against the implication of the Abrogation Doctrine that there is irreconcilable conflict between some verses in the Quranic script.

### 11.1.2 Verses Against Annulment

If conflict is the cause for invoking abrogation, annulment is the effect of it. Annulment of a verse means that there is no longer a mandate to follow it. Regardless of what the cause is, the end result is that the Quranic script would have verses that are no longer valid. This is another inescapable implication of the Abrogation Doctrine.

Al-Asfahani was the first known scholar to raise objections to the Abrogation Doctrine based on this implication. He interpreted a specific Quranic statement as excluding the possibility that there would be verses in the Quranic script that are no longer valid.

﴿... وَإِنَّهُ لَكِتَابٌ عَزِيزٌ ۖ لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ ۖ﴾  
[فُصِّلَتْ: ٤١-٤٢]

[41:41-42] ... And indeed, it is a mighty Book. *Battel* does not come to it from before or after ...

We left the word *الباطل* (*battel*) in the verse untranslated because its significance warrants careful treatment. It is usually translated to ‘falsehood’ and its opposite, *الحق* (*haqq*) is translated to ‘truth’. The linguistic origin of the two words, however, provides an added insight.

Linguistically, the contrast between the two words is based on whether something would last (*haqq*) or not (*battel*). The use of these words for ‘truth’ and ‘falsehood’ stems from the fact that the truth lasts while falsehood doesn’t. The Arabic dictionary *Standards of the Language* (مقاييس اللغة) describes *battel* as “something being gone, and lack of its staying and persistence” - ذهاب الشيء - (Al-Qazwini [79]).

When something is abrogated, it is no longer valid so it becomes *battel*. This is a linguistic matter, not just an anti-abrogation view, and it is actually supported by a number of pro-abrogation scholars:

1. In his interpretation of “*battel* does not come to [the Quran] from before or after ...” [41:42], Al-Razi [83] states explicitly that “Al-Asfahani is justified in using this verse as evidence that abrogation in [the Quran] does not exist because abrogation is annulment so if abrogation had entered it, *battel* would have come to it from after, and that conflicts with this verse” (على خلاف هذه الآية).
2. Al-Nasafi [72] gives a pointed interpretation of verse 41:42. He says that it means that the Quran does not have “*substitution or contradiction ... in any facet*” (التبديل أو التناقض ... بوجه من الوجوه).

3. As [Al-Zurqani \[128\]](#) tries to rebut the evidentiary value of this verse, he states that it is not evidence against all types of abrogation, but he concedes that it is evidence against “*abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation*” (نسخ الحكم دون التلاوة), which is the only concern of the Abrogation Doctrine. [Al-Arid \[20\]](#) and [Ismail \[181\]](#) concur, using the same words, and [Farghali \[136\]](#) concedes the same point.
4. The understanding of *battel* this way is evident in Al-Tabari’s interpretation of another verse, 22:52. The verse describes another act of abrogation, and [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) uses a verb form of *battel* (أَبْطَلَهُ) to characterize what was done to the object of that abrogation. [Al-Zamakhshari \[124\]](#), [Al-Thaalabi \[110\]](#), [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#), [Al-Baydawi \[31\]](#), [Al-Baghawi \[23\]](#), [Al-Khazen \[62\]](#), [Al-Nasafi \[72\]](#), and [Al-Maqdesi \[68\]](#) interpret it the same way. No doubt about this understanding.

Other pro-abrogation scholars offer different interpretations of *battel* in this verse, e.g., [Zeid \[206\]](#). However, the above interpretation follows the principle of “*taking the absolute of the language*” (الأخذ بِمُطْلَقِ اللّغة) which means that the linguistic meaning of the words takes precedence over alternative interpretations ([M. Al-Zahabi \[118\]](#)). What is clear is that we have a legitimate interpretation of verses 41:41-42 that goes against the annulment implication of the Abrogation Doctrine.

There is another aspect of annulment that is also countered by a Quranic statement. Since annulment in the Abrogation Doctrine applies only to the ruling of the abrogated verse, not its recitation, Muslims regularly recite these abrogated verses as a normal part of worship even as they intend not to follow them ([Al-Zalmi \[123\]](#)). This goes against

﴿كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾ [الصّٰفّ: ٣]

[61:3] It is greatly detested in the sight of God that you say what you do not do.

First, we establish that the statement against saying something and not doing it is general. Again, the generality is what “*taking the absolute of the language*” (الأخذ بِمُطْلَقِ اللّغة) dictates, since the wording of the verse is not restricted. However, the context of the verse has to do with fighting in particular, so do exegetes interpret the verse in the more general sense? We have alluded to that in §10.1, but here are more details.

1. Exegete [Ibn Atiya \[154\]](#) is explicit about the generality of verse 61:3 as he comments on other specialized interpretations, saying “*the ruling in this verse remains for all times, and everyone who says what he does not do would be detested, contaminated in what he says*” (حكم هذه الآية باق)

- (غابر الدهر، وكل من يقول ما لا يفعل، فهو ممقوت مذق الكلام [111] quotes in his exegesis as well.
2. [Qutb \[191\]](#) analyzes the context of the verse as he interprets it, and states that what the verse says is broader than this context, and goes to “its general indications” (إلى مدلولاتها العامة).
  3. [Ibn Ashur \[153\]](#) does a linguistic analysis of the preceding verse “... why do you say what you do not do?” [61:2] ﴿... لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾ [الْصَّاف: ٢] and concludes that the prohibition on saying what one does not do is general, regardless of any reason or any excuse (لأي سبب أو لأيّة علة).
  4. As [Al-Zamakhshari \[124\]](#) interprets the verse, he cites a story about an early Muslim who was asked to give a talk and responded “do you order me to say what I do not do so I can expedite being detested by God?” The story does not restrict his statement to any particular context. [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#) and [Al-Nasafi \[72\]](#) cite the same story.
  5. [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) interpreted verses 61:2-3 in the generality that the Quranic words convey, saying: “why do you say something then not follow it up with deed? Your deeds are different from your words. God greatly detests your saying something that you don’t do.”

These are all pro-abrogation exegetes, so they do not have a hidden agenda against the Abrogation Doctrine. The verse is explicit in what it says, and they recognize that the wording does not restrict its scope. In its generality, it goes against abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation, so it provides evidence against the Abrogation Doctrine.

### 11.1.3 Verse Against Uncertainty

The final implication of the Abrogation Doctrine that we address here is an uncertainty that the doctrine caused. It is the uncertainty about which verses in the Quranic script are valid and which verses are not. Uncertainty is a separate concern from annulment since it is not an argument about *whether* verses are annulled, but about not knowing *which* verses are annulled. Here are some manifestations of this uncertainty.

First, there is the sheer number of abrogation claims and the broad disagreements about them over the centuries. There are 432 claims that we have found in scholarly books, as tallied in Appendix A.2. There are vastly different views by pro-abrogation scholars about which claims are valid. It is a matter of record that every single abrogation claim has been rejected by at least one recognized pro-abrogation scholar, as we have shown in §3.1.

Second, there are the narrations about abrogation claims. Even narrations that are rated authentic (Appendix A.3) contribute to that uncertainty. For example, there are multiple authentic narrations both **for and against** the abrogation of verse 2:184. There is also **an authentic narration** by Ibn Abbas (RA) asserting that verse 2:234 abrogated verse 2:240 and **another authentic narration** by him asserting abrogation the other way around, with verse 2:240 abrogating verse 2:234 instead.

So the question naturally arises: which verses do we know for certain are abrogated, and which verses do we know for certain are not abrogated? The reality of the Abrogation Doctrine is that many verses are claimed abrogated by some scholars while claimed unabrogated by other scholars. If we do not know for certain whether these verses are abrogated, we have uncertainty about their validity. There is no escaping that conclusion.

Al-Zahiri [121] addresses this issue and states unequivocally that such uncertainty cannot possibly exist, saying “*It cannot at all be that God Almighty left us in blindness and loss, not knowing forever is this ruling abrogated or not abrogated? This is something we were spared from ever occurring*” (لا يجوز البتة أن يكون الله تعالى تركنا في عمياء وضلالة، لا ندري معها أبداً، هل هذا الحكم منسوخ أو غير المنسوخ؟ هذا أمر قد أئنا وقوعه أبداً). Zeid [206] quotes this statement by Al-Zahiri and concurs with it. Both are pro-abrogation scholars, so they are not just trying to set an impossible standard in order to dismiss the Abrogation Doctrine.

The Quran itself concurs. Let us quote the relevant verse first, then discuss its interpretation carefully.

﴿ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢]

[2:2] This Book - there is no uncertainty in it ...

First, a linguistic remark. The Arabic word *rayb* (ريب - uncertainty) in the verse is sometimes translated to ‘doubt’ instead, though there is another Arabic word for ‘doubt’ (*shakk* - شك). The difference is subtle, where *rayb* is closer to the heart (Al-Shayea [98]) and *shakk* is closer to the mind, hence our choice of ‘uncertainty’ as it is somewhat closer to the heart. However, the choice of the English word will not affect the analysis here, which is based on how the Arab exegete interpreted the verse.

What does this verse signify? Ibn Ashur [153] includes an interpretation of “no uncertainty in it” as a reference to the content of the Quran. There are no statements within the Quran that “*contradict one another or deviate from the truth*” (كلام يناقض بعضه بعضاً أو كلام يجافي الحقيقة). This interpretation addresses the type of uncertainty that we are discussing here, namely the uncertainty about what is valid and what is not valid within the text of the Quran. There is no such uncertainty. All of it is valid.

This also sheds light on a hypothetical question posed in side note 11. Given that all abrogation claims have been refuted, could there still be verses in the Quranic script outside of the known abrogation claims that are abrogated but we simply don't know them? The answer is that there could not be, because verse 2:2 promises no such uncertainty.

It should be noted that exegetes also have another interpretation of this verse. Some interpret the uncertainty to be about the authenticity of the Quran as a whole rather than about the verses within the Quran. However, the 'within' interpretation is linguistically justified. Exegete Ibn Ashur [153] specifically concludes that both meanings are intended.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, when the verse says "This Book - there is no uncertainty **in it** ..." [2:2] [البقرة: ٢] ﴿ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ...﴾, the highlighted part linguistically can signify 'within the Quran' which would mean that the Quran does not have uncertainty within its content. That includes uncertainty about which verses are valid and which are not, an uncertainty that the Abrogation Doctrine has created by opening the door for claiming abrogation in what was not explicitly designated by God or His Messenger as abrogated.

The conclusion is that this is another case where a legitimate interpretation of a Quranic statement goes against the implications of the Abrogation Doctrine. In this case, the implication is about uncertainty in the Quran. In the other cases, it was about annulment and conflict in the Quran. The concern that these implications go against Quranic assertions is alleviated by recognizing that the doctrine that led to these implications is not valid, as Part II has proved.

## 11.2 Other Elements

In addition to Quranic verses that are consistent with the anti-abrogation view, other elements support this view. We will focus here on two compelling elements. One is an authentic Prophetic narration against the notion of Quranic conflict. The other is the lack of designation of abrogated verses. The accounts of these two elements will be brief, but significant.

### 11.2.1 Prophetic Narration

There are no authentic Prophetic narrations that support any claims of abrogation of a verse in the Quranic script, as the complete tally in Appendix A.3 shows. There is, however, an authentic Prophetic narration whose statement negates the possibility of a conflict within the Quranic script. Conflict has

<sup>1</sup>Ibn Ashur has a strong emphasis on intricate linguistic details throughout his exegesis.

been the basis of every abrogation claim that has been put forward.

We saw in §11.1.1 how verse 4:82 of the Quran itself negates the possibility of such conflict. When interpreting this verse, some exegetes such as [Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#) cite a version of the Prophetic narration in question.

An authenticated version of this narration appears in [Ibn Majah \[166\]](#), one of the six authoritative books of narrations. Another version was belatedly authenticated by Al-Albani, a modern narrations scholar, in [Ibn Abi-Alizz \[141\]](#). There are other versions with lesser authentication levels.

All versions of this narration report a story about Muslims who were having a debate close to where the Prophet (PBUH) was at the time. The different sides of the debate were using verses from the Quran to substantiate their views, thus the debate created the appearance of conflict between these verses. The prophet (PBUH) heard this and was quite unhappy about it.<sup>2</sup> He came out and addressed those who were debating.

The key statement by the Prophet (PBUH) that pertains to the current discussion is that the Quran did not descend from Heaven “with parts of it belying each other, but rather confirming each other” (إِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ لَمْ يَنْزِلْ يُكَذِّبْ بَعْضُهُ (بَعْضًا، بَلْ يُصَدِّقُ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا). In the other authenticated version of the narration, the Prophet (PBUH) is reprimanding those who “shoot down parts of the Quran with other parts” (تَضْرِبُونَ الْقُرْآنَ بَعْضُهُ بِبَعْضٍ).

It is notable that in the first version, the factual aspect that there are no conflicts within the Quran is stated. The second version disparages those who seek such conflict. The relevance to the Abrogation Doctrine is unmistakable, both in terms of what the doctrine asserts and how it is practiced.

The pointed statement of this Prophetic narration is also used by some scholars even without citing the narration. For instance, as he interprets verse 4:82 that negates conflict within the Quran, [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) includes a quote that uses similar words to the narration. The quote goes on to say that what is to blame is the limitations of people’s minds and their ignorance.

#### p o i n t   t o   p o n d e r

The premise that the Quran does not have conflicts should have been self-evident for every Muslim. A Divine revelation cannot have contradictions. It is remarkable that there is a need to argue for that. Had it not been for the Abrogation Doctrine, the issue would not have been raised at all. Everything we said in this chapter that negates such conflicts would have been seen as a tautology.

<sup>2</sup>In one version, the narrator described the anger of the Prophet (PBUH) in a colorful way, saying that he looked as if pomegranate seeds have burst on his face.

### 11.2.2 Lack of Designation

The debate about the validity of the Abrogation Doctrine between the pro-abrogation camp and the anti-abrogation camp has been largely argumentative. None of the arguments used by either camp is conclusive, though some have more merit than others.

One of the most compelling arguments comes from both sides of the debate simultaneously, and we are going to focus on it here. It is about a concern that pro-abrogation scholar Al-Zahiri raises, and many on the anti-abrogation side see it as an argument against the Abrogation Doctrine. It pertains to the second component of the Abrogation Doctrine, which we restate here:

**The Abrogation Doctrine:**

1. *There are verses in the Quranic script that have been abrogated. As such, there is no longer a mandate to follow them.*
2. *In the absence of explicit designation of such verses as abrogated by God or by the Prophet (ﷺ), it is permissible to identify these verses through reasoning based on other evidence.*

3 Without this second component, there would be no claims of abrogation in the Quranic script since no verses were explicitly designated as abrogated by God or His Messenger (ﷺ). Identifying abrogated verses has been entirely the domain of scholarly opinions. As detailed in §11.1.3, this created significant uncertainty about which verses are abrogated within the Quranic script. Al-Zahiri [121] asks a natural question: why wouldn't God "reveal what is abrogated in a clear-cut way that removes doubts and confusion?" (يُبين لهم) (المنسوخ بياناً جلياً يرفع به عنهم الشكوك والحيرة).

Coming from a respected pro-abrogation scholar highlights the importance of this concern. A number of anti-abrogation scholars put forward arguments that substantiate this concern:

1. Al-Jabri [54] gives examples of the minutest details that have been preserved about what the Prophet (ﷺ) said and did, even regarding relatively minor issues, then contrasts that with the total absence of any statement by him that identifies even a single verse in the Quranic script as abrogated. Wouldn't that have had a much higher priority?
2. Tahir [202] addresses the 'no uncertainty' promise in verse 2:2, and invokes it as proof against the Abrogation Doctrine since "what uncertainty could be bigger than someone following the rulings of the Quran



*and remaining afraid and scared that he followed what had been canceled, or that he canceled and suspended what had stayed”.*

3. Al-Ghali [43] wonders “How dare we suspend a ruling and a Divine command where no text from the Quran or the authentic Prophetic tradition says that this ruling is abrogated, but rather depending on an understanding that is uncertain”.

This is a clear vulnerability of the Abrogation Doctrine which is seldom confronted by pro-abrogation scholars. Al-Zahiri [121] was an exception, and he continued his reflections on this point: “In many things where you claim abrogation and others disagree with you, and many things where you claim no abrogation and others claim abrogation.” This observation is not just an opinion, but a fact that is uncontested in the abrogation literature. A quick look at Appendix A.2 shows the extent of this disagreement in hundreds of abrogation claims.

The lack of explicit designation of which verses are abrogated has caused another, arguably bigger problem than mere uncertainty. It opened the door for the practice of looking for conflicts in the Quran. The only reason for this practice was the need for a ‘criterion’ to determine which verses are abrogated.

Indeed, there is nothing inherent about abrogation that requires the existence of a conflict. For example, the requirement in the Torah to fast a particular day (10th day in the first lunar month) was abrogated when the Torah was abrogated.<sup>3</sup> The requirement for Muslims to fast the month of Ramadan (the 9th lunar month) was instituted in the Quran. There is no conflict between the two fasts, yet one of them was abrogated.

However, without designation, invoking conflict was necessary to justify claiming that a verse was abrogated. Conflict gave the claim a false legitimacy; asserting that it is not possible to follow both verses so one must be abrogated. Inevitably, a competition of sorts ensued in the search for more conflicts under this pretense. If abrogated verses had been designated, the search for conflict between verses would have never taken place.

For both issues of uncertainty and conflict, it is not abrogation, in and of itself, that is the issue. It is abrogation without designation that leaves verses in the Quranic script inoperative, but not identified as such. This is arguably the biggest logical concern about the Abrogation Doctrine.

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<sup>3</sup>Muslims are still encouraged, but not required, to fast that day.

## 11.3 Anti-Abrogation Voices

Dissent about the Abrogation Doctrine is often minimized by pro-abrogation scholars,<sup>4</sup> and sometimes posed as a fringe view that is not to be taken seriously. However, the reality shows that this dissent is substantial, both in terms of quantity and quality. This reality shows that the situation is not as lopsided as some claim it to be and that the anti-abrogation voices have become a force to be reckoned with. Indeed, very prominent scholars dissented and openly rejected the Abrogation Doctrine.

For example, the *Mufti* of Egypt (chief of religious edicts) is one of the two highest offices for handling Islamic matters in the country. Not one *Mufti*, but two of them rejected the Abrogation Doctrine altogether. Muhammad Abduh rejected the doctrine in the late 19th century (Rida [193]), and Jumaa [182] rejected it when he was the *Mufti* in the early 21st century. The entire Supreme Council on Islamic Affairs rejected the Abrogation Doctrine in its Quranic exegesis (SCIA [201]), prompting Zeid [206] to ask them to reconsider.

The early impact of Abduh's dissent may have influenced many subsequent Egyptian scholars since he is a highly respected local figure. However, dissent from the Abrogation Doctrine was not limited to those scholars. There are anti-abrogation scholars from other geographical regions. Here are some examples.

Al-Zalmi [123], who was a professor of Islamic jurisprudence in northern Iraq, wrote a detailed book that refutes the Abrogation Doctrine. He reached his conclusion after reviewing “*hundreds of reliable references in Quranic exegesis, Prophetic narrations and their explanation, books about the Foundations of Deduction, and old and new books about abrogation in the Quran.*” Al-Qasimi [77], a highly respected scholar from Syria, did not even mention the Abrogation Doctrine as he interpreted verse 2:106 in his Quranic exegesis. Anti-abrogation scholar Asad [130], who wrote a highly respected translation of the Quran with commentary, lived in Spain.

The modern era has seen a huge increase in the number of anti-abrogation authors. In addition to those already mentioned, some notable names are Al-Jabri [54] who dedicated much of his life to this subject and Afana [7] who wrote a detailed book refuting the Abrogation Doctrine. Al-Ghali [43] wrote one of the most polished anti-abrogation books. Tahir [202], Nada [190], Al-Saqqa [88], Ataya [132], Al-Banna [29], Al-Ulwani [17], Imara [180], and others also wrote dedicated anti-abrogation books.

Other reputable scholars who did not focus on the subject of the Abrogation Doctrine also rejected the doctrine in their writing. Among them is

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<sup>4</sup>We reiterate that in this book, the terms ‘pro-abrogation’ and ‘anti-abrogation’ pertain to abrogation of verses within the Quranic script only, regardless of the views about other types of abrogation.

M. Al-Ghazali [46] who states his rejection without mincing words, saying that the premise of the doctrine is what he “negates thoroughly” (نفيّه نفياً باتاً). Abu-Zahra [6] uses less combative language in his rejection. He addresses the abrogation claims, saying “a deep look shows the possibility of reconciliation, and if reconciliation is possible in any facet, it has priority over abrogation”.

Some exegetes have also shown their anti-abrogation stance, as SCIA [201] did. In his exegesis of the Quran, Al-Khatib interprets both verses 2:106 (Al-Khatib [61]) and 16:101 (Al-Khatib [61]) in a decidedly anti-abrogation way. Al-Bahiyy [26] does the same in his interpretation of verse 16:101.

The sheer number and diversity of these anti-abrogation scholars have made it easier for others who do not accept the doctrine to come forward with their views. Rejecting the doctrine is still not mainstream, and anti-abrogation scholars still face the wrath of those who disagree with them. However, the scholarly atmosphere has decidedly changed, allowing the different views to be aired more freely. If the *Mufti* of Egypt can reject the Abrogation Doctrine publicly, so can other scholars who share his opinion.

There is sometimes apprehension about the Abrogation Doctrine even among those who approved it, including major scholars. One example is Al-Zahiri [121] who accepted the Abrogation Doctrine as the tradition prescribed but went into a lengthy soul searching about it. He asked many questions like what gave the abrogated in ruling the priority to remain in the Quranic script over what was abrogated in recitation? (ما الذي جعل إبقاء ما أُبقي لفظه من المنسوخ (أولى بالإبقاء مما رُفع لفظه من المنسوخ؟). He does not offer answers to any of the questions he asks as he falls back on his faith in God’s will.

Al-Razi [83] also has a moment of apprehension about the Abrogation Doctrine. He interprets verse 18:27 “And recite what has been revealed to you of the Book of your Lord. No one substitutes His words ...” ﴿وَاتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ﴾ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ كِتَابِ رَبِّكَ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ ... ﴾ [الكهف: ٢٧] as a mandate to comply by what is recited in the Quran. This leads him to ponder “so abrogation must not happen in [the Quran]” (فيجب ألا يتطرق النسخ إليه), then to concede Al-Asfahani’s anti-abrogation view. He goes on to explain this away by arguing that substitution is not abrogation, notwithstanding that he had interpreted substitution to specifically mean abrogation in verse 16:101 (Al-Razi [83]).

Even Al-Nahhas [71] who wrote one of the earliest pro-abrogation books was equivocal about the notion that abrogated verses are in fact annulled. In spite of approving the abrogation claim of verse 2:184 about a fasting exemption,<sup>5</sup> he accepted that the abrogated exemption was still valid “even if it is abrogated, because it is still in the [Quranic] script” (وإن كانت منسوخة لأنها ثابتة) (في الخط).

<sup>5</sup>The claim was discussed in §4.3.

Looking back at history, Al-Asfahani remains the most influential scholar in rejecting the Abrogation Doctrine. Even if his arguments were not always strong, and even with the barrage of personal attacks and ridicule that he received over the centuries, scholars still could not ignore his views and he is featured in almost every book about abrogation in Islamic history. His contribution *more than a millennium ago* paved the way for what is now a steady stream of anti-abrogation scholars in the modern era.

## 11.4 The Other Abrogation Verse (22:52)

This verse has two features that impact the discussion of the Abrogation Doctrine. First, it is the only other verse in the Quran that includes the word *naskh* in the same conjugation used in the abrogation verse 2:106, so it provides insight into the semantic use of the word. Second, there is an interpretation of this verse that lends support to the view that 2:106 addresses the abrogation of verses in previous scripture, so it provides evidence against the Abrogation Doctrine.

A third feature, which is incidental to the abrogation discussion, is that the way this verse was interpreted for centuries involved a made-up story that was later proven false. This feature will be discussed in §12.3.1 as we address the question of how the Abrogation Doctrine could possibly be false when it has survived for so long.

Here is what the verse says, with a selected translation of a key word:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا إِذَا تَمَنَّى أَلْقَى الشَّيْطَانُ فِي أُمْنِيَّتِهِ فَيَنسَخُ اللَّهُ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ ثُمَّ يُحْكِمُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾  
[الحج : ٥٢]

[22:52] And never did We send before you a messenger or prophet except that when he recited, Satan cast into his recitation. But God promptly abrogates what Satan casts; then God firms His verses. And God is much Knowing, very Wise.

The Arabic word *تَمَنَّى* which was translated above to ‘recited’ is normally used to mean ‘wished’ instead. We will elaborate on this point shortly, but let us first discuss the two features of the verse that matter the most to the Abrogation Doctrine.

The verse describes what God did toward what Satan cast, using the same verb form of *naskh* that was used in the abrogation verse 2:106. Therefore, it sheds light on what the verb signifies in Quranic use. Let us look at what the exegetes say about it when they interpret verse 22:52.

1. Al-Zamakhshari [124] and Al-Nasafi [72] use ‘take it away’ (يَذْهَبُ بِهِ) to interpret the act of *naskh*.
2. Al-Thaalabi [110], Al-Thaalibi [111], Al-Baghawi [23], and Al-Khazen [62] use ‘make it gone’ (يُذْهِبُهُ).
3. Al-Razi [83] also uses ‘make it gone’ then describes that as “*the linguistic meaning*” of *naskh*, contrasting it with the ‘juristic’ meaning that applies to rulings, in an apparent attempt to reconcile the different ways he interpreted the same word in two verses.
4. Several exegetes use a verb form that translates to “*something being gone*” (Al-Qazwini [79]) as we detailed in §11.1.2.
5. Ibn Kathir [163] uses the word ‘removal’ (الْإِلْزَالُ), describing it as the true nature of *naskh* linguistically.

These definitive interpretations of the word *naskh* in verse 22:52, and the assertions that this is the proper linguistic interpretation, contrast how the same word was interpreted in the abrogation verse 2:106 in a metaphoric sense. That metaphoric interpretation was used to justify the notion that a verse would remain intact in the Quranic script after being abrogated, which is the main premise of the Abrogation Doctrine.

As we discussed in detail in §9.3.3, the claim by a number of exegetes that the metaphoric interpretation of *naskh* in verse 2:106 is a necessity is not a valid claim. It was refuted using direct evidence from scholars such as A. Al-Ghazali [44] and Ibn Taymia [172].

The interpretation of the word *naskh* is the first feature of verse 22:52 that goes against the Abrogation Doctrine. The second feature pertains to an interpretation of the verse as a whole that takes into consideration its context, namely the preceding verse and the following two verses. The interpretation assumes that the word تَمَنَّى in verse 22:52 means ‘recite’ rather than ‘wish’, as we alluded to before. We will discuss the interpretation first, then go back to the question of ‘recite’ versus ‘wish’ at the end.

Almost all exegetes interpret verse 22:52 as consolation to the Prophet (ﷺ) for the difficulty he was facing, by recounting the difficulties that previous prophets have faced. However, early exegetes used the wrong context for such consolation, citing a made-up story that has now been fully debunked.<sup>6</sup> The correct context of verse 22:52 can readily be seen in the preceding verse 22:51,

﴿وَالَّذِينَ سَعَوْا فِي آيَاتِنَا مُعَاجِزِينَ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ﴾ [الحج: ٥١]

<sup>6</sup>This story will be addressed in §12.3.1.

[22:51] And the ones who strove against Our verses to undermine them - those are the companions of Hellfire.

The difficulty that the Prophet (PBUH) was facing was that the enemies of Islam strove to undermine the verses of the Quran. The consolation in verse 22:52 is that every previous prophet has faced similar difficulties, but the message of God prevailed over Satan's effort. The two verses are linked through the preposition 'And' which is the first word in verse 22:52. This reinforces the connection between them.

Let us now look beyond the consolatory nature of verse 22:52 and examine its exact wording. There are two words in the verse that we focus on:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا ...﴾ [الحج : ٥٢]

[22:52] And never did We send **before you** a messenger or prophet except ...

Why is the verse specifically referring to the prophets *before* Muhammad (PBUH) if its statement applies equally to him? Had the statement about what Satan does and how God corrects it applied to the Prophet (PBUH), a simple "*And never did We send a messenger or prophet except that ...*" would have conveyed the meaning more comprehensively without 'before you', and would have still served the same consolation role.

A closer look confirms that the specifics of the difficulty that previous prophets faced are not exactly the same as what the Prophet (PBUH) was facing. The situations are similar, but not identical. The enemies of Divine scripture always work hard to undermine it,

﴿... يَحْرِفُونَ الْكَلِمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ ...﴾ [المائدة : ٤١]

[5:41] ... They alter the words after [the words] have been set ...

The main difference is that for the Prophet (PBUH), their effort was destined to fail from the start and the Quran was preserved word for word. With previous scripture, Satan had temporary success by having those enemies inject into the scripture what does not belong to it. This is how previous scripture became altered, while the Quran has not been altered at all.

What happens when Satan succeeds? God abrogates the altered scripture, "... then God firms His verses ..." [22:52] [الحج : ٥٢] ﴿... ثُمَّ يُحْكِمُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ ...﴾ by revealing a new, unaltered scripture. How do we know that this is what firming means? Why wouldn't it mean restoring the old scripture to its unaltered origin? The reason is that if the old scriptures had been restored, we wouldn't have been left with the altered Gospel and Torah we have today. Permanent

alteration, followed by abrogation and revealing a new scripture, has indeed occurred to every previous scripture ([Al-Hindi \[51\]](#)), but not to the Quran.

This interpretation is the second feature of verse 22:52 that goes against the Abrogation Doctrine by showing that the object of abrogation has been previous, altered scripture. This is exactly what the anti-abrogation interpretation of verses 2:106 and 16:101 asserts (see Chapter 9).

The two verses after 22:52 are also consistent with this interpretation. They explain the reason why Satan was allowed to alter previous scripture in the first place. For the disbelievers,

﴿لِيَجْعَلَ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ وَالْقَاسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ  
...﴾ [الحج : ٥٣]

[22:53] [That is] so that He may make what Satan casts a trial for those in whose hearts is a disease and those hard of heart...

while for the believers,

﴿وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَيُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ فَتُخْبِتَ لَهُ قُلُوبُهُمْ ...﴾ [الحج : ٥٤]

[22:54] And so those who were given knowledge may know that it is the truth from your Lord and [therefore] believe in it, and their hearts humbly submit to it...

This last verse makes a specific point. It states that the process of altered scripture followed by unaltered, new scripture helps the knowledgeable “know that it is the truth from your Lord”. How is that? Why would a succession from altered scriptures to new scriptures confirm that it is the truth from God more than a single, unaltered scripture would?

The reason is that even if previous versions of the scripture were altered, they still contain so much commonality about the core message from God that it is difficult to believe that so many prophets over time came up with the same message without the source of this message being the same, God Almighty. A single scripture, even unaltered, would be more susceptible to doubts that it was made up.

Finally, we address the question of ‘recite’ versus ‘wish’ as an interpretation of the Arabic word تَمَنَّى in verse 22:52. Perhaps the link between the two meanings is that we express a wish verbally even if it is unrealized. However, the interpretation has been a controversial issue among exegetes, affecting how the verse as a whole is understood.

Although the interpretation of the Arabic word تَمَنَّى to signify ‘recite’ instead of ‘wish’ is unusual, it is the majority opinion and there are verses in the Quran that are consistent with this interpretation:

1. A conjugation of the word تَمَنَّى is used in the possible sense of recitation in the verse “And among them are illiterates who do not know the scripture except as **recitations**, and they are but conjecturing.” [2:78] ﴿وَمِنْهُمْ

أُمِّيُونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِي وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ﴾ [البقرة: ٧٨]

2. The word for ‘cast’ (what Satan did in verse 22:52) is used in the Quran where the object of casting is specifically the spoken word, “... But they **cast** at them the statement ‘Indeed, you are liars.’” [16:86]

﴿... فَأَلْقَوْا إِلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلَ إِنَّكُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ﴾ [النحل: ٨٦]

Nonetheless, some exegetes disagree. [Ibn Ashur \[153\]](#), who emphasizes linguistic issues, greatly doubts that ‘recite’ is the intended meaning of تَمَنَّى in verse 22:52. [Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#) also finds that meaning quite remote in this particular instance because the verse refers to what messengers *and prophets* do. Prophets who are not messengers do not bring a new scripture, so it is less clear what they would be reciting that would be interfered with by Satan.



This chapter presented additional, compelling anti-abrogation evidence. The evidence goes against what the Abrogation Doctrine implies in terms of conflict, annulment, and uncertainty within the Quranic script. This evidence reinforces the refutation of the Abrogation Doctrine that was done in Part [II](#).



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## Chapter 12

# How Did This Happen?

The refutation of the Abrogation Doctrine was done through refuting individual abrogation claims in Part II of this book. Part III has been focusing on alleviating concerns about other evidence, outside of individual abrogation claims, that relates to the doctrine. In the same spirit, we close with this chapter that alleviates another legitimate concern: How could a doctrine that is readily refutable persist in Islamic thought for more than a millennium?

We will provide concrete reasons for how this could, and did, happen. The reasons belong to two different categories. In §12.1, we will address how the Abrogation Doctrine started in the first place. In §12.2, we will address how it took hold from then on.

The final concern, which we address in §12.3, is what the impact would be if this refutation of the Abrogation Doctrine gained acceptance. It would not be the first instance in Islamic history where an issue that was widely accepted ended up being widely rejected. We will discuss two previous instances. The impact of the reversal in those instances was all positive. There was virtue in reverting to the truth (الرجوع إلى الحق فضيلة), and there were tangible benefits. Mistakes are inevitable in human endeavors. If mistakes can be corrected, it is never too late to do so.

### 12.1 How Did It Start?

Before we go into the subject matter of this section, let us clarify a key point about this chapter as a whole, namely what the chapter is not about. It is not about arguing for or against the Abrogation Doctrine. That was already done in previous chapters. It is also not about arguing that everyone was unjustified in accepting the Abrogation Doctrine. There were good arguments to

persuade at least some scholars that the doctrine is valid and, naturally, scholars can reach different opinions about a complex issue like this. Disagreement is a normal and healthy part of scholarship.

What this chapter is about are the tangible reasons why, in the specific case of the Abrogation Doctrine, a vast majority of scholars supported a doctrine whose merits did not warrant that level of support. Some, perhaps many, would support it anyway, but certainly not the overwhelming number that casts the level of agreement, in and of itself, as evidence that the doctrine must be valid.

First, we address how the seeds of the Abrogation Doctrine were laid in the earlier part of Islamic history. This can be attributed to two undisputed historical facts. We will discuss each of them in detail.

### 12.1.1 The word ‘*naskh*’

The single most important factor that gave the Abrogation Doctrine its initial boost was the semantic ambiguity of the word *naskh* as used by early Muslims. Indeed, *naskh* was commonly used for meanings other than abrogation, such as elaboration and exception. These were legitimate uses of the word given the common understanding of what *naskh* covered at the time. The problem is that many statements that used the word *naskh* were later quoted as if they were evidence of abrogation, notwithstanding the other meanings that the word signified.

This is not a unique situation in Islamic history. [Al-Zahiri \[121\]](#) makes a general statement about the consequences of semantic ambiguity, calling the use of one word for many meanings “*the origin of every calamity, blindness, mix-up, and corruption*” as one person uses a word for a certain meaning and another person understands it in a different meaning (الأصل في كل بلاء وعناء وتخليط وفساد، اختلاط الأسماء ووقوع اسم واحد على معاني كثيرة، فيخبر المخبر بذلك الاسم وهو يريد أحد المعاني التي تحته فيحمله السامع على غير ذلك المعنى الذي أراد المخبر فيقع البلاء والإشكال).

The impact that the ambiguity of *naskh* had on establishing the Abrogation Doctrine is not to be underestimated. For those who understood *naskh* to mean abrogation only, the sheer volume of quotes by early Muslims that included that word may have given the impression that the Abrogation Doctrine is an inevitable part of religion.

The impact of semantic ambiguity in other situations is well documented. [Salih \[195\]](#) wrote a dedicated research paper on the subject, and he refers to dozens of instances of semantic ambiguity and its impact in the history of Islamic jurisprudence. He quoted major scholars addressing the issue, which

sheds light on the scope of the problem.

The fact that there was semantic ambiguity in how early Muslims used the word *naskh* is not in dispute. Some major scholars spelled it out. Ibn Taymia [172] asserted that “*the decisive statement is that the word naskh is cursory, as the predecessors used it in what is thought the verse implies, whether it is generality, absoluteness, or something else* (عُموم أو إطلاق أو غير ذلك).” In another spot (Ibn Taymia [172]), he mentions “*specializing the general and restricting the absolute*” (تخصيص العام وتقييد المطلق) as examples of meanings of *naskh* as used by the predecessors.

Waliyullah [203] also listed different ways in which the word *naskh* had been employed in early narrations. His list includes specializing a general ruling, pointing to a meaning that was not apparent, or correcting a misunderstanding.

The fact that such semantic ambiguity was a culprit in claiming abrogation is also not in dispute. For example, numerous narrations by Ibn Abbas (RA) use the word *naskh* in situations that patently are not about abrogation. Yet, they are quoted as if they are evidence for abrogation. Zeid [206] addresses this issue and laments:

“...it is not of scholarly fidelity at all to quote a narration by Ibn Abbas (RA) –or anyone else– in which he states that a verse did *naskh* to another although there is no relation between the two verses other than one being an exception from the other, then use that to deduce the *naskh* of one verse by the other in the sense that has later become the conventional definition of abrogation.”

What made such confusion possible? One reason is that early Muslims did not document how they defined the word *naskh*. Zeid [206] notes that “some of the authors who wrote about the origins and the abrogated and abrogating, and some of them are of stature, did not bother with defining abrogation.” Brevity was customary in that era. Al-Khodari [65] laments the ‘compromising brevity’ that persisted for centuries in early Islam. Under these circumstances, it is not difficult to see how scholars may misinterpret what early Muslims meant when they used a particular term such as *naskh*.

The meanings of *naskh* other than abrogation, such as exception and elaboration, describe common occurrences in the Quran. Therefore, it is not surprising that the word was used frequently by early Muslims in quotes that were not related to abrogation. Confronted by a significant number of such quotes, and treating the word *naskh* as if it meant abrogation in all of them, a scholar who is weighing the evidence for and against the Abrogation Doctrine will certainly be inclined to adopt the doctrine as valid.

Let us elaborate on this point. Reaching an opinion is not a black-and-

white process for scholars. On almost every issue, there is evidence for and against. Weighing the two conflicting bodies of evidence is how scholars arrive at their opinions.

In the case of abrogation, if the evidence was heavily tilted toward the Abrogation Doctrine because of numerous quotes that were considered supportive but were in fact irrelevant because their use of *naskh* was not in the sense of abrogation, it is completely logical that a vast majority of scholars would take the side of the Abrogation Doctrine. We are not discussing what the merits of the doctrine are, or are not. We are only showing how it is possible for many scholars in the early days of Islam to have supported it when they were looking at tilted evidence.

The era where *naskh* was used for meanings other than abrogation was not restricted to the time of the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH), but it continued to the time when major schools of thought were starting to form by later scholars. The school of thought of Abu-Hanifa, which is the earliest and arguably the most influential in Islamic history, used the word *naskh* in the sense of exception (Zeid [206]). Abu-Hanifa's use of the expression 'partial *naskh*' to describe adjustment to a ruling is very telling of the fundamentally different way he treated that word. Abrogation, being annulment, is total not partial.

The definition of *naskh* as only abrogation did not come until later (Zeid [206]). In the late second *hijri* century, it was Al-Shafei who was the earliest major scholar to restrict *naskh* to mean abrogation only (Shula [199]).

The reliance of scholars on quotes from early Muslims to form their opinions about a given issue is a fundamental tool in Islamic jurisprudence. This is why the semantic ambiguity of the word *naskh* in these quotes had such a huge impact. We now move to a second factor, also related to early quotes, that had its own significant impact on starting the Abrogation Doctrine.

### 12.1.2 Inauthentic Narrations

The first systematic authentication of narrations that are attributed to the Prophet (PBUH) and his Fellows (RA) took place in the third *hijri* century by Al-Bukhari. This happened after the Abrogation Doctrine had been formulated and, in fact, after the key schools of thought in Islam, including those of Abu-Hanifa, Malik, Al-Shafei, and Ibn Hanbal, had been established.

This means that all scholars who preceded Al-Bukhari did not have the benefit of his research that identified which narrations among those circulating at the time were verified by him as authentic. Those scholars depended on the information available to them at the time. In hindsight, some of that information was not reliable.

For example, though highly regarded, neither Malik's book of narrations *Al-Muattaa* (الموطأ) nor Ibn Hanbal's book of narrations *Al-Musnad* (المُسْنَد) ended up among the authoritative books of narrations after the authentication era. At the time they were published, their content was viewed as authoritative. For instance, Al-Shafei described Malik's *Al-Muattaa* as second only to the Quran itself (Malik [185]).

Why is this relevant to our discussion here? There are important narrations about abrogation that were widely circulating in the early days of Islam that proved inauthentic later on. To understand the impact of such narrations on the establishment of the Abrogation Doctrine, we are going to focus on an inauthentic narration that was attributed to Ali (RA) which had an inordinate impact in making the Abrogation Doctrine look like an inevitable part of the religion.

How could just one narration make all that difference? The Abrogation Doctrine asserts that there are abrogated verses in the Quranic script. If scholars were certain that one specific verse was indeed abrogated, the entire Abrogation Doctrine would become inevitable (Zeid [206]). At that point, the question was no longer whether the Abrogation Doctrine was valid, but whether other verses were also abrogated. One proven abrogation claim is sufficient to prove that the doctrine is valid and opens the door to looking for more.

The narration in question is used to substantiate the “private consultation” abrogation claim which was refuted in §5.1. This is the most famous abrogation claim in the literature and is often used by pro-abrogation scholars as tangible proof that the Abrogation Doctrine is valid. Different versions of the narration in question were widely cited despite being inauthentic.

The narration quotes Ali (RA) asserting that he was the only person to abide by the mandate in verse 58:12 to offer charity before engaging in private consultation with the Prophet (ﷺ). The narration goes on to say “*no one after me will put [charity before consultation] into action*” as the mandate in the verse was abrogated by the next verse 58:13. There are variations of this narration that go into different details.

The wording of this narration is quite pointed. The statement “*no one after me will put into action*” indicates actual abrogation. The usual issue of using the word *naskh* and having ambiguity associated with it is not there. In addition, coming from a revered personality like Ali (RA), this clearly would be decisive evidence for the abrogation claim, and it may explain why the claim has been so widely accepted.

The problem is that this narration is not authentic, as we elaborated in detail in §5.1. The narration was not found to be authentic in any of the major books of narrations by Al-Bukhari [35], Muslim [189], Abu-Dawoud [3], Al-Tirmizi [113], Al-Nasai [73], and Ibn Majah [166], nor in the additional

recognized books of narrations by [Ibn Hibban \[161\]](#) and [Ibn Khuzayma \[165\]](#).

Even the expansive book *Al-Musnad* by [Ibn Hanbal \[160\]](#), which compiled more than 27,000 narrations including narrations by Ali (RA), did not include any version of the above narration about verse 58:12. The authentication criteria of Ibn Hanbal were not strict enough for scholars to accept his book as an authoritative book of narrations. Yet, the narration by Ali (RA) still did not make it to that book, notwithstanding that the book was written more than a century after the era where the cited narration purportedly belonged.

Nonetheless, this inauthentic narration, in one form or another, was cited as evidence, many times as the *only* evidence, when scholars concluded that the abrogation claim of verse 58:12 was valid. In §5.1.1, we reported compelling statistics about how ubiquitously this narration was cited in this context. Here is a summary.

We surveyed the books of exegesis of the Quran that interpret verse 58:12. Twenty-five out of thirty books prominently featured the narration of Ali (RA) in their interpretation that 58:12 was abrogated. The remaining five books mentioned it less prominently. Surveying the books that are dedicated to abrogation or have a detailed section about it, we looked at twenty books that approved the abrogation claim of verse 58:12. Among them, fifteen prominently featured that narration in their analysis of the abrogation claim. One book mentioned it less prominently, and the remaining four books did not mention it or mention any other evidence.

This leaves no doubt about how an inauthentic narration can have a far-reaching impact. As mentioned before, when a scholar reaches an opinion, it is not a black-and-white process. He weighs the evidence for and against that opinion. Any scholar in the early part of Islam who did not know that this narration was not authentic when he considered the abrogation claim of verse 58:12 was faced with a compelling piece of evidence that seemed to support the claim unequivocally.

Because of this, it is completely logical that these scholars reached the opinion that the claim is valid. Once a scholar reaches that conclusion, it is not only logical, but inevitable, that he will concede that the Abrogation Doctrine as a whole is valid. Indeed, modern scholar [Al-Shinqeiti \[99\]](#) invokes this claim as a standalone proof of the Abrogation Doctrine.

This is just one example, though it is a decisive example given the prominence of its abrogation claim. There is an abundance of other examples of inauthentic narrations being cited to support abrogation claims. A case in point is the book by [Ibn Salama \[170\]](#) that is often cited in the abrogation literature. At the end of the book, after enumerating the abrogation claims that he approves, Ibn Salama lists the sources from which he extracted his information. Many of these sources have been discredited.


Let us look at two sources that he prominently mentions at the top of his list, Muqatil and Al-Kalbi. They were contemporaneous early Muslims who lived in the first to second *hijri* centuries and were the source of many abrogation narrations. However, in terms of reliability as narrators, they have been thoroughly discredited by major narration scholars.

For example, Muqatil's narrations are 'to be left out' (متروك الحديث) by consensus of scholars, according to S. Al-Zahabi [119], with strong condemnation quoted in the book. In one of the quotes, Al-Bukhari [38] describes Muqatil as "nothing at all" (لاشيء البتة). Prominent abrogation scholar Zeid [206] spent several pages citing evidence that unequivocally impeaches Muqatil.

The other source, Al-Kalbi, did not fare much better. Zeid [206] lists those who dismissed his narrations for a variety of reasons, including outright lying and senility. Ibn Hibban [162] elaborates the accounts of Al-Kalbi's lying, and concludes with a quote that "the clarity of [his] lying is more apparent than needs to be elaborated" (وضوح الكذب فيه أظهر من أن يحتاج إلى الإغراق في وصفه).

To put this in perspective, Ibn Salama died in the early fifth *hijri* century, well after the authentication work of Al-Bukhari and others was completed. Given that, if he depends on Muqatil and Al-Kalbi in matters of abrogation, one can only imagine how earlier Muslims, without the benefit of knowledge that Ibn Salama had available, can be affected by such questionable sources. Their views of abrogation were based, at least in part, on narrations that proved later to be inauthentic. It is incumbent upon us to look at these views in the context where they arose.

### Key Point

 Major scholars, including all four Imams of the Islamic schools of thought, instructed us to examine how they reached their opinions (Ibn Al-Qayyim [150]). In the words of Imam Abu-Hanifa, "no one is allowed to assert what we said until he knows from where we said it" (لا يحل لأحد أن يقول بقولنا، حتى يعلم من أين قلناه). This is exactly what we are doing here, following their instructions.

Looking at the origins of the Abrogation Doctrine, the circumstances at the time explain why the doctrine was so widely accepted even if the real evidence did not warrant that level of acceptance.

This begs the question: why wasn't the Abrogation Doctrine challenged later once scholars realized the role that questionable evidence played in forming the doctrine in the first place? This is what we address in the next section.

## 12.2 How Did It Take Hold?

Once the Abrogation Doctrine was established, it gathered more attention and elaboration from prominent scholars. By the fourth *hijri* century, it had taken hold as an integral part of the religion as can be seen in the major books of that era such as [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#), [Al-Jassas \[57\]](#), and [Al-Nahhas \[71\]](#). From then on, it passed from generation to generation without notable dissent until the last century. In this section, we address some factors that contributed to the persistence of the Abrogation Doctrine in Islamic heritage.

### 12.2.1 Imitation

Imitation (التقليد) is a widespread phenomenon in Islamic jurisprudence. It means following previous opinions without critical analysis of what had led to those opinions. It is similar to precedence in the legal world, where a ruling is justified based merely on the fact that it has been invoked in a previous court.

There is a positive side to imitation, similar to precedence, in that it helps the body of rulings remain stable and consistent over time. Without some level of imitation, rulings may keep changing back and forth, thus eroding confidence in the entire body of rulings.

From a religious point of view, imitation has its place. For example, following the practices of the Prophet (ﷺ) is not debatable. What he said and did are not opinions; they are the religion itself. Imitation of learned people can also make sense for those who lack the knowledge or analytic capacity to create a reliable opinion on their own.

What is debatable is the imitation of scholars, even if they are revered scholars, by those who are capable of critical analysis. The usual argument for defending imitation in this case is that it may be better to defer to someone who is more learned than to create an independent, but erroneous opinion. [Ibn Al-Qayyim \[150\]](#) argues this point on behalf of imitators, emphasizing the risk of creating the wrong opinion compared to the risk of following an opinion that turns out to be wrong.

#### point to ponder

What if a learned scholar that we are imitating out of deference had used information that seemed correct at the time and later proved to be incorrect? For example, what if he used a narration that turned out to be inauthentic or interpreted *naskh* to mean something when it meant something else?

The negative side of imitation is clear. It allows an incorrect opinion to



propagate and persist without the chance to revisit its reasoning. The opinion of [Al-Zahiri \[121\]](#) is that a thinker who is wrong is better than an imitator who is right. Major scholars have stated unequivocally that they should not be imitated themselves. In addition to what we quoted before, [Ibn Al-Qayyim \[150\]](#) reported that the four Imams of Islamic schools of thought, Abu-Hanifa, Malik, Al-Shafei, and Ibn Hanbal, “*admonished against imitating them, and disparaged those who take their opinion without proof.*” It was not just a matter of humility on the part of those Imams. It was what you would expect from true scholars and pious Muslims who know they are not infallible.

For the purpose of the present discussion, we are not in fact concerned at all with whether imitation is right or wrong. We are only concerned with the undisputed fact that *imitation has happened abundantly in Islamic jurisprudence*. As [A. Al-Ghazali \[45\]](#) describes it when he debates the subject, imitation is the “[*chosen*] methodology for the most [people]” (مذهب للأكثرين).

Why is this our only concern here? If you know that a hundred independent scholars arrived at the same opinion about some issue, it is very difficult to argue that they are all wrong. However, if these hundred scholars are not independent, and in fact are imitating one another, the opinion no longer has the power that independent thought would confer.

This is what is lost by imitation, regardless of whether you think the practice itself is good or bad. When imitation happens, independence is lost. This is what matters for the question this chapter is asking, which is how could the Abrogation Doctrine have such a wide agreement, not whether the doctrine is valid *per se*.

It is the lack of independence that can create overwhelming agreement without the merits that would warrant such agreement. This is a recurring situation inside and outside of religion. Social sciences have studied these phenomena, which are technically called ‘cascades’ ([Sunstein \[200\]](#)). This is a key notion in understanding how the Abrogation Doctrine took hold. Let us elaborate what a cascade is and how it unfolds, in four points.

**1) The nature of a cascade.** A cascade starts when a decision that was made by predecessors gets subsequently adopted without being critically reexamined. The more people adopt the decision, the more likely that others will consequently adopt it as well, and that cascade takes off. Numerous examples from history and from controlled experiments show that these cascades are very powerful and resistant to change.

It is clear that in the case of the Abrogation Doctrine, previous decisions were not critically examined by many, since they cited the same evidence used to make the original decisions even as that evidence was subsequently invalidated. The narration attributed to Ali (RA) that was mentioned in §12.1.2 was still being cited as evidence to support the abrogation claim of verse

58:12 for centuries after the authoritative narration books excluded it. The narrations attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) that use the word *naskh* in the sense of exception are still being cited in the literature as evidence for abrogation. The cascade is in plain sight.

Cascades were recognized by Islamic scholars, even if they did not call it by that name. The essence of cascades is the propagation of fallacy through imitation. Therefore, we would not know if a widespread belief resulting from a cascade is true. As A. Al-Ghazali [45] phrases it, “*imitation is accepting a view without proof, and this is not a path to knowledge, neither in fundamentals nor in branches.*” (ليس ذلك طريقاً إلى العلم، لا في الأصول ولا في الفروع). It is important that he included ‘fundamentals’ here since the Abrogation Doctrine, by virtue of how much it penetrated Islamic thought, has attained the level of a fundamental.

Cascades are a human phenomenon that can happen in many settings as shown in social sciences, but there are factors that are particular to religion that exacerbate this phenomenon. Let us highlight a factor that played a significant role in the cascade of the Abrogation Doctrine, and that is the repercussions of dissent.

**2) Reluctance to dissent.** One of the reasons cascades happen naturally is the tendency of humans not to dissent from popular views, even in a culture of agreeable disagreement where the repercussions of dissent are minor. In religious matters, the repercussions of dissent can be severe, making cascades even more inevitable.

One of the most potent examples of these repercussions is how Al-Asfahani, who was the most prominent dissenter from the Abrogation Doctrine in the early days of Islam, was treated by other scholars. It is one thing to disagree with his views. It is another thing to slander him with insults and accusations. His legacy endured personal attacks and ridicule that would make any other scholar who questioned the Abrogation Doctrine think twice before making his views known.

A modern example of these repercussions is well documented. After witnessing the revolt against an established scholar as he expressed a dissenting view on a different religious matter, Al-Qaradawi [76] lamented: “*how many opinions and new, daring views remain imprisoned in the chests of those who have them, until they die with them without anyone hearing about it or anyone conveying it to others*” (كم من آراء واجتهادات جديدة وجريئة تبقى حبيسة في صدور أصحابها، حتى تموت معهم، ولم يسمع بها أحد، ولم ينقلها أحد عنهم).

Why such extreme aversion to dissent? It is arguable that dissent in Islamic scholarship is not tolerated as a matter of cultural norms, where difference of opinion (اختلاف) is often equated with discord (خلاف). An early book captures this point. Al-Tahawi [109] admonishes deviating from scholarly leaders and

political leaders “even if they transgress” (وَأَنزُو جَارُوا). This would take imitation to a new level. Not only do you accept an opinion without proof, but you accept it even if you know it is objectionable in order to avoid disagreement.

As a result, a dissenting view by a scholar can result in loss of stature, loss of livelihood, or worse. Even scholars in the modern era felt the pressure. [Al-Ghali \[43\]](#) talks about his reluctance to share his anti-abrogation views since they disagreed with so many scholars. Even a pro-abrogation scholar like [Zeid \[206\]](#) says that he took on the subject of abrogation while he knows that he would be “between two fears” of not saying something new and of saying something new that would be perceived as disagreeing with tradition.

**3) When a cascade takes hold.** If a cascade is already in place, the hostile attitude toward dissent is not necessarily all bad. There is a good reason for scholars to put dissent in check. When it comes to religion, unity is critical. Dissent often leads to divisions that can even create opposing sects within the religion, with devastating consequences. Also, dissent is not always the correct opinion; it can be argued that dissent is often on the wrong side. Therefore, resistance to dissent within religion is not illogical.

Muslim scholars are particularly wary of divisions within the religion. The notions of *bidaa* (novelty - بدعة) and *fitna* (schism - فتنة) are central to their thought. These notions capture two connected phenomena, where *bidaa* is the introduction of something into the religion that was not part of it before, and *fitna* is large-scale division and disagreement. The former is often a cause for the latter, as some people adopt the novelty and others don’t, and they polarize along these lines.

This wariness is exacerbated when the dissent is about something as established as the Abrogation Doctrine. [Al-Khazraji \[63\]](#) expresses the dread of such dissent: “*Denying abrogation hits all the narrations, texts, and reports that reached us from the predecessors, generation after generation, and raises doubts about the scholarship of this nation and its legacy.*”

This is the mindset that nourished the cascade of the Abrogation Doctrine. [Al-Arid \[20\]](#) is a case in point. His reaction when he first looked into abrogation was “*I was stunned by what I saw*” (هالني ما رأيته), and he rejected it altogether. It was when his academic advisor directed him to traditional books and references that he changed his views and accepted the Abrogation Doctrine.

Some pro-abrogation scholars try to find a balance between what they see as excess (إفراط) in the number of abrogation claims and what they see as negligence (تفريط) in rejecting the Abrogation Doctrine altogether. They accept the Abrogation Doctrine but approve fewer abrogation claims. [Al-Qaradawi \[75\]](#) praises this group as “*the people of moderation*” (أهل الاعتدال).

Looking at the writings of this group, every abrogation claim was rejected

5 by at least one scholar, as we have seen in §3.1. While the Abrogation Doctrine was not rejected by any of them, every abrogation claim was. Thus, all the parts were rejected, but the whole wasn't.

The dread of rejecting the Abrogation Doctrine as a whole may be due to a broader concern: if a fundamental issue like the Abrogation Doctrine was proven false, this could be just the start. What else among the fundamentals would be attacked next?

This concern is not valid. What is certain in sourcing will never be proven wrong, and that includes all the basic tenets of the religion. On the other hand, what tradition has formulated over time, regardless of how long it lasted, can always be subject to debate to test its validity. Examples of this have already occurred in Islamic history, as we will see in §12.3.1. When things are reexamined, it is completely logical to expect that the vast majority of the tradition, *but not all of it*, will stand the test of time.

Nonetheless, the perceived calamity in challenging something as established as the Abrogation Doctrine made scholars attack any dissent in strong terms. It created pressure on everyone to conform to it, thus consolidating the cascade. In their defense, one can look at these attacks as rational behavior by those who not only believe that the dissenting opinion is wrong, but also that it is dangerous and should be extinguished quickly before it creates *fitna*.

These are important considerations, no doubt. Upholding or rejecting the Abrogation Doctrine has consequences. Nonetheless, whether to uphold it or reject it is not decided by those consequences. It is decided by where the truth is. If none of the abrogation claims meets the burden of proof needed to overrule a Quranic verse, as we have seen in Part II of this book, no amount of imitation, repercussions, or calls for unity can change that.

Recasting the above words of Al-Khazraji, anything but the truth is what “raises doubts about the scholarship of this nation and its legacy.” Islam is called by God ‘the religion of truth’ (دين الحق), and truth has priority over all other considerations.

**4) The other side of a cascade.** As we have seen, the cascade of the Abrogation Doctrine is perfectly logical given the strong factors that sustain it. There is yet another factor that should be mentioned, and that factor is also studied in social sciences. It is the diametric opposite of imitation; people tend to specifically go against what their enemies assert, the same way they tend to imitate their own.

This phenomenon is technically called ‘reactive devaluation’: “if people seem to be from some group we distrust or dislike, ... we might say or do the very opposite” (Sunstein [200]). What this has in common with imitation is that neither is based on the substance of what is said, but rather on who said it.

Zeid [206] addresses this point as it relates to Al-Jassas, a key figure who helped cement the Abrogation Doctrine in the fourth *hijri* century. Al-Jassas lived in Iraq, and was faced with attacks on abrogation by enemies of Islam who objected to abrogation as a ‘change of mind’ by God (page 12). His response was reactionary in nature, defending abrogation in all forms even with an approach that “*has clear weakness*” (ضعفه الظاهر).

The attacks on the Abrogation Doctrine from outside groups put Muslims who had reservations about the doctrine in the untenable position of ‘taking the side of the enemy’. Indeed, they were attacked as such. Ibn Salama [170] puts those who reject the Abrogation Doctrine in the same category as “*the atheists and the hypocrites*” (الملحدين والمنافقين) in terms of how God would respond to them.

Even those within Islam who did not belong to the mainstream schools of thought were considered outsiders whose reservations about the Abrogation Doctrine were a reason to stand by the doctrine. Afana [7] put this as the top factor as he enumerated the factors that helped spread the doctrine: “*the need of the [mainstream] sunna followers to respond quickly to the accusations and attacks from other groups*”, with examples of Muslim groups who split ideologically or politically from the mainstream.

In conclusion, the cascade of the Abrogation Doctrine was aided by multiple factors that we presented here. These factors occur naturally in the human experience and do not reflect shortcomings. Nonetheless, they are factors that are *not related to the evidentiary merits of the doctrine itself* and they contributed to the broad support that it enjoyed. Therefore, there is no contradiction between such widespread support and the refutation of the evidentiary merits of the doctrine presented in previous chapters.

## 12.2.2 Conflation

We now move to another important factor that contributed to the widespread acceptance of the Abrogation Doctrine. This factor is quite puzzling. There was nothing puzzling about cascades which we have just addressed. Cascades happen naturally in human activities as shown in scientific research, imitation is the key ingredient that enabled the cascade of the Abrogation Doctrine, and other factors particular to our heritage have made that cascade quite formidable. When it comes to conflation, the situation is harder to understand.

Conflation here means using the evidence for one thing as proof of another, thus conflating the two notions. The only notion we are addressing in this book is the Abrogation Doctrine, namely the abrogation of Quranic verses between the two covers of the Quranic script (بين دفتي المصحف), not other types of abrogation.

The Abrogation Doctrine is the key point of contention in the abrogation literature. Evidence for other types of abrogation is not relevant to the validity of the Abrogation Doctrine. Oftentimes, scholars who disagree with the doctrine do not extend their dissent to other types of abrogation. Even Al-Asfahani, the most famous dissenter in abrogation, fully accepted the abrogation of previous scripture by the Quran (Nada [190]).

Why is it then that many pro-abrogation scholars,<sup>1</sup> when arguing for the validity of the Abrogation Doctrine, cite evidence for other types of abrogation as proof? This is the puzzling aspect, especially because of how often it happens as we have already seen in §10.2. Of course, such conflation would cast the Abrogation Doctrine with more merit than it has, thus boosting its support undeservedly.

Other types of abrogation such as abrogation of previous scripture or abrogation of pre-Islamic traditions have no bearing whatsoever on the abrogation of verses within the Quranic script. The object of abrogation in those cases is not part of the Quran. That is outside the domain of the Abrogation Doctrine.

Nonetheless, evidence for these types of abrogation is used as if it were proof that Quranic verses were abrogated. Al-Shinqeiti [99] cites the prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH) itself as decisive evidence since his prophethood would not be valid without abrogating previous scripture, concluding: “so certainty about abrogation is mandated” (فوجب القطع بالنسخ). This is in a book whose title is unambiguously “*Abrogated Verses in the Noble Quran*”.

Similarly, Farghali [136] uses the abrogation of previous scripture by Islam as evidence that abrogation did occur. Nonetheless, like the book by Al-Shinqeiti, the main topic of Farghali’s book is the abrogation of Quranic verses, not of previous scripture. Makki [184] has a section explaining why abrogation within the Quran is permissible, and he cites abrogation of previous scripture as evidence. Many other books make the same non sequitur.

Even when the object of abrogation is not divine revelation, the same way of conflation can be found in the literature. Tahir [202] enumerates different ways the ‘abrogation’ of pre-Islamic traditions, such as dealing in usury, is counted by some as evidence for the Abrogation Doctrine.

Another example of conflation is the frequent citing of a narration attributed to Umar (RA) in the context of the Abrogation Doctrine (see §10.3). In the narration, Umar (RA) describes Ubayy (RA) as “the best reader [of the Quran] among us” (أَقْرَأُنا أُنْبِيَّ). He then qualifies the statement by saying that they leave out from what Ubayy (RA) reads. What is Umar (RA)’s rationale for that? It is that Ubayy (RA) says he would not leave out anything that he heard from the Prophet (PBUH), as Umar (RA) cites what verse 2:106 says about

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<sup>1</sup>Recall that the expression “pro-abrogation” was defined in this book as being supportive of the Abrogation Doctrine regardless of the views about other types of abrogation.

abrogation.

Where is the conflation here? The Abrogation Doctrine is very specifically about what scholars have termed “abrogation of the ruling but not of the recitation” (نسخ الحكم دون التلاوة). The abrogated verses remain in the Quranic script and are recited as an integral part of the Quran. The narration by Umar (RA) patently applies to abrogation of the recitation (Zeid [206]), since his reservation was about Ubayy (RA) *reading* abrogated verses.

- Conflation is a form of inconsistency; evidence for one thing is used for something else. We have already seen this inconsistency when we talked about the semantic ambiguity of the word *naskh*, which conflated several meanings of the word together and then used one meaning to argue for another.

There are other forms of inconsistency in the evolution of the Abrogation Doctrine which created further unmerited support for it. These inconsistencies have gone largely unchallenged in the literature, thus exacerbating their effect. We will mention two types of this inconsistency.

**The first inconsistency** is between how scholars require stringent standards for abrogation claims, and then approve abrogation claims that patently do not meet those standards. A striking example is what Zeid [206] and Al-Arid [20], using very similar wording, assert as requirements for accepting an abrogation claim, compared to how they actually deal with these claims.

They both require any valid abrogation claim in the Quranic script to be attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) himself. If the Fellows (RA) are the source of the claim, that would only be valid if they are conveying from the Prophet (ﷺ), with the chain of narration being correct and uninterrupted. Anything else would not be acceptable as a valid abrogation claim.

Had they adhered to this requirement, they should have invalidated all abrogation claims. Islamic scholars have been unanimous that no authentic statement exists where the Prophet (ﷺ) has explicitly designated a verse in the Quranic script as abrogated. The reality is that Zeid and Al-Arid did not adhere to their own requirement at all. For example, Zeid [206] goes on to approve the abrogation claim<sup>2</sup> of verse 4:43 in all of two paragraphs without mentioning a single word that is remotely attributable to the Prophet (ﷺ).

Other pro-abrogation scholars require rejection of any abrogation claim whose verses can be reconciled, e.g., Al-Zurqani [128] who proclaims that “*any facet of interpretation*” (أي وجه من وجوه التأويل) is acceptable for reconciliation. He goes on to approve patently reconcilable claims like that of verse 2:240 (see §4.1).

It is not clear why such inconsistency took place. It could be that the pressure to approve certain abrogation claims to conform to traditional views

<sup>2</sup>See §4.2 for the refutation of this claim.

played some role. Whatever the reasons are, such inconsistency certainly boosted the abrogation claims thus contributing undue support for the Abrogation Doctrine.

**The second inconsistency** occurs when abrogation is used as a reconciliation tool in Islamic jurisprudence. A perceived conflict between religious texts is clearly something that scholars paid attention to and tried to reconcile. Claiming abrogation would certainly resolve such a conflict. However, a conflict could be perceived where no real conflict exists. If a claim of abrogation is introduced to reconcile a misconstrued conflict, this creates abrogation claims where none should be and unduly boosts the Abrogation Doctrine.

This phenomenon is recognized by major scholars. For example, [Ibn Taymia \[175\]](#) makes this point repeatedly. In one quote, he asserts that “*many of the predecessors mean by the term ‘abrogation’ the lifting of what they think the verse signifies*” (كثير من السلف يريد بلفظ النسخ رفع ما يظن أن الآية دالة عليه).

The inconsistency of employing abrogation when there is nothing to reconcile played a role in the spread of the Abrogation Doctrine ([Afana \[7\]](#)). The sheer frequency of invoking abrogation in Islamic jurisprudence whenever a conflict is perceived made the Abrogation Doctrine so entrenched in the scholars’ thought that it became unthinkable that such doctrine could possibly be invalid.

It should be noted that the ready use of abrogation as a reconciliation tool may have been boosted by the semantic ambiguity of the word *naskh* which we addressed in §12.1.1. The other meanings of the word, such as exception and qualification, are valid tools for reconciliation between two texts. The fact that the word *naskh* was routinely used in the early era of Islam to designate these tools, e.g., in the narrations attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) and in the expression ‘partial abrogation’ by Abu-Hanifa ([Zeid \[206\]](#)), may have normalized the use of abrogation as a reconciliation tool. Of course when the word *naskh* was later restricted to mean only abrogation, using that for reconciliation became far more consequential.

In conclusion, between conflation and other forms of inconsistency, and between imitation and aversion to dissent, the Abrogation Doctrine had ample reason to take hold. The end result is that we have a doctrine whose widespread acceptance far exceeds its evidentiary merit.

## 12.3 Final Thoughts

We can now put the entire case against the Abrogation Doctrine to rest. We have refuted the doctrine by staying true to the high burden of proof needed to overrule a Quranic verse and applying that to every abrogation claim to invalidate it. Once there were no abrogation claims to contend with, the case in



principal was complete. We followed that by discussing other, general evidence that seemed to support the doctrine and refuted that as well to alleviate any concerns about it. We concluded by explaining how a doctrine that is so flawed could still survive with so many people for so long.

In the rest of the chapter, we will discuss coming to terms with the refutation of the Abrogation Doctrine. There is no doubt that some scholars have already had strong reservations about the doctrine even if they kept that to themselves. There is also no doubt that some scholars will never accept the refutation of a doctrine so entrenched in Islamic history regardless of the arguments. Other scholars will weigh the evidence presented here and reach their own conclusions one way or the other.

For the readers who are wondering about the ramifications of this situation, this section will provide some context. We will look at history to gain insight into somewhat similar situations from the past. We will also look at the impact that the Abrogation Doctrine has had in order to gain insight into how things may unfold in the future.

### 12.3.1 Similar Situations In History

If the refutation of the Abrogation Doctrine is to gain traction, it will undoubtedly be quite a feat in Islamic scholarship. However, it will not be the first time that a long-standing view in Islam was reversed once and for all. We will discuss two instances in history where this happened before in order to gain insight into the dynamics of a situation like this.

- The first instance is about a made-up story involving the Prophet (PBUH) that gained traction among early exegetes and other scholars before it was rejected by most scholars later on. The story is that while the Prophet (PBUH) was reciting some Quranic verses, Satan injected some fake words between them that pay respect to the idols that were worshiped before Islam. The story is known by the name *Gharaneeq* (الغرائيق - a type of bird in the crane family) because the word was included in what Satan allegedly injected.

A lot has been written about this story over the centuries, including different versions of what happened. The details of the story are not critical to this discussion. We are interested here in the history of its rise and fall since it once took hold as the Abrogation Doctrine has.

Looking at the major books of exegesis in the early days of Islam, the story is portrayed there as a fact. For example, in the interpretation of verse 22:52, [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) prominently includes this story.<sup>3</sup> Al-Tabari's book is the oldest comprehensive exegesis that has been preserved. It captures much

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<sup>3</sup>Verse 22:52 was discussed in detail in §11.4.

of the state of knowledge up till that point, and it has been quite influential on subsequent scholars.

#### p o i n t   o f   i n t e r e s t

It should be noted that Al-Tabari emphasized preserving all the information that had reached him from all sources, which created an unparalleled record of knowledge for future generations. Nonetheless, not all the information that he included was critically evaluated by him in terms of authenticity.

Other exegetes followed suit for more than a century after Al-Tabari, without challenging the story. Those include [Al-Thaalabi \[110\]](#), [Al-Baghawi \[23\]](#), and [Al-Zamakhshari \[124\]](#). If you look at the Islamic literature through the fifth *hijri* century, this story was widespread and treated as a true event that had taken place in the life of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Between the fifth and sixth *hijri* centuries, scholars started to challenge the authenticity of the story. A number of notable scholars, including [Ibn Al-Arabi \[145\]](#) and later [Al-Razi \[83\]](#), attacked the story very strongly and with very detailed analysis. These views, novel at the time, profoundly shifted the tide toward rejecting the story.

In the following three centuries, major exegetes have dramatically shifted to the new direction of rejecting the story, including [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#), [Al-Ghornati \[47\]](#), [Al-Khazen \[62\]](#), [Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#), and [Al-Thaalibi \[111\]](#). They refuted the story and sometimes criticized their predecessors who had supported it.

There are indications that dissenting from an entrenched tradition like this was not an easy step for these scholars. Some struck a reconciliatory tone, e.g. [Al-Baydawi \[31\]](#). Some tried to find a middle ground by advocating a more ‘benign’ version of the story. The original story had the Prophet (ﷺ) recite the fake verses that Satan had injected, and that just went too far against basic tenets of the religion. Apparently, as a compromise, some scholars of that era such as [Al-Nasafi \[72\]](#) adopted a version where it was Satan who recited those fake verses and the voice was mistaken for that of the Prophet (ﷺ).

There is also evidence that the rejection of the story, in one version or another, was not universal. Although the vast majority of scholars unequivocally reject the story today, there were few that renewed the interest in it over the centuries. The most notable are two scholars who lived around the same era and in geographical vicinity, [Ibn Hajar \[155\]](#) then [Al-Suyuti \[102\]](#). They cited the inauthentic narrations that created the story and relaxed the criterion of accepting them ([Al-Albani \[16\]](#)). These scattered efforts failed to resurrect the story in mainstream thought.

In hindsight, it may be hard to imagine how any scholar bought into this

story in the first place. The very nature of religion may have been a factor. We believe in the unseen based on what God conveyed to us through his Prophet (PBUH), even if we do not fully comprehend it. Therefore, when scholars looked at this story and thought that it was authentic based on the narrations they had, they had no choice but to believe it. Their effort went into trying to reconcile it with the tenets of religion, not into refuting the story itself. This process has some similarities with what happened with the Abrogation Doctrine:

1. The culprit for starting this story was the inauthentic narrations that were treated as authentic at the time. Some scholars argue that the sensational nature of the story helped spread these narrations, e.g., [Ayyadd \[133\]](#) and [Al-Khazen \[62\]](#) who blame “those who are fond of anything strange” (المولعون بكل غريب).
2. Once the story was accepted by some scholars, a cascade of acceptance by others followed. The conflict between the story and what we know about God and His Prophet (PBUH) was either ignored or explained away.
3. The interpretation of a specific verse in the Quran was tilted to support the narrative, both in the case of the *Gharaneeq* story and in the case of the Abrogation Doctrine:

- Verse 22:52, [الحج : ٥٢] ﴿... أَلْقَى الشَّيْطَانُ فِي أُمْنِيَّتِهِ ...﴾ (“... Satan cast into his *umniyya* ...”) was made to fit the *Gharaneeq* story by ignoring its context (previous verse, 22:51) which points to a different interpretation,<sup>4</sup> and stretching the Arabic word *umniyya* to signify one of its rare meanings: recitation.

- Verse 2:106, [البقرة : ١٠٦] ﴿... مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ ...﴾ (“Whatever verse We may abrogate ...”) was made to fit the Abrogation Doctrine by ignoring its context (previous verse, 2:105) which points to a different interpretation,<sup>5</sup> and stretching the word *verse* to signify an altered meaning: ruling in a verse.

The *Gharaneeq* story is now fully discredited. Some modern exegetes, such as [Ibn Ashur \[153\]](#), [Al-Maraghi \[69\]](#), and [Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#), only mention the story as an obvious mistake in history and reprimand those who advocated it. [Qutb \[191\]](#) dismisses it in decisive terms: “it is not proper to be a subject of discussion” (لا يصح أن يكون موضوعاً للمناقشة), and other modern exegetes don’t even mention it at all, e.g., [Al-Qasimi \[77\]](#), [AIRA \[131\]](#), and [SCIA \[201\]](#). Modern narration scholar [Al-Albani \[16\]](#) wrote a dedicated book that demolishes

<sup>4</sup>See the context and interpretation of verse 22:52 in §11.4.

<sup>5</sup>See the context and interpretation of verse 2:106 in §9.4.1.

the story, both in terms of its sourcing and its substance.<sup>6</sup>

This does not mean that we do not see some individuals re-adopting the story from time to time. That is inevitable in a diverse community of scholars. The key point is that the story has dropped out of mainstream Islamic thought for centuries now. For scholars who have profound reservations about such a story, and would have had to conform to its widespread acceptance, this must be quite a relief.

- The second historical instance of something that was widely accepted and was later refuted is related directly to the Abrogation Doctrine. It is the claim that verse 2:240 that gave a year-long residence right to widows was abrogated by verse 2:234 that specified her grace period as a shorter horizon. We discussed this abrogation claim in great detail in §4.1.

Almost every abrogation book from the first six *hijri* centuries approved this abrogation claim, including Ibn Sallam [171], Al-Nahhas [71], Ibn Salama [170], Al-Baghdadi [24], Makki [184], and Ibn Al-Jawzi [147]. Major exegetes from that era, most notably Al-Tabari [107], also approved the claim.

It went beyond just approving it. Some scholars of that era considered the claim strong enough to be used as proof that the Abrogation Doctrine in general must be valid. Al-Jassas [56] uses this claim as an example in a section called “*Evidence that abrogation is allowed*”. Al-Baji [28] uses this claim as an example of “*the validity of abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation*.” Al-Zahiri [121], trying to prove a point about the order of verses in the Quranic script, went as far as claiming that verse 2:240 is abrogated “*by unanimity of the entire nation*” (بإجماع الأمة كلها).<sup>7</sup>

In spite of this overwhelming support for the abrogation claim, some indications of dissent started to appear in the sixth *hijri* century. Al-Razi [83] discussed different views, for and against the abrogation claim, including a very early view by Mujahid that had not gained traction, and the view of Al-Asfahani that was widely dismissed. After discussing the different views, Al-Razi sided with non-abrogation.

Dissent gained a huge boost in the seventh and eighth *hijri* centuries when highly respected scholar Ibn Taymia rejected the claim. His student Ibn Kathir [163] published the dissenting view of Ibn Taymia, and expressed the same opinion himself; there is no abrogation because verse 2:234 is about *duties* of the widow whereas verse 2:240 is about *rights* of the widow. Obvious as this argument may be, it was still the stature of Ibn Taymia that gave it the leverage to be taken seriously.

The argument of Ibn Taymia and Ibn Kathir against the abrogation of verse

<sup>6</sup>Al-Albani chose a colorful title for the book, depicting catapults shooting at the story to demolish it.

<sup>7</sup>See §10.3 for a discussion of unanimity claims.

2:240 stood the test of time. It made it possible for later scholars to assert this obvious reconciliation between the two verses and reject the abrogation claim without repercussions. Nonetheless, that was not enough to completely reverse the impact of an entrenched tradition as many scholars continued to approve the claim in the centuries that followed, e.g., [Al-Suyuti \[100\]](#) and [Waliyullah \[203\]](#).

By the modern era, the obvious reconciliation argument has prevailed and scholars routinely reject the claim based on it. As [Zeid \[206\]](#) phrases it, “*and as it is intuitive that the right would not conflict with the duty, a verse that determines the right would not conflict with a verse that determines the duty*” وكما أن من البدهي أن الحق لا يعارض الواجب - فإن من البدهي ألا تتعارض آية تقرر الحق مع آية (تقرر الواجب). [Qutb \[191\]](#) also mentions right versus duty and quickly dismisses the abrogation claim. [Al-Shaarawi \[92\]](#) presents the reconciliation view as a forgone conclusion without even mentioning abrogation as an alternative.

It is puzzling how many scholars over the centuries did not embrace the obvious reconciliation argument. This abrogation claim is one of the easiest to refute. There is simply no conflict between the two verses. Yet, it is one of the most famous claims that persisted for centuries.

This shows the power of a cascade. When some scholars take one side, it becomes more difficult for subsequent scholars to take the other side, and the cascade grows as a result. It took the dissent of a towering figure like Ibn Taymia to break this cascade. Once it was broken, the lack of substance in the claim gradually prevailed over the sheer number of supporters that the claim had had before.

Similar to the reversal in the case of the *Gharaneeq* story, reversal in the support of the abrogation claim of verse 2:240 is still not universal. Some scholars choose to present both the abrogation view and the reconciliation view without taking sides, e.g., [Ibn Uthaymin \[177\]](#). Some scholars still support the claim and even use it as proof for the Abrogation Doctrine, e.g., [Farghali \[136\]](#). Nonetheless, rejecting the claim is now the norm, whereas in the early centuries, accepting it was not only the norm, it was so strong that [Al-Zahiri \[121\]](#) claimed it was unanimous.

What was the impact of reversing the long tradition in this instance? The main impact was removing the source of an injustice that was committed in the name of this abrogation claim. There is no question that there were Muslim women who were in a most vulnerable position, having lost their husbands, who were then deprived of a right that God explicitly mandated for them.<sup>8</sup> This right would have given them time to get back on their feet. It was taken away under the pretense of an abrogation claim that passed from generation to generation, until it was corrected centuries later.

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<sup>8</sup>See §4.1.1 for scholarly quotes about how definitive this mandate is.

Correcting a course of action that resulted from the opinions of past scholars does not mean disrespect for those scholars. On the contrary, it means that we are honoring them by doing what they expressly asked us to do, namely to *not* follow their opinions without critically examining their reasoning. As we noted earlier, [Ibn Al-Qayyim \[150\]](#) reported that all four Imams of Islamic schools of thought, Abu-Hanifa, Malik, Al-Shafei, and Ibn Hanbal, “*admonished against imitating them, and disparaged those who take their opinion without proof.*”

#### point of interest

We owe the scholars of the early centuries of Islam an immense debt of gratitude for the gigantic body of knowledge that they created. Not only did they do that with very limited resources, but sometimes they did it at considerable personal risk.

No one after the death of the Prophet (ﷺ) is infallible. When a scholar inadvertently makes a mistake, like that of approving a false abrogation claim that deprives some Muslims of a God-given right, there is no question that the scholar would have wanted that mistake to be corrected. Honoring him is to correct the mistake, not to let it propagate. This is how we would be on his side, not on the side of a mistake.

That last point was inscribed into Islamic conduct by a Prophetic narration. The Prophet (ﷺ) was addressing his fellows about what to do if a Muslim brother is being wronged, and what to do if he is wronging others. He told them to help their brother prevail, whichever side he was on. Someone naturally asked: I help him prevail when he is on the right side, but how could I do that when he is on the wrong side? The Prophet (ﷺ) answered: “*By stopping him from the wrong; that’s how he would prevail*” ([Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#)).

### 12.3.2 Going Forward

There are lessons to be learned from the two historical instances that we have just discussed, the *Gharaneeq* story and the widow’s abrogation claim, about what happens when a long-standing concept within Islamic scholarship is reversed. Two lessons are clear. The reversal happens gradually, and not everyone will accept it.

We would like to address the same question in the case of the Abrogation Doctrine. Of course, the doctrine has not yet been reversed. However, one may argue that the reversal process has already started, given the unprecedented number of scholars over the past century who openly rejected the doctrine as we have seen in §11.3.

What would happen if the refutation of the doctrine gained traction? The magnitude of the doctrine is significantly bigger than either of the two instances we already discussed, in terms of the penetration it has in various parts of Islamic thought such as exegesis, jurisprudence, etc. However, when it comes to the practical impact that the doctrine has, it may not be that big anymore.

Over the centuries, the practical impact of the Abrogation Doctrine has been gradually depleted through the diminishing number of abrogation claims that are still approved. The two most agreed claims, that of verses 73:1-4 about night prayer (§5.3) and that of verse 58:12 about private consultation (§5.1) have no practical impact. In the case of night prayer, we are not required to do this prayer whether the claim is valid (hence the requirement was abrogated) or not (hence the requirement applied only to the Prophet (PBUH)). In the case of private consultation, whatever requirement there was ended with the death of the Prophet (PBUH).

The claims that had significant practical impact, such as that of the sword verse (§6.2) and the widow's residence (§4.1), have now been thoroughly refuted. In some sense, the Abrogation Doctrine has been stripped of its power by eliminating its influential claims rather than by rejecting the doctrine as a whole. This is somewhat similar to a king who used to rule, and now 'owns but does not rule' and is just a symbolic figure. This was a way to effectively reject the Abrogation Doctrine without explicitly rejecting it (Al-Banna [29]).

So why is this not a satisfactory compromise? Why stir up a hornet's nest by overruling the doctrine itself, thus contradicting so much of the Islamic literature by so many respected scholars? The reason is simple. The truth has priority. We must "... counsel each other with the truth ..." [103:3] ﴿... وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ ...﴾ [العصر: ٣]. Otherwise, we will be 'lingering in a loss' (لَفِي خُسْرٍ).

Moreover, the cost of reversal may not be as severe as some think. Take the *Gharaneeq* story for example. There was no practical impact for the story in daily life whether it was accepted or rejected. Yet, it was paramount to reject it in order to cleanse the religion from an ugly myth that compromised its crisp beliefs. When this was achieved, the benefit of standing for those beliefs far outweighed any implications about past literature or past scholars.

There have indeed been ideological consequences for the Abrogation Doctrine (Tahir [202]), even as its practical impact has diminished. Rejecting the doctrine altogether will rid the future of these consequences. However, we do not reject the doctrine because of its harmful consequences. We reject it because it is not true. We are only addressing these consequences that rejecting the doctrine will eliminate because this is the subject at hand. Here are some examples that we have covered in more detail in §11.1.

Rejecting the Abrogation Doctrine will put an end to reciting Quranic

verses with the intention of not following them, under the pretense of abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation. This prevents a trap that the Quran warns about in decisive terms: “It is greatly detested in the sight of God that you say what you do not do.” [61:3] ﴿كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾ [الصَّف: ٣]. Even if they are only a few verses whose abrogation claims have survived so far, a Muslim would still be untruthful in reciting those verses with no intention of following them. Ironically, this untruthfulness is happening while he is reading the words of God.

Rejecting the Abrogation Doctrine will also eliminate the uncertainty that abrogation claims have injected into the Quran. When anyone reads a verse, they will have no doubt about whether it is valid, as promised by: “This book - there is no doubt in it ...” [2:2] ﴿ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢]. The search for abrogated verses, which devolved into a competition to find more of them, resulted in **432 abrogation claims** over the centuries. This shows the magnitude of this uncertainty.

Rejecting the Abrogation Doctrine will therefore make us read the Quran with the proper attitude: “Don’t they ponder the Quran? If it had been from [any] other than God, they would have found in it much disagreement”[4:82] ﴿أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا﴾ [النساء: ٨٢]. When we perceive a conflict, we will recognize that it is only our perception, and we will think deeply to understand the subtleties in the verses that create harmony, not conflict.

Finally, rejecting the Abrogation Doctrine will put an end to blatant inconsistencies that compromise the integrity of Islamic scholarship:

1. We are not going to require the knowledge of which verses are abrogated as a prerequisite for every scholar, when in fact all the pro-abrogation scholars have not agreed on even one abrogation claim.
2. We are not going to raise the requirement for abrogation of a Quranic verse when we theorize about it, then lower that requirement when we apply it to a given claim.

The Abrogation Doctrine, which permitted the annulment of certain Quranic rulings, has been one of the most polarizing issues in Islamic scholarship. To the proponents of the doctrine, it is a settled matter and overruling it would be an unacceptable *bidaa* (novelty). To the opponents of the doctrine, it is fundamentally flawed and has been the biggest *bidaa* in Islamic history as it overrules the Quran itself. Every scholar should look at the evidence objectively and decide, in their heart of hearts, where the truth is.





In the Quran, God describes Islam as دين الحق - *the religion of truth*. For more than a decade, we sought the truth above any other consideration in researching the abrogation issue. Whatever we have done right, we thank God for enabling us to do it. Whatever we have done wrong, we ask for His forgiveness.

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# Part IV

## Attachments

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WE now include attachments that complement the material of the book. The three attachments are the Appendix, the References section, and the Index.

We have a 7-part Appendix that covers the side notes, the list of abrogation claims, the full text of all authentic narrations about abrogation claims, short biographies of some scholars, the full time line of pertinent scholars over the centuries, the order of revelation in the Quran, and a discussion of types of abrogation outside the scope of the Abrogation Doctrine.

We follow with the References section which has bibliographical information of all the references that were cited in this book. We close with a 3-part Index; index of terms, index of personalities, and index of Quranic verses.

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# Appendix

## A.1 Side Notes

The following notes are detailed comments about the points referenced by margin numbers throughout the book. The page numbers point to the first instance where the note is referenced.

1 [PAGE 3] The claim of abrogation of the Quranic passage “There is no compulsion in religion ...” [البقرة : ٢٥٦] ﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ...﴾ appears in a number of older references on abrogation, e.g., Ibn Sallam [171], Ibn Salama [170], and Ibn Al-Jawzi [147]. The claim has been largely dismissed (see Zeid [206]), and it is seldom even acknowledged in the abrogation literature over the past several centuries. We address this claim and related claims in §6.2.

2 [PAGE 5] Over the centuries, a number of technical definitions of abrogation were introduced (Zeid [206]) in addition to the linguistic meanings of *naskh*. While these definitions emphasized different angles such as duration and termination of the rulings involved, and used different terms for the details of abrogation, they all asserted that a ruling in the Quranic script has been annulled as a result of abrogation. This annulment is what we address in this book regardless of all other aspects of the definitions of abrogation.

3 [PAGE 6] The fact that the Prophet (PBUH) has never designated a verse in the Quranic script as abrogated is not challenged in the literature, and is specifically mentioned in the book of Al-Amidi [18]. As Asad [130] states it, “there does not exist a single reliable Tradition to the effect that the Prophet ever declared a verse of the Qur’an to have been ‘abrogated.’”

4 [PAGE 7] The Arabic text of the part of the narration about the graves (“I [Muhammad] had forbidden you from visiting the graves; now visit them”) is “نهيتكم عن زيارة القبور، فزوروها” (من رواية أبي موسى الأشعري وبريدة بن الحصيب).

The narration was reported and rated authentic (صحيح) by Muslim [189] and narrated by Abu-Musa Al-Ashaari and Burayda ibn Al-Husayb. There are other narrations that similarly address the part about visiting the graves.

5 [PAGE 8] The fact that none of the abrogation claims has unanimous approval among pro-abrogation scholars can be established by looking at just four scholars; Shah Waliyullah, Mostafa Zeid, Abu-Jaafar Al-Nahhas, and Jamal Al-Deen Al-Isnawi. All four are pro-abrogation as evidenced by their approval of some abrogation claims as we will elaborate.

Waliyullah approved only the claims that verses 2:180, 2:240, 8:65, 33:52, and 58:12 are abrogated, and rejected all other abrogation claims (Waliyullah [203]). Zeid approved only the claims that verses 4:15-16, 4:43, 8:65, 58:12, and 73:1-4 are abrogated, and rejected all other abrogation claims (Zeid [206]). Thus the only two claims that they both approved are the Steadfastness in Battle claim (verse 8:65, discussed in §5.2) and the Private Consultation claim (verse 58:12, discussed in §5.1).

Al-Nahhas rejected the first of these two claims, the Steadfastness in Battle claim (Al-Nahhas [71]). He approved many other abrogation claims, e.g., the abrogation of verse 2:240 about widow’s residence (Al-Nahhas [71]).

Al-Isnawi rejected the second of the two claims, the Private Consultation claim (Al-Isnawi [52]). He approved other abrogation claims, e.g., the abrogation of verse 2:240 about widow’s residence (Al-Isnawi [52]). Here are some details of his discussion of the Private Consultation claim:

1. He cites Al-Asfahani’s refutation of the claim and Al-Urmawi’s rebuttal to it (Al-Urmawi [114] referred to by the book title ‘The Yield’ - الحاصل), then knocks down Al-Urmawi’s rebuttal as inconsistent with another opinion of his (Al-Urmawi [114]) related to the Contingency validation rule.
2. He then cites another rebuttal to Al-Asfahani’s view, this time by Imam Al-Baydawi, and counters this rebuttal, again siding with the rejection of the abrogation claim.

Therefore, between Waliyullah, Zeid, Al-Nahhas, and Al-Isnawi, all abrogation claims have been rejected by at least one of these four pro-abrogation scholars. This establishes the fact that not a single abrogation claim has been agreed upon by all pro-abrogation scholars.

6 [PAGE 10] Abdullah Ibn Masoud (RA) is a distinguished fellow of the Prophet (PBUH) who moved to Iraq and established a scholarly center there. He died<sup>1</sup> in the *hijri* year 32;

عبد الله بن مسعود: ت ٣٢هـ

Here is a list of his most recognized fellows:

1. **Alqama ibn Qays** - died in the *hijri* year 62;

علقمة بن قيس النخعي الكوفي: ت ٦٢هـ

2. **Al-Aswad ibn Yazeed** (son of Alqama's brother) - died in the *hijri* year 75;

الأسود بن يزيد الكوفي (ابن أخي علقمة): ت ٧٥هـ

3. **Ibrahim Al-Nakhei** (son of Al-Aswad's sister) - died in the *hijri* year 96;

إبراهيم بن يزيد النخعي الكوفي (ابن أخت الأسود): ت ٩٦هـ

4. **Al-Harith ibn Qays** - died in the *hijri* year 77;

الحارث بن قيس الجعفي الكوفي: ت ٧٧هـ

5. **Ubayda ibn Aamer Al-Salmāni** - died in the *hijri* year 73;

عبدة بن عامر السلماني المرادي الكوفي: ت ٧٣هـ

6. **Masrooq ibn Al-Ajdaa** - died in the *hijri* year 62;

مسروق بن الأجدع الكوفي: ت ٦٢هـ

For perspective, Abdullah Ibn Abi-Najeeh who attributed the key narration about abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation to the fellows of Ibn Masoud died in the *hijri* year 131;

عبد الله بن أبي نجيع المكي: ت ١٣١هـ

while Mujahid ibn Jabr who was included in the chain of narration by Ibn Abi-Najeeh died in the *hijri* year 103;

مجاهد بن جبر المكي: ت ١٠٣هـ

7 [PAGE 11] In his comprehensive book about the Quran, [Al-Suyuti \[100\]](#) narrows down the abrogation claims to twenty and discusses those claims briefly,

<sup>1</sup>It is customary to identify early scholars by their date of death rather than their date of birth. Records of birth were not kept in that era. When they became known scholars, their date of death became noteworthy and was recorded.

referring to a more detailed account in another manuscript that he wrote which he described as “تأليف لطيف” (nice composition) without specifying the title of the manuscript.

A footnote by the verifier of the above book mentions a pointer to that manuscript. The same pointer is also mentioned in a reference by [Al-Shaybani \[97\]](#) entitled “*Guide to Manuscripts of Al-Suyuti and their Locations*”. It specifies the location of the manuscript to be the Sulaymaniya Library in Istanbul, Turkey.

We visited this library and examined the manuscript in person with the help of the library administration. Unfortunately, it is mislabeled and is not Al-Suyuti’s manuscript. We also examined several other labeled and unlabeled manuscripts about abrogation there, and none of them was Al-Suyuti’s.

Further attempts to locate the manuscript were not successful, thus confirming the statement by [Zeid \[206\]](#) that he did not encounter the manuscript. It is remarkable that despite the loss of the manuscript, Al-Suyuti’s views about abrogation had a full impact based only on the summary writeup in his other book.

8 [PAGE 22] Narrations refer to two words in Arabic, حديث (*hadith*) and أثر (*athar*). Imam Ibn Baz was asked about the difference between *athar* and *hadith*. He answered that both terms have been used interchangeably to mean a narration that traces back to the Prophet (PBUH) or one of his Fellows (RA). But some scholars, notably those from the Khorasan region, called for a distinction between the two terms, that *hadith* traces back to the Prophet and *athar* doesn’t. This has become the most frequent usage of the two terms according to Ibn Baz. We follow this convention in this book by calling the *hadith* Prophetic narration and *athar* a narration.

9 [PAGE 24] The statement that “the uncertain does not abrogate the certain” has a subtle flaw. Uncertainty in sourcing relates only to whether the words truly belong to the Prophet (PBUH). It is still possible that he did say those words, but there is simply no way to find out if he did.

If abrogation of a Quranic verse by a Prophetic narration was possible, and the Prophet (PBUH) did say those words, then abrogation took place even if we are uncertain about it. The subtle flaw is that being uncertain about something is not the same as knowing that it did not happen.

If we are just deducing what the ruling should be, then “the uncertain does not abrogate the certain” applies in the sense that “we cannot overrule a ruling that is certain based on another ruling that is uncertain”. However, if we are addressing the question of whether one ruling did abrogate the other,



the truthful answer to this specific question is “there is no way to find out”.

10 [PAGE 26] Literary scholars of Arabic have identified the following as methods of elaboration of text:

- Disambiguating a vagueness (تفسير المُبْهَم)
- Defining a generic (تقييد المُطْلَق)
- Detailing a brief (تفصيل المُجْمَل)
- Specifying a generality (تخصيص العام)

The difference between these methods is technical as each helps explain the effect on the text they elaborate. A vagueness is an ambiguous word or phrase. Elaborating it, therefore, is done by disambiguation. A generic is an unambiguous but broad word or phrase. Elaborating it, therefore, is done by defining it. A brief is an undetailed word or phrase. Elaborating it, therefore, is done by detailing it. A generality is an unspecific word or phrase. Elaborating it, therefore, is done by specifying it.

Specification may be done by qualification, exception, license, or alternatives. Qualification of a text is done by specifying to whom it applies. Exception is to specify to whom it does not apply. Specification may also be done by handling conditions that are relevant to the text being elaborated. For instance, a license gives an allowance and alternatives give options.

The following are some examples of that.

﴿لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ  
الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا﴾ [النساء : ٧]

[4:7] To men shall be a share of what the parents and relatives have left and to women shall be a share of what parents and relatives have left - a determinate share.

In this verse about inheritance, “men”, “women”, and “relatives” are all generic until they were defined in subsequent verses 4:11-12 and 4:176. Also, “a share” is a brief until it was detailed in verses 4:11-12 and 4:176 as well. The purpose of using generics and a brief is to establish a principle first before getting into the details. That principle is that women also shall inherit and that inheritance shares are mandated by God, not by man.

Another example,

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾ أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ وَأَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿البقرة: ١٨٣-١٨٤﴾

[2:183] O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that perhaps you may attain piety.

[2:184] Numbered days. So whoever among you was ill or on a journey [during them] - then a[n equal] number of other days [are to be fasted]. And upon those would endure [the fast] - a ransom of feeding a poor person. And whoever volunteers better - it is better for him. And to fast is better for you, if you would know.

In these verses about ritual fasting, the particulars of fasting, the number of days to fast, when it is to start and end each day, and in what month are all missing from the brief mandate of fasting. The reason they are not detailed yet is to establish the principle of a mandatory fast first and to explain why it has been mandated: so that believers may attain piety. The month was defined in subsequent verse 2:185 to be Ramadan. The times to begin and end the fast were defined in subsequent verse 2:187 and the Prophet (PBUH) detailed the particulars of fasting in his practice (the *sunna*).

Verse 2:184 further makes two specifications: (a) a license for the ill and the traveling to make up the fast later, and (b) an alternative, an expiation for those who can hardly bear to fast, by feeding a poor person for each day they do not fast.

Finally, an example of disambiguating a vagueness,

﴿ وَالسَّمَاءِ وَالطَّارِقِ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الطَّارِقُ ﴿٣١﴾ النَّجْمُ الثَّاقِبُ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾ [الطارق: ٣-١]

[86:1] By the sky and by the knocker.

[86:2] And what could make you understand what the knocker is?

[86:3] [It is] the piercing star.

Here, the third verse disambiguates the vagueness of the word “the knocker” mentioned in the first verse. The purpose of using a vague word first is to draw attention to its grandeur.

**11** [PAGE 27] We described the effect of refuting all the known abrogation claims as “rendering the Abrogation Doctrine moot” rather than “proving that the

Abrogation Doctrine is false” because of a subtle point. The Abrogation Doctrine asserts that there are abrogated verses in the Quranic script, notwithstanding that none are designated as such. Given that, it is conceivable that there would be abrogated verses outside the known abrogation claims.

However, as we elaborate in §11.1.3, having abrogated verses in the Quranic script that cannot be identified goes against the Quranic promise:

﴿ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢]

[2:2] This Book - there is no uncertainty in it ...

As Al-Zahiri [121] phrases it, “It cannot at all be that God Almighty left us in blindness and loss, not knowing forever is this ruling abrogated or not abrogated? This is something we were spared from ever occurring” (لا يجوز) البتة أن يكون الله تعالى تركنا في عمياء وضلالة، لا ندرى معها أبداً، هل هذا الحكم منسوخ أو البتة أن يكون الله تعالى تركنا في عمياء وضلالة، لا ندرى معها أبداً، هل هذا الحكم منسوخ أو (غير منسوخ؟ هذا أمر قد أمنا وقوعه أبداً). We only used the expression “rendering the Abrogation Doctrine moot” out of an abundance of caution about the logical consequence.

12 [PAGE 43] A technical point about reconciling the two verses of this claim is worth mentioning. The command “watch out for God as much as you can” in verse 64:16 is interpreted as a lighter version of the command “watch out for God as He ought to be watched” in verse 3:102. Strictly speaking, there is no irreconcilable conflict between the two commands because neither of them would be violated if the heavier command is followed. The conflict comes from assuming that the lighter command implies that the heavier command is no longer required. It is a reasonable assumption, but an assumption nonetheless.

Al-Shaarawi [92] provides an interesting view about the impact of following each of the two commands. He argues that trying to follow the heavier command will be successful in very limited cases, and it would be more beneficial to settle for the lighter command because it can be followed much more often.

13 [PAGE 45] Monasticism is mentioned in the Quran in the context of the followers of Jesus (PBUH):

﴿... وَرَهْبَانِيَّةً ابْتَدَعُوهَا مَا كَتَبْنَاهَا عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ فَمَا رَعَوْهَا حَقَّ رِعَايَتِهَا ...﴾ [الحديد: ٢٧]

[57:27] ... and monasticism, which they innovated; We did not prescribe it for them except [that they did so] seeking the approval of God. But they did not observe it with due observance ...

The verse asserts that monasticism is an innovation not mandated by God, that the followers of Jesus (PBUH) meant it as a way to please God, and that it was not practiced properly. There are also reported Prophetic narrations against practicing monasticism in Islam, but their authenticity is questionable.

**14** [PAGE 71] A central word in verse 2:184 is “يُطِيقُونَهُ” which we translated to ‘would endure [the fast]’. The word characterizes the exemption from the fast that is subject to the abrogation claim by verse 2:185. Discussion of the claim tends to focus in large part on the interpretation of this word. Opinions have been expressed that the word signifies ‘is able to do, but with difficulty’ or just ‘is able to do’, with some interpretations postulating that it is a metaphor for ‘unable to do’.

However, which interpretation of the word is more plausible is immaterial to the abrogation discussion. Here is why. Regardless of the interpretation of the word, there is a certain exemption in verse 2:184 that is not mentioned again in verse 2:185. The reconciliation arguments in Step C have to do with why this exemption is still valid notwithstanding that it was not mentioned again, independently of what the exemption specifically entails.

**15** [PAGE 73] The endurance exemption from fasting in verse 2:184, “... And upon those who would endure [the fast] - a ransom of feeding a poor person ...” ﴿... وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ...﴾ [البقرة : ١٨٤] is not repeated in verse 2:185. [Al-Baghawi \[23\]](#) asserts that the exemptions that are repeated are confirmed while the exemption that was not repeated has been abrogated.

However, there are other instances in the Quran of something not repeated but still valid. An example is the qualifier “after a bequest that is willed, or debt [to be paid off]” that is mentioned (with different conjugations of a verb) in two verses about inheritance (4:11-12) as something that needs to be taken care of before the mandated shares of the estate are distributed among the heirs. In a third verse about inheritance (4:176), further instructions about distributing the shares of the estate are mandated, but without the qualifier “after a bequest that is willed, or debt [to be paid off]”.

There is not a single scholar that we know of who asserted that the shares mandated in 4:176 are not subject to the qualifier and are to be distributed from the full estate before bequests or debt. It stands to logic, as the qualifier has already been established and need not be repeated to remain valid.

**16** [PAGE 94] While the claim that verse 58:12 was abrogated has now been refuted, the reader may have some lingering questions. We present next such

questions and propose answers to them based on what exegetes and scholars of circumstances of revelation have written. It should be noted that these answers are educated guesses of the scholars or derived from their writings. That is because the narrations they relied on were all ‘singles’ and most were inauthentic.

- 1) Why did the poor not partake in the explicit exemption granted to them in verse 58:12?

Answer: This is an important question to ponder, especially since, as reported in a Prophetic narration authenticated by [Al-Albani \[11\]](#), “*God loves that His licenses are taken just as He hates that His prohibitions are violated*” (رَوَى ابْنُ حَنْبَلٍ وَابْنُ حَبَّانٍ عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى يُحِبُّ أَنْ تُؤْتِيَ (رَخَصَهُ كَمَا يَكْرَهُ أَنْ تُؤْتِيَ مَعْصِيَتَهُ).

The scholars agreed that verse 58:12 addresses two groups of people seeking private counsel with the Prophet (ﷺ): those who can afford to pay a token charity and those who cannot. They also agreed that verse 58:13 addresses two subgroups of people both of whom did not comply with the charity requirement. The first group was those who were afraid of becoming poor if they offered a charity before consultation,<sup>2</sup> and the second group was those who could but chose not to.<sup>3</sup> Both groups, as a result, stopped going for private counsel with the Prophet (ﷺ). Many scholars, such as [Al-Tibi \[112\]](#), [Al-Thaalabi \[110\]](#) and [Al-Maqdesi \[68\]](#) explained the cause of the stopping in the same way: the rich were stingy and the poor could not afford it.

An important corollary can therefore be drawn from that: the poor who could not afford to give the charity must have *thought they were not exempted* from it, despite the explicit exemption of them in verse 58:12. Why did they think that? One possible explanation is that they wanted to be on the safe side. They did not want to risk being disobedient to God even if it meant their questions went unasked. Another explanation could be that they felt embarrassed showing up for consultation with empty hands. Muslims of Medina were particularly praised in the Quran for their dignity,

﴿وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شَحْنَ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾ [الحشر: ٩]

[59:9] And those who have settled at the abode and the faith before them love those who migrated to them, do not feel in their

<sup>2</sup>Several scholars, such as [Al-Maqdesi \[68\]](#) and [Al-Tibi \[112\]](#), interpreted the word أَشْفَقْتُمْ in verse 58:13 as “*Did you fear poverty?*”.

<sup>3</sup>[Al-Mahalli \[67\]](#) understood it to be addressing only the poor. [Al-Khazen \[62\]](#) and [Al-Baghawi \[23\]](#) agreed.

chests a need of what they were given and prefer others to themselves even if they were with a dire need. He who has been protected from the stinginess of his soul, those are the prosperous.

- 2) Why did the stingy rich not pretend to have given a charity and then go for a consultation?

Answer: Muslims habitually gave their donations at the mosque in plain sight where the Prophet (PBUH) was in charge of distributing donations to the poor who came for assistance. Therefore, it was not practicable for someone to pretend to offer charity without actually doing so.

- 3) Given the easing interpretation (second interpretation in step C), what was the wisdom of starting with the harder command?

Answer: This is a question that is not particular to this claim. It is surely to rise with other claims as well. It is a question that has been contemplated much in the classic literature. Many scholars saw it as the wisdom of abrogation. Other scholars, such as [Al-Bahiyy \[25\]](#), saw it as the wisdom of gradual legislation. The question of abrogation is whether the original command was annulled. In the case at hand, verses 58:12-13, the command was only elaborated, hence no abrogation.

- 4) Did the time wasters<sup>4</sup> resume wasting the Prophet's time after the revelation of verse 58:13? If they did not then why not?

Answer: There is no authentic evidence either way. If they did not, one may conjecture that the reason is that either they knew they were exposed and their ploy was foiled, or because they thought that the charity requirement was not rescinded, that it remained applicable to all who could afford it and that includes them, that the command in verse 58:12 was not abrogated but rather an expiation for those wary of poverty was introduced by verse 58:13. They may have seen that verse 58:13 did not apply to them as they were rich and not wary of poverty.

[Al-Isnawi \[52\]](#) presents a logical argument, supported by a Prophetic narration, that provides a good reason to conclude that the ruling of verse 58:12 continued until the death of the Prophet (PBUH) and beyond that to his Fellows (RA). No other scholar that we know of has addressed this point.

His argument starts with accepting Al-Asfahani's argument that the purpose of revealing verse 58:12 was to filter out the hypocrites. Authentic narrations have reported that the Prophet (PBUH) already knew the names of the hypocrites and told them to his fellow, Huzayfa ibn Al-Yaman (RA). So, the Prophet (PBUH) could have filtered out the hypocrites by not welcoming them to private consultation, but it was not his nature to turn away

<sup>4</sup>The scholars agreed that the circumstances of revelation of verse 58:12 were that people took too much liberty when they sought the Prophet (PBUH) to ask him questions. Some would take him aside, while others sat in the same room. Some even asked him trivial questions. See [Al-Khazen \[62\]](#) and [Al-Baydawi \[31\]](#) for instance.

people. Besides, that would have exposed the hypocrites to the rest of the believers and the Prophet always hoped that some of them would mend their ways. That's why, presumably, he asked Huzayfa never to divulge the names.

Verse 58:12 provided a subtle way to filter out the hypocrites without exposing them *per se*. The fact that hypocrites continued to exist until the Prophet's death and beyond (Muslim [189]) means that the ruling of verse 58:12 had to continue so that they do not come back to wasting the Prophet's time and by extrapolation the time of his successors.

- 5) Given the license interpretation (second interpretation in step C), for whom was this license? Was it to the poor mentioned in verse 58:12, or the apprehensive, mentioned in verse 58:13? If it was the former, then the claim must have been about abrogating the beginning of verse 58:12 by its ending. Was that the scholars' opinion?

Answer: One narration stated that the ending of verse 58:12 was revealed later than its beginning and was a license of relief. The narration was told by Ibn Abi-Aruba quoting Al-Sadusi and Ibn Hayyan and mentioned, without authentication, by Ibn Kathir [163] and Al-Tabari [107]. Most narrations, however, have explicitly named verse 58:13 as the licensing verse, e.g., a narration by Mujahid mentioned in several books such as Ibn Kathir [163].

The time that elapsed between the charity command and the license was said to be as little as one hour in some narrations and as much as ten days in other narrations. They all say that Ali (RA) was the only one who gave the charity and everyone else found that hard to do. All of these narrations are inauthentic, it should be noted.

In particular, no one has authenticated that narration that claims that the ending of verse 58:12 abrogated its beginning. The claim can be summarily dismissed because the exemption of the poor is an exception (استثناء) that falls under the **Elaboration** validation rule and therefore is not abrogation.

- 6) Was the command in verse 58:12 a mandate or a recommendation? If it was a recommendation then doesn't that mean it was never necessary to comply with it? If it was a mandate then don't the words "better for you and more purifying" mean that the alternative is still good and purifying?

Answer: Whether the command was a mandate or a recommendation is irrelevant to the abrogation claim; if it remains in effect, then it was not abrogated in either case. We've shown in the discussion of the claim that it was not. The issue of mandate-versus-recommendation is of interest, however, to jurisprudence. The scholars were split on that. Al-Shawkani [96] argued for the command being a recommendation and so did Al-Shaarawi [92]. Al-Baydawi [31] countered that argument by the fact that those who

cannot afford the charity are excused from it, so this implies to him that for those who can, it may well be a strict requirement.

Al-Maqdesi [68] concluded that the negative reaction of Muslims to the charity imperative was “an offense which God let pass” (“ذنب تجاوز الله عنه”) and that verse 58:13 stated the expiation for it to be a commitment to prayer, almsgiving, and obedience to God and His Messenger. Al-Baydawi [31] agrees that the reaction of the poor was pardoned, but does not describe the commitment to religious duties as an expiation.

- 7) Is it a valid reconciliation argument to say that the charity command served its purpose by stopping the time wasters and thus was no longer needed?

Answer: This argument was suggested by many scholars, such as Al-Asfahani (Al-Razi [83]) and Al-Shaarawi [92]. It is, however, unclear from what they argued whether they saw it as a recurring contingency, i.e., if it ever happens again the command returns so that would fall under the Contingency validation rule. Nada [190] opined that the contingency was recurring and, therefore, the command could not be abrogated.

- 8) Were there other valid reconciliation arguments offered in the literature?

Yes. For example, Al-Khodari [64] and Al-Saqqa [88] offered another argument, that verse 58:13 elaborates on the meaning of charity, that it does not have to be material, that acts of worship and obedience are also charity. This argument has merit because it is supported by a Prophetic narration (Al-Bukhari [35]) that says “Every virtue is a charity.” (كل معروف صدقة). We did not include more arguments in step C only because we already presented several valid arguments that are more than sufficient to make the case against abrogation.

- 9) Was the command in verse 58:12 particular to consultation with the Prophet (PBUH) only or does it extend to others?

This question is not relevant to reconciliation arguments, but it is a valid jurisprudence question. Hasaballah [139] and Nada [190] asserted that it applies only to the Prophet (PBUH). Other scholars argued that it may apply, by analogy, to scholars who get inundated by juristic questions. Al-Ghornati [47] mentions the different interpretations of the word المجالس (seated lectures) in verse 58:11 and how that affects whether the command in 58:12 applies only to the Prophet (PBUH). Whether it applies is irrelevant, however, to the abrogation question, because we have shown in the discussion of the claim that the command was not annulled.

17 [PAGE 94] The two versions of the main narration about verse 58:12 that was attributed to Ali (RA) are inauthentic according to the narration encyclopedia



[Al-Dorar Al-Saniyya](#) [89]. Here are the two versions in their original Arabic wording, together with their attribution information and conclusion.

**First version:**

عن عليّ بن أبي طالب أنه قال: في كتاب الله آية، ما عمل بها أحد قبلي، ولا يعمل بها أحد بعدي، وهي: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ﴾. كان لي دينار فبعته، فكننت إذا ناجيت الرسول، تصدقت بدرهم حتى نفذ؛ فنسخت بالآية الأخرى: ﴿أَشْفَقْتُمْ أَنْ تُقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَاتٍ﴾.

“In God’s book, there is a verse that no one before me put into action, and no one after me will put into action [quoting verse 58:12]. I had a *dinar* and I sold it [a *dinar* is a gold coin and a *dirham* is a silver coin worth a small fraction of a *dinar*. Selling a *dinar* means breaking it into *dirhams*] so when I consulted with the Messenger privately I gave a *dirham* for charity until I ran out. Then [verse 58:12] was abrogated by the other verse [quoting verse 58:13].”

الراوي: - | المحدث: القرطبي المفسر | المصدر: تفسير القرطبي | الصفحة أو الرقم: 20/323

خلاصة حكم المحدث: ضعيف

It is reported by [Al-Qurtubi](#) [80]. [Al-Dorar Al-Saniyya](#) [89] summarizes its ratings as “weak.”

**Second version:**

قال عليّ رضي الله عنه: إن في كتاب الله عز وجل آية ما عمل بها أحد قبلي ولا يعمل بها أحد بعدي: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ﴾. قال: فُرِضَتْ ثم نُسِخَتْ.

“In God’s book, there is a verse that no one before me put into action, and no one after me will put into action [quoting verse 58:12]. It was mandated then abrogated.”

الراوي: مجاهد بن جبر المكي | المحدث: المباركفوري | المصدر: تحفة الأحوذى | الصفحة أو الرقم: 8/288

خلاصة حكم المحدث: منقطع

It is reported by Mujahid. [Al-Dorar Al-Saniyya](#) [89] summarizes its ratings as “disconnected”.

18 [PAGE 95] [Al-Hakem](#) [48] reported a different sourcing of the narration about verse 58:12 attributed to Ali (RA), that no one else has although many echoed, and rated it “authentic per the criteria of Al-Bukhari and Muslim.” However,

no one else agreed with him. [Ibn Hajar \[156\]](#) rated it less than authentic. [S. Al-Zahabi \[119\]](#), who reviewed Al-Hakem's narrations, and often approved them, did not mention that narration.

Al-Hakem is one of the authenticators of *hadith*, not a reporter of any. He lived later than the time *hadith* authentication was reported and documented in books. The era of *hadith* reporting started at the beginning of the second *hijri* Century when Caliph Umar ibn Abdul-Aziz, worried that narrators were dying and narrations were being misquoted, ordered a number of scholars to begin collecting narrations and filtering out the ones with questionable authenticity.

Three books came out during that time, by [Malik \[185\]](#), Al-Darimi, and [Ibn Hanbal \[160\]](#), but they were compilations only without authentication. Authentication started in earnest when Al-Bukhari developed sensible criteria of authentication and followed through by traveling to where narrators lived to hear from them directly what they narrated and from whom they heard it. The result was his famous book of compilation of authentic *hadiths*, [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#). A side effect of it was the birth of the discipline of narrator appraisal (الجرح والتعديل).

Seven more books of *hadith* compilation, authentication and reporting followed, each with less strict authentication criteria than Al-Bukhari's to one degree or another. With *hadith* now documented, reliance on verbal narrations started to give way to quoting them from one of those books.

As these books garnered acceptance by Islamic scholars, some, such as [Ibn Hajar \[155\]](#), began to write books expounding on them. They also started to write books on the weaker narrations and explain why they were not included in the eight books, by pointing out faults in some of the narrators or gaps in the connectivity of the narration chain. Some also opined that there was no fault with some narrators who were regarded as weak. Al-Hakem was perhaps the most famous of those scholars.

When he published his book, [Al-Hakem \[48\]](#), he announced that he found 9000 narrations which, in his view, met the criteria of Al-Bukhari or Muslim or both. That announcement caused a ruckus among the scholar community. All the prominent scholars among his peers rejected his assertion and pointed out that his criteria were too lax for proper authentication.

S. Al-Zahabi who took the time to comment on most of Al-Hakem's narrations, was unequivocal in his criticism of Al-Hakem's narrations when he said "a quarter of his book is flimsy, unrecognized narrations that are not valid and some of that are fabricated" (مناكير واهيات لا تصح وفي بعض ذلك موضوعات). Ibn Hajar was more charitable. He tried to explain Al-Hakem's work by saying that he had no time to verify the authenticity and he died before he could ([Al-Hakem \[48\]](#)).

The consensus of *hadith* scholars has been that Al-Hakem's book is not to be considered as a reliable source of authentic *hadith*.

19 [PAGE 96] For reference, here is the original Arabic text of other inauthentic narrations about Ali (RA) in connection with the abrogation claim of verse 58:12.

- The narration attributed to Ibn Umar (RA) where he mentions blessings that Ali (RA) had that he would have loved to have, and one of them is the event of 58:12-13 ([Al-Tha'alabi \[110\]](#)):

قال ابن عمر: كان لعلِّي ثلاثة لو كان لي واحدة منهن كانت أحب إلي من حمر النعم: تزويجه فاطمة، وإعطاؤه الراية يوم خيبر، وآية النجوى.

- The narration attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) that says that only Ali (RA) offered charity of a *dinar* then the license (presumably of verse 58:13) was revealed ([Ibn Adel \[143\]](#)):

روي عن ابن جريج، والكلبي، وعطاء عن ابن عباس - رضي الله عنهم - أنهم نهوا عن المناجاة حتى يتصدقوا فلم ينجح أحد إلا علي تصدق بدینار، ثم نزلت الرخصة

- A similar statement about Ali (RA) in two narrations, this time attributed to Mujahid ([Al-Tabari \[107\]](#)):

حدثني محمد بن عمر، قال: ثنا أبو عاصم، قال: ثنا عيسى وحديثي الحارث، قال: ثنا الحسن، قال: ثنا ورقاء، جميعاً عن ابن أبي نجيح، عن مجاهد، في قوله: فَقَدَّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ قال: نُهَوُّوا عَنْ مَنَاجَاةِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى يَتَصَدَّقُوا، فَلَمْ يَنَاجِهِ إِلَّا عَلِيٌّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، قَدَّمَ دِينَاراً فَتَصَدَّقَ بِهِ، ثُمَّ أُنْزِلَتِ الرُّخْصَةُ فِي ذَلِكَ.

and

حدثني موسى بن عبد الرحمن المسروقي، قال: ثنا أبو أسامة، عن شبل بن عباد، عن ابن أبي نجيح، عن مجاهد، في قوله: يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدَّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ قال: نهوا عن مناجاة النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم حتى يتصدقوا، فلم ينجح إلا علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه، قدم ديناراً صدقة تصدق به، ثم أنزلت الرخصة.

20 [PAGE 96] The following are two narrations by Ibn Abbas (RA) about verse 58:12 that do not involve the story of Ali (RA). The narrations were mentioned by [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#), but they were not authenticated in the major narration books.

The first narration states that Muslims followed the directive of 58:12 and offered charity ahead of private consultation with the Prophet (PBUH), and then that was abrogated (using the word *naskh*) by almsgiving:

حدثني محمد بن سعد، قال: ثني أبي، قال: ثني عمي، قال: ثني أبي، عن أبيه، عن ابن عباس، قوله: يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ... إِلَى فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ قال: كان المسلمون يقدمون بين يدي النجوى صدقة، فلما نزلت الزكاة نسخ هذا.

The second narration states that requiring charity ahead of private consultation with the Prophet (PBUH) was to ease the burden on him (Muslims crowded him with questions, some trivial, and occupied his time), but Muslims stopped consulting with him as a result, so verse 58:13 was revealed where God broadened the license for them. This narration does not include the word *naskh* (abrogation):

حدثني علي، قال: ثنا أبو صالح، قال: ثني معاوية، عن علي، عن ابن عباس، قوله: فَقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ وذلك أن المسلمين أكثروا المسائل على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حتى شقوا عليه، فأراد الله أن يخفف عن نبيه فلما قال ذلك صبر كثير من الناس، وكفوا عن المسألة، فأنزل الله بعد هذا فَإِذَا لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَتَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ فوسَّعَ الله عليهم، ولم يضيق.

A more detailed discussion of the circumstances that surrounded the revelation of verses 58:12-13 is included in side note 16.

21 [PAGE 114] The interpretation of the command in verses 73:1-4 as imposing a requirement on anyone has also been debated (Al-Ghornati [47]). There is a spectrum of interpretations in terms of how mandatory the imperative tense in verse 73:2 is (قُمْ اللَّيْلُ - Arise in the night), as some recommendations in the Quran are stated in imperative tense as well (referred to in Arabic as النَّدْب which is a lighter degree of duty - الفَرَض).

In addition, Al-Ghornati [47] debates in detail what duration and frequency of the night prayers are implied by the verses. There is also a spectrum of interpretations about that.

However, since we are only addressing the abrogation question here, these interpretations are not relevant. The question here is whether the command in 73:1-4, whatever it entails, has been annulled by verse 73:20.

22 [PAGE 134] The full text of the narration that is used to support the claims of abrogation by the sword verse quotes the Prophet (PBUH) saying:

أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَشْهَدُوا أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ، وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ، فَإِذَا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ عَصَمُوا مِنِّي دِمَاءَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَّا بِحَقِّ الْإِسْلَامِ، وَحَسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ.

"I was ordered to fight people until they bear witness that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God,

*and establish prayers and provide almsgiving. If they do that, they have shielded their blood and money from me except with the right of Islam, and their accountability is with God.”*

The narration was authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#) who also authenticated other versions of it. [Muslim \[189\]](#) also authenticated versions of this narration, and so did [Abu-Dawoud \[3\]](#), among others.

Similar to the discussion of verse 9:5 (the sword verse), the key issue is whether the object of fighting is limited to a certain group rather than being everyone, everywhere. In the case of the sword verse, we argued that it is limited to those who violated their treaties with the Prophet (PBUH) as described in verse 9:1 and the subsequent verses. In the case of this narration, the key is the use of the word ‘people’:

“I was ordered to fight **people** until ... (أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أُقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى ...)

Could this word refer to a special group or does it always designate everyone, everywhere? In English, limited scopes of ‘people’ are sometimes employed, e.g., in “people leave their countries for a better life”. There is Quranic evidence that the Arabic word is also used to mean a special group. The following verse, which addresses a different subject, uses the word twice to mean special (and different) groups:

﴿الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ ...﴾ [آل عمران: ١٧٣]

[3:173] Those to whom **people** said, “Indeed, **people** have gathered against you so fear them” ...

It is obvious that the two groups, each referred to as ‘people’, are different since one group is warning Muslims against the other group. [Ibn Ashur \[153\]](#), who emphasizes linguistic aspects in his exegesis, comments on this part of the verse and mentions that ‘people’ can even be used to refer to one person.

Therefore, the word ‘people’ in the narration may be referring to a group of people rather than everyone, everywhere. The books that authenticated the narration did not provide its context to further pinpoint the meaning. However, several Quranic verses about tolerance and coexistence go against interpreting ‘people’ in the narration to mean everyone, everywhere. For example,

﴿وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ ...﴾ [الكهف: ٢٩]

[18:29] And say, “The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve.”...

Someone in the category “whoever wills - let him disbelieve” would certainly not

be expected to “bear witness that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God, and establish prayers and provide almsgiving” as the narration prescribes.

Indeed, as we mentioned on page 133, the four Caliphs (RA) who came after the Prophet (PBUH) never forced non-Muslims in the lands they conquered to enter Islam, so those people practiced their religions openly. It is obvious that the Caliphs would not have violated this Prophetic narration had it been meant to coerce everyone into Islam.

23 [PAGE 135] Al-Suyuti [100] dismissed all abrogation claims by the sword verse in one paragraph. He reasoned that this is a case of postponement of the fighting order rather than abrogation, and that the ruling moves between fighting and not fighting at different times contingent upon what necessitates that ruling (كل أمرٍ وُردَّ يجب امتثاله في وقتٍ ما، لعلّه تقتضي ذلك الحكم).

It is not clear whether he elaborated this argument further in his other manuscript dedicated to abrogation that was lost and never found (see side note 7). He does mention other opinions about abrogation by the sword verse in the claims that he approved (Al-Suyuti [100]).

24 [PAGE 162] The claimants that “the food of those who were given the Scripture is lawful for you” in verse 5:5 abrogated the prohibition of certain foods in other verses specifically identified the object of abrogation as the prohibition of animals that were slaughtered without mentioning God’s name. It is notable that the prohibition of pork meat, which is explicitly included in some of the verses, was not included by those claimants as part of what was abrogated.

In discussing this claim in §7.1, we did not address pork meat either because our only goal was to refute the actual abrogation claim made by the scholars. However, because pork meat was mentioned in the same list as meats that were subject to the abrogation claim, it is prudent to clarify how pork meat figures in this context.

The issue is that while Judaism prohibits pork, most Christian denominations allow it. Therefore, an apparent conflict would be that “the food of those who were given the Scripture” that was allowed by verse 5:5 would include pork, thus conflicting with the prohibition of pork in the other verses.

However, this conflict can be resolved. Some people affiliated with Christianity or Judaism do not follow religious rules. If those people eat a certain food that is forbidden by their religion, the mere fact that they eat it does not make it allowed for Muslims, notwithstanding the allowance of verse 5:5. So, what exactly is the criterion for invoking that allowance?

The key is the wording “those who were given the Scripture” in verse 5:5.

When those who came after the Scripture was given deviate from the foods allowed by that Scripture, they lose the basis for allowing their foods. For Christians, that Scripture is the Bible. Is pork meat among the foods allowed by the Bible?

The Old Testament of the Bible unambiguously prohibits pork meat. What Jesus (PBUH) *himself* conveyed during his life does not eliminate that prohibition. Indeed, Christians recognize that Jesus (PBUH) did not eat pork. Some Christian denominations, such as the *7th Day Adventist Church* which bases its fundamental beliefs on “Bible Only”, prohibit pork meat.

The logical conclusion is that the allowance for Muslims in verse 5:5 does not include pork meat. Therefore, it does not conflict with the other verses in the Quran that prohibit it.

Christians use other arguments, including statements made by key Christian figures after the departure of Jesus (PBUH) that they consider part of Christianity, to argue that pork meat is allowed for them. This does not affect our argument here. We are only concerned with what is allowed for Muslims according to verse 5:5 in the Quran. If later generations of Christians eat pork, this does not change what those who received the original Bible practiced, which is the only relevant issue for the ruling in verse 5:5.

25 [PAGE 185] There is another way to refute the claim against verse 2:221, which forbids Muslims from marrying polytheists. The verse was said to have been abrogated by verse 5:5 which allows Muslim men to marry chaste women from among the people of the Scripture (Christians and Jews).

The perceived conflict comes from the notion that people of the Scripture would be considered polytheist. But people of the Scripture are not polytheist. The distinction between the two communities is repeated many times in the Quran. For instance, verse 98:1 explicitly separates the two communities. Exegete [Al-Qurtubi \[80\]](#) supports this reconciliation argument.

In addition, a narration attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) calls verse 5:5 an exception from verse 2:221 and does not even mention the word *naskh* ([Ibn Sallam \[171\]](#)). The same book quotes a supporting opinion of Al-Awzaei and later a narration attributed to Ibn Jubair that specifically states that marrying Jewish and Christian women is allowed for Muslims, and defines polytheists to be worshipers of idols.

While [Ibn Sallam \[171\]](#) mentioned narrations attributed to Umar (RA) and his son Abdullah (RA) that they disliked and discouraged interfaith marriage, he also mentioned a number of fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) who married Christians and Jews, including Uthman (RA), the third Caliph in Islam.

26 [PAGE 185] There is a point that makes the claim of abrogation of verse 2:229 particularly tenuous. The verse already states the same principle that the abrogating verse 4:20 states; the husband should not take back what he has given to the wife. Thus verse 4:20 is not bringing a new rule, but reiterating the same rule of verse 2:229 with different wording.

Therefore, when verse 2:229 goes on to make an exception (in the case where the wife withdraws from the marriage - *khul-a*),

﴿... وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا إِلَّا...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٢٩]

[2:229] ... And it is not lawful for you (men) to take anything of what you have given to them (your wives) **except** ...

it is explicitly a case of exception from a general rule, not an abrogation, per the highlighted word. Repeating the general rule in verse 4:20 does not alter the fact that this is a case of exception, not abrogation.

27 [PAGE 206] In Arabic, the initial part of the 2:106 passage which we translated to “Whatever verse We may abrogate” uses the conditional construct ‘*ma ... min*’ (ما ... من). This construct has an ‘exhaustive’ semantic (الاستغراق) which was captured by our choice of the word ‘Whatever’ in the translation. It means that the conditional part applies to any abrogated verse, with no exceptions. This meaning is universally acknowledged as what the passage signifies.

Individually, the two Arabic words in the construct (*ma* - ما and *min* - من) can have other meanings, but the parsing of the full construct pins it down to the exhaustive conditional semantic as we translated it. Indeed, the same construct is used repeatedly in the Quran with the same semantics.

We tallied the use of the conditional *ma* (ما) in the Quran and found 10 other instances of it. These instances are in verses 2:110, 2:197, 2:215, 2:272, 2:273, 3:92, 3:115, 4:127, 8:60, and 35:2. In all 10 instances, the conditional *ma* comes with the same preposition *min* (من) with which it comes in 2:106. In all 10 cases, the meaning is unambiguously “whatever ... may ...” like the standard translation of 2:106.

28 [PAGE 211] Another narration about the circumstance of revelation of the abrogation verse 2:106 is also inauthentic. It was attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) and purported that the “cause to be forgotten” part of 2:106 was in response to certain Quranic verses being forgotten overnight ([Al-Jabri \[54\]](#)).

29 [PAGE 227] How Muslims treat previous scripture is captured in a Prophetic



narration authenticated by [Al-Albani \[10\]](#):

”ما حدثكم أهل الكتاب فلا تصدقوهم ولا تكذبوهم، وقولوا: آمنا بالله وكتبه ورسله، فإن كان حقا لم تكذبوهم، وإن كان باطلا لم تصدقوهم.“

*“Do not believe or disbelieve what People of the Book relate to you [from scripture], and say we believe in God and His books and His messengers. This way, if it is false, you didn’t believe it, and if it is true, you didn’t disbelieve it.”*

The narration tells us to be neutral towards the current versions of previous scripture. Does ‘neutral’ imply that it is abrogated? The narration makes it clear that there is no longer a mandate to follow previous scripture, which is precisely the premise of abrogation.

There is another point that we will address here for completeness. Have the unaltered parts of the original scripture, that survived in the altered version, been abrogated? The question is theoretical in nature since we don’t know for sure which parts these are. Nonetheless, it is a relevant question for this discussion.

Scholars believe that even original parts of previous scripture are subject to abrogation. [Abu-Elela \[4\]](#) argues that Judaism and Christianity in their original form were meant to be abrogated because those religions were intended for specific historical eras only. [Ibrahim \[178\]](#) refers specifically to the authentic version of previous religions as an object of abrogation when he talks about *“legislation from those before us if its conveyance to us was proved without doubt, and was not abrogated by our legislation”* (إذا ثبت نقله إلينا ثبوتا لا شك فيه،). [Al-Zarkashi \[125\]](#) talks about *“what God abrogated from the Torah by the Quran and the Bible.”*

Notwithstanding the difference of opinions, the following Quranic passage leaves no ambiguity about what to follow,

﴿وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا ...﴾ [المائدة : ٤٨]

[5:48] And We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], the Book in truth, confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture and dominant over it. So judge between them by what God has revealed and do not follow their inclinations away from what has come to you of the truth. To each of you We prescribed a legislation and a methodology ...

The Quran is dominant over previous scripture, so for any ruling that is different, the Quranic ruling abrogates the previous ruling. The passage further asserts that there are indeed differences between one scripture and another as

it says that each nation has its own ‘legislation and methodology’. Notwithstanding such differences, the Quran confirms the legitimacy and the core message of prior scripture.

30 [PAGE 227] The division of the Quran into 30 parts with sub-parts, as it is currently organized in every copy of the Quranic script, happened in stages. There are several accounts of early attempts to divide the Quran into parts, most notably seven parts, and later attempts to divide it evenly based on the exact number of letters. The final division we have today took shape some time in the 2nd *hijri* century. What is certain is that the Prophet (ﷺ) did not divide the Quran nor suggest that it may be divided in any way other than into chapters and verses.

31 [PAGE 240] Al-Albani [10], a modern *hadith* scholar who lived in the 20th century, authenticated this narration that was not considered authentic before. The narration reports an incident where the Prophet (ﷺ) forgot one of the verses as he was reciting the Quran during a prayer and was reminded about it after the prayer. The Arabic text is

عن ابن أبي عن أبيه أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أغفل آية، فلما صلى قال: أفي القوم أبي؟ فقال أبي: آية كذا نسخت أم نسيته؟ قال: بل أنسيته

It is a case of simple forgetfulness, and Al-Albani comments that it is evidence that one may remind the leader of a prayer if he forgets something as he recites the Quran (الفتح على الإمام).

A related narration authenticated by Ibn Hibban [161] similarly reports a forgetfulness incident after which a man inquired if that skipped verse had been abrogated. The Prophet (ﷺ) said that the man should have reminded him of it and that it was not abrogated. The Arabic text is

عن المسور بن يزيد قال: شهدت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قرأ في الصلاة فتعابا في آية فقال رجل: يا رسول الله، إنك تركت آية قال: **فهل أذكرتنيها؟** قال: ظننت أنها قد نسخت قال: فإنها لم تُنسخ

Again, it is a case of simple forgetfulness that was corrected.

32 [PAGE 245] There are three versions of the narration by Ibn Abi-Najeeh about the separation of recitation of a Quranic verse from its ruling, interpreting the opening part of verse 2:106 “Whatever verse We may abrogate” to mean ‘We fix its script and substitute its ruling’ (نُثَبِّتُ حَقَّهَا، وَنُبَدِّلُ حُكْمَهَا). The interpretation is attributed to the fellows of Ibn Masoud. For reference, we include the full

Arabic text that [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) provided when he reported the narration, together with English commentary about key points.

The first version of the narration has Ibn Abi-Najeeh quoting the fellows of Ibn Masoud directly. It is the version that [Zeid \[206\]](#) considers reliable:

حدثني محمد بن عمرو، قال: ثنا أبو عاصم، قال: ثنا عيسى، عن ابن أبي نجيح، عن أصحاب عبد الله ابن مسعود أنهم قالوا: ما ننسخ من آية نثبت خطها ونبدل حكمها.

The person who narrated from Ibn Abi-Najeeh in this version is called Issa, whom [Zeid \[206\]](#) identifies as Issa Al-Jurashi (عيسى بن ميمون الجُرشي). According to [Ibn Hajar \[159\]](#), Al-Jurashi was a Fatalist like Ibn Abi-Najeeh.

The second and third versions are narrated by Ibn Abi-Najeeh through Mujahid who in turn quotes the fellows of Ibn Masoud. According to Ibn Hibban, everyone who quoted Mujahid in matters of exegesis took those quotes from the writings of Al-Qasim Ibn Abi-Bazza, the scholar who did hear Mujahid directly ([Ibn Hajar \[159\]](#)). Therefore, many scholars dismissed narrations where Ibn Abi-Najeeh quotes Mujahid directly, and [Zeid \[206\]](#) dismissed the second and third versions of this narration because of it. Here is the second version:

وحدثني المثنى، قال: ثنا أبو حذيفة، قال: ثنا شبل، عن ابن أبي نجيح، عن مجاهد: ما ننسخ من آية نثبت خطها، ونبدل حكمها، حدث به عن أصحاب ابن مسعود.

In this version, Shibl is the one who quotes Ibn Abi-Najeeh and is identified by [Zeid \[206\]](#) as Shibl Ibn Abbad Al-Makki (شبل بن عباد المكي). He is also a Fatalist according to Abu-Dawoud ([Ibn Hajar \[159\]](#)).

The third and final version is unique in that its wording does not include ‘and substitute its ruling’ (وَنُبَدِّلُ حُكْمَهَا) which is the basis for the separation of recitation and ruling:

حدثني المثنى، قال: ثنا إسحاق، قال: حدثني بكر بن شاذب، عن ابن أبي نجيح، عن مجاهد، عن أصحاب ابن مسعود: ما ننسخ من آية نثبت خطها.

This is how [Al-Tabari \[107\]](#) reported the narration; it only says ‘We fix its script’ (نُثَبِّتُ خَطَّهَا) without the ‘and substitute its ruling’ (وَنُبَدِّلُ حُكْمَهَا) part which was added after Al-Tabari wrote his book ([Afana \[7\]](#)). The added part is put between parentheses in some modern editions of Al-Tabari’s book to indicate that it was not in the original manuscript. It should be noted that ‘We fix its script’ (نُثَبِّتُ خَطَّهَا) by itself is a legitimate meaning for the word *naskh* since *naskh* also has the linguistic meaning ‘copy’.

33 [PAGE 256] There are narrations of questionable authenticity that talk about Quranic verses that were abrogated or made to be forgotten and were not included in the Quranic script. An example of these narrations was reported in [Ibn Taymia \[172\]](#), but not in the major narration books. It describes a number of people who were unable to recite one of the Quranic chapters so they went to the prophet (PBUH) to inquire and he said “it was abrogated yesterday”,

أَنَّ رَجُلًا كَانَ مَعَهُ سُورَةٌ فَقَامَ يَقْرَأُهَا مِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَلَمْ يَقْدِرْ عَلَيْهَا، وَقَامَ آخَرُ يَقْرَأُهَا فَلَمْ يَقْدِرْ عَلَيْهَا،  
 وَقَامَ آخَرُ يَقْرَأُهَا فَلَمْ يَقْدِرْ عَلَيْهَا، فَأَصْبَحُوا فَأَتَوْا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ: ذَهَبَتْ  
 الْبَارِحَةَ لِأَقْرَأُ سُورَةَ كَذَا وَكَذَا فَلَمْ أَقْدِرْ عَلَيْهَا، وَقَالَ الْآخَرُ: مَا جِئْتُ إِلَّا لَذَلِكَ، وَقَالَ الْآخَرُ: مَا جِئْتُ  
 إِلَّا لَذَلِكَ، وَقَالَ الْآخَرُ وَأَنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِنَّهَا نُسَخِتِ الْبَارِحَةَ

In addition to the questionable authenticity of these narrations, they do not address verses *in the Quranic script* as the Prophet (PBUH) left it to us, which is the exclusive focus of this book. We mention these narrations for completeness without in-depth analysis since they are not relevant to the subject at hand.

34 [PAGE 258] We discussed a number of issues with the “doomed and dooming” (هَلَكْتَ وَأَهْلَكَتَ) story in §10.4.1. In this side note, we focus on the authenticity question of the different versions of the story in detail.

Most versions of the story were reported as follows. Al-Solamy, a fellow of Ali (RA), narrated that Ali once passed by a storyteller. He asked him, “have you learned what is abrogating versus what is abrogated?” The man answered, “no.” Ali said, “you are doomed and are dooming.” Many authors who cited that story rarely mentioned anything about its authentication. We searched the literature for all narrations of that story that include a chain of narrators.

Several *hadith* scholars had reservations about two narrators who appear in the chains of most versions of the narrations of this story, Sufyan ibn Masoud ibn Masrooq Al-Thawri and Abu-Hassin Uthman ibn Aasem. For example, [Ibn Hajar \[157\]](#), a highly regarded evaluator of narrator trustworthiness, found both to have imposed. An example of imposition (التدليس) is when a narrator says he heard from someone when he did not. [Al-Suyuti \[103\]](#) described Al-Thawri’s imposition saying, “he was famous for it”.

Here are the different versions of the story that we found in the literature, and the detailed authentication analysis of them. We present each version in English followed by the Arabic original. Four main versions stand out: (1) the version that was belatedly authenticated by Al-Albani without verifying all the narrators in the chain, (2) an almost identical version but with the full narration chain, (3) a version that attributes the story to Ibn Abbas (RA) rather than Ali (RA), and (4) a version that describes the doomed person as

a judge rather than a storyteller. Here are the details.

(1) **Abu-Khaythama** [5] reported that Abu Abdul-Rahman Al-Johany narrated that Ali passed by a storyteller and he said to him: Do you know the abrogating versus the abrogated? He said: No. He said: You are doomed and are dooming.

*Sourcing validation:* We found this short sourcing, ending with Al-Johany, in the Narration Encyclopedia (**Al-Dorar Al-Saniyya** [89]) but we found a more expanded sourcing in the reporting book as follows: Abu-Khaythama from Wakea from Sufyan, without his last name, from Abu-Hassin from Abu Abdul-Rahman, without his last name. The book's verifier, Al-Albani, wrote in the footnotes identifying the narrator as Al-Solamy, not Al-Johany, and rated him trustworthy. He also rated Abu-Hassin trustworthy and rated the narration "authentic according to the criteria of the two elders"<sup>5</sup>. He did not rate Sufyan nor identify him as Al-Thawri.

The verifier of **Ibn Sallam** [171] agreed that the narrator was Al-Solamy but raised doubts about its authenticity, as will be detailed in narration (2) below.

**Summary** Sourcing chain was not rated by the reporter but belatedly rated authentic by the reviewer of his book without analysis of the full narration chain.

*The Arabic original:*

أَنَّ عَلِيًّا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مَرَّ بِقَاصٍّ، فَقَالَ: أَتَعْرِفُ النَّاسِخَ مِنَ الْمَنْسُوخِ؟ قَالَ: لَا، قَالَ: هَلَكْتُ وَأَهْلَكْتُ.

الراوي: أبو عبد الرحمن الجهنّي | المحدث: الألباني | المصدر: العلم لأبي خيثمة الصفحة أو الرقم: 130 | خلاصة حكم المحدث: إسناده صحيح على شرط الشيخين

تحقيق السند: وجدنا هذا السند في المصدر منسوباً إلى أبي عبد الرحمن دون لقبه، ويرجح أنه السلمي لا الجهنّي ما في حاشية ابن سلام، رواية عن أبي عبد الرحمن السلمي وليس الجهنّي، قال الألباني فيها إن أبا عبد الرحمن هو عبد الله بن حبيب السلمي. ذكره ابن خيثمة في كتاب العلم بسنده عن وكيع عن سفيان عن أبي حصين وقال محقق كتابه الألباني: صحيح على شرط الشيخين وعرف أبا عبد الرحمن بأنه عبد الله بن حبيب السلمي، تابعي مفرئ ثقة ثبت وأبا حصين بأنه عثمان بن حصين الأسدي وقال عنه إنه ثقة ثبت أيضاً.

(2) Hanbal narrated from Abu Abdul-Rahman Al-Solamy that he said: Ali stopped by a man telling stories. He said to him: Do you know the abrogating

<sup>5</sup>"The two elders" is a term that refers to the foremost scholars of narration authentication, Al-Bukhari and Muslim

versus the abrogated? He said: No. Ali said: You are doomed and are dooming.

*Sourcing validation:* Reported by [Ibn Mufleh \[169\]](#) who rated its sourcing authentic. The sourcing chain he listed had only two names: Hanbal and Al-Solamy. We found a more expanded sourcing chain in the footnotes of [Ibn Sallam \[171\]](#) as follows: Ibn Sallam from Abdul-Rahman ibn Mahdi from Sufyan Al-Thawri from Abu-Hassin from Al-Solamy. The verifier of his book, Muhammad ibn Saleh Al-Mudayfer, wrote that both Al-Thawri and Abu-Hassin may have imposed, which is what [Ibn Hajar \[157\]](#) said. [Al-Suyuti \[103\]](#) went further and wrote that Al-Thawri was known for imposition.

**Summary** The sourcing chain is truncated to two names but still was rated authentic by the reporter. Several scholars identified the full sourcing chain and pointed out two problematic narrators in it.

*The Arabic original:*

روى حنبل عن أبي عبد الرحمن السلمي قال: انتهى عليّ إلى رجلٍ وهو يقصُّ فقالَ علمتَ النَّاسَ من المنسوخ؟ قالَ: لا قالَ: هلكتَ وأهلكتَ. وعن ابن عباس معناه.

تحقيق السند: أخرجه ابن مُفلح المقدسي في الآداب الشرعية وقال: بإسناد صحيح. لم نجد تحقيقاً لذلك السند، ولكننا وجدنا في حاشية ابن سلام سندا منه عن عبد الرحمن بن مهدي عن سفيان الثوري عن أبي حصين عن السلمي، وقال محقق الكتاب محمد بن صالح المدني إن سفيانا وأبا حصين ربما دلسا، وهو ما قاله ابن حجر عنهما في تقريب التهذيب وقال السيوطي عن سفيان في أسماء المدلسين: مشهور به.

**(3)** Ibn Abbas (RA) passed by a storyteller. He kicked him with his leg and said: Are you aware what is abrogating and what is abrogated? He answered: What is abrogating and what is abrogated? He said: So, you are not aware what is abrogating and what is abrogated? He said: No. He said: You are doomed and are dooming.

*Sourcing validation:* [Al-Haythami \[50\]](#) wrote that it was reported by [Al-Tabarani \[106\]](#) who commented: In it (the narration chain), there is an Abu-Yaala Rashed, servant of Banu Aamer, and I have not seen anyone who mentioned him [in appraisal]. The Narrations Encyclopedia ([Al-Dorar Al-Saniyya \[89\]](#)) mentions that the narrator was Al-Dahhak. We found confirmation of that in the footnotes of [Ibn Sallam \[171\]](#) from him from Muhammad ibn Rabeeaa Al-Ruasi from Salama ibn Nabit Al-Ashjaei from Al-Dahhak from Ibn Abbas. The verifier of his book commented that Al-Dahhak's narrations were frequently open-ended, i.e., have a gap in the narration chain.

That was confirmed by other scholars. [Al-Jabri \[54\]](#) comments on this story, making the following points: Al-Dahhak Ibn Muzahim Al-Helaly, who

told of this story about Ibn Abbas, is reported to have never met Ibn Abbas, and is viewed by others as untrustworthy in all the narrations that he reported.

Al-Jabri added that it was Ibn Jubair who said that Al-Dahhak never met Ibn Abbas, and Ibn Hibban is the one who dismissed Al-Dahhak's reliability wholesale. In the footnotes of [Al-Suyuti \[105\]](#), the book's verifier, Muhammad Al-Sabbagh, confirmed that Al-Dahhak never met Ibn Abbas and that Ibn Hibban advised scrutiny of all narrations by Al-Dahhak.

Likewise did [Afana \[7\]](#). He wrote that the story was narrated by Al-Dahhak ibn Muzahim Al-Helaly, who died in the *hijri* year 105, who attributed it to Ibn Abbas but there is one problem: He never met the man. He added that Ibn Jubair said that Al-Dahhak “*never met Ibn Abbas, so how can his narrating be accepted?*” He continued saying that Ibn Hibban said, “*Everything narrated from Al-Dahhak needs to be scrutinized.*”

**Summary** Sourcing chain has a gap.

**Note:** In this narration, the person who encountered the storyteller is Ibn Abbas (RA), not Ali (RA), but he said literally the same words to the storyteller.

*The Arabic original:*

مرَّ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ بِقَاصٍّ فَرَكَلَهُ بِرَجْلِهِ فَقَالَ أَتَدْرِي مَا النَّاسُخُ وَالْمَنْسُوخُ؟ قَالَ وَمَا النَّاسُخُ وَالْمَنْسُوخُ؟ قَالَ  
فَمَا تَدْرِي مَا النَّاسُخُ وَالْمَنْسُوخُ؟ قَالَ لَا. قَالَ هَلَكْتَ وَأَهْلَكْتَ.

تحقيق السند: قال الهيثمي في مجمع الزوائد (1/154): رواه الطبراني في الكبير وقال: فيه أبو  
يعلى راشد مولى بني عامر ولم أر من ذكره.

تذكر الموسوعة الحديثية أن الراوي الضحاک ووجدنا ما يؤكد ذلك في حاشية ابن سلام عنه عن  
محمد بن ربيعة الرؤاسي عن سلمة بن نبيط الأشجعي عن الضحاک عن ابن عباس، وقال محقق  
الكتاب إن الضحاک كان كثير الإرسال.

(4) [Al-Bayhaqi \[32\]](#) reported that Abul-Hasan Ali Al-Khusrawjerdy narrated to him from Abu-Ahmad Al-Ghatrify from Abu-Khalifa from Muslim ibn Ibrahim from Shuaba from Abu-Hassin from Abu Abdul-Rahman Al-Solamy that Ali came to a judge and said to him: Do you know the abrogating versus the abrogated? He said: No. He said: You are doomed and are dooming.

In another book of his, [Al-Bayhaqi \[33\]](#) reports the story as told by another sourcing chain of narrators: Abu-Abdullah Al-Hafez from Muhammad ibn Balaweh from Muhammad ibn Ghaleb from Amr ibn Marzooq from Abu-Umar Al-Hawdhi, quoting him, that they said that Shuaba narrated to them from Abu-Hassin from Abu Abdul-Rahman.

*Sourcing validation:* No authentication was mentioned.

**Note:** The text mentions a judge, not a storyteller. This is significant because the difference in Arabic between قاص (storyteller) and قاض (judge) is a dot. It is not possible to confuse these two words by hearing since the two letters ص (Ss) and ض (Dh) are phonetically distinct. The dot changes the pronunciation completely. That suggests that this version of the story was read from a written document, rather than conveyed orally as narrations have traditionally been transmitted. The second version confirms the job of the man addressed by Ali to be a judge, not a storyteller, and the verifier of the book, Dr. Muhammad Dhiyaa Al-Rahman Al-Aazhami confirmed that Abu Abdul-Rahman is Al-Solamy, and wrote that he was a fellow of Ali (RA).

**Summary** No authentication was given.

*The Arabic original:*

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الْحَسَنِ عَلِيُّ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ الْخُسْرُو جَرْدِي رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ، ثنا أَبُو أَحْمَدَ الْغَطَرِيْفِيُّ، أُنْبَأُ أَبُو خَلِيفَةَ، أُنْبَأُ مُسْلِمُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَنْ شُعْبَةَ، ثنا أَبُو حُصَيْنٍ، عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ السُّلَمِيِّ، أَنَّ عَلِيًّا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَتَى عَلَى قَاضٍ فَقَالَ لَهُ: هَلْ تَعْلَمُ النَّاسِخَ مِنَ الْمُنْسُوخِ قَالَ: لَا قَالَ: هَلَكْتَ وَأَهْلَكْتَ.

تحقيق السند: أخرجه البيهقي في السنن الكبرى.

ملحوظة: يلاحظ أن هذه الرواية تتحدث عن قاض وليس عن قاص.

The other version:

أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْحَافِظُ، أَخْبَرَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ بَالَوَيْهِ، أُنْبَأُ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ غَالِبٍ، ثنا عَمْرُو بْنُ مَرْزُوقٍ، وَأَبُو عَمَرَ الْحَوْضِيُّ وَاللَّفْظُ لِعَمْرٍو قَالَا: ثنا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ أَبِي حُصَيْنٍ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ يَقُولُ: إِنَّ عَلِيًّا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَتَى عَلَى قَاضٍ يَقْضِي فَقَالَ: أَتَعْرِفُ النَّاسِخَ مِنَ الْمُنْسُوخِ؟ قَالَ: لَا فَقَالَ عَلِيُّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: هَلَكْتَ وَأَهْلَكْتَ.

تحقيق السند: أخرجه البيهقي في المدخل مؤكدا الرواية الأخرى التي أخرجها أن المخاطب قاض لا قاص. قال محقق الكتاب د. محمد ضياء الرحمن الأعظمي في الحاشية عن أبي عبد الرحمن: هو السلمي صاحب علي رضي الله عنه

In addition to these 4 versions of the narration, other versions in the literature are similarly worded and sourced, and all of them have not been authenticated.

**35** [PAGE 273] Two authenticated versions of the Prophetic narration in question contain the key words that we quoted. The first version appears in **Ibn Hanbal**



[160], was authenticated by Al-Albani ([Al-Dorar Al-Saniyya](#) [89]), and contains the Prophetic quote “the Quran did not descend from Heaven with parts of it belying each other, but rather confirming each other”,

أَقْبَلْتُ أَنَا وَأَخِي، وَإِذَا مَشِيخَةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ جُلُوسٌ عِنْدَ بَابٍ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهِ، فَكَرِهْنَا أَنْ نُفَرِّقَ بَيْنَهُمْ، فَجَلَسْنَا حَجْرَةً، إِذْ ذَكَرُوا آيَةً مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ، فَتَمَارَوْا فِيهَا، حَتَّى ارْتَفَعَتْ أَصْوَاتُهُمْ، فَخَرَجَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ مُغَضَّبًا، قَدْ احْمَرَّتْ وَجْهُهُ، يَرْمِيهِمْ بِالتُّرَابِ، وَيَقُولُ: مَهَلًا يَا قَوْمُ! بِهَذَا أَهْلِكْتَ الْأُمَّةَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ، بِاخْتِلَافِهِمْ عَلَى أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ، وَضَرْبِهِمُ الْكِتَابَ بَعْضُهَا بِبَعْضٍ، **إِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ لَمْ يَنْزِلْ يُكَذِّبْ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا،**

**بَلْ يُصَدِّقُ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا**

The second version was authenticated by [Ibn Majah](#) [166] and contains the Prophetic quote reprimanding those who “shoot down parts of the Quran with other parts”,

خَرَجَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَى أَصْحَابِهِ وَهُمْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ فِي الْقَدَرِ فَكَأَنَّمَا يُفْقَأُ فِي وَجْهِهِ حَبُّ الرُّمَّانِ مِنَ الْغَضَبِ فَقَالَ بِهَذَا أُمِرْتُمْ أَوْ لِهَذَا خُلِقْتُمْ **تَضْرِبُونَ الْقُرْآنَ بَعْضُهُ بِبَعْضٍ** بِهَذَا هَلَكْتَ الْأُمَّةُ قَبْلَكُمْ

36 [PAGE 304] The Prophetic narration, authenticated by [Al-Bukhari](#) [35], about helping a fellow Muslim prevail addresses the case where injustice is being done to him or by him. In the case of injustice done by him, the narration asserts that helping him prevail would be by stopping him from doing that injustice,

انْصُرْ أَخَاكَ ظَالِمًا أَوْ مَظْلُومًا. فَقَالَ رَجُلٌ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، أَنْصُرُهُ إِذَا كَانَ مَظْلُومًا، أَفَرَأَيْتَ إِذَا كَانَ ظَالِمًا، كَيْفَ أَنْصُرُهُ؟ قَالَ: تَحْجُزُهُ -أَوْ تَمْنَعُهُ- مِنَ الظُّلْمِ؛ فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ نَصْرُهُ (الراوي: أنس بن مالك)

The principle of being on the side of a fellow Muslim by not being on the side of an error he made is what we cited the narration for.

## A.2 List of Abrogation Claims

This is a complete list of all abrogation claims that were cited in the literature we studied. We put them in a table with 4 columns; ‘Claimed Abrogated’, ‘Claimed Abrogating’, ‘For’, and ‘Against’.

The For/Against columns show counts of authors and scholars who have analyzed the claim and either approved or refuted it. In few cases, certain scholars were reported in different books to be for and against the same claim, so they were counted in both columns. Numbers with a plus sign next to them indicate that one or more of the counted scholars or authors stated that the majority has judged the claim as he did. Many of the claims were not even addressed by most scholars, so the number of scholars against those claims could be considerably higher than indicated.

For each claim, we include the page number where the claim is addressed in this book. A page number inside a box such as [91](#) points to a detailed discussion of the claim. An underlined page number such as [184](#) points to a brief discussion. For the rest of the claims, the page number points to a discussion of a general category or a summary listing that does not elaborate individual claims.

[Claimed Abrogated]	[Claimed Abrogating]	[For]	[Against]
2:3 (p. <a href="#">188</a> )	9:60	6	7
2:62 (p. <a href="#">169</a> )	3:85	5	15
2:81 (p. <a href="#">166</a> )	4:48	1	12+
2:83 (p. <a href="#">129</a> )	‘Sword Verse’	6	9
2:104 (p. <a href="#">195</a> )	Not mentioned	1	3
2:109 (p. <a href="#">136</a> )	9:29	6	11+
2:109 (p. <a href="#">129</a> )	‘Sword Verse’	9	4
2:115 (p. <a href="#">139</a> )	2:144	15	21+
2:115 (p. <a href="#">141</a> )	2:150	1	1
2:139 (p. <a href="#">129</a> )	‘Sword Verse’	2	6
2:158 (p. <a href="#">192</a> )	2:130	1	5
2:159 (p. <a href="#">184</a> )	2:160	3	3+
2:173 (p. <a href="#">161</a> )	5:5	2	5
2:173 (p. <a href="#">161</a> )	Sunna	2	5
2:178 (p. <a href="#">172</a> )	17:33	1	2
2:178 (p. <a href="#">172</a> )	5:45	15	33
2:180 (p. <a href="#">123</a> )	4:11-12	45+	47
2:180 (p. <a href="#">127</a> )	Prophetic Narration	1	10
2:183 (p. <a href="#">142</a> )	2:187	14+	21
2:184 (p. <a href="#">70</a> )	2:185	21	42

[Claimed Abrogated]	[Claimed Abrogating]	[For]	[Against]
2:187 (p. 184)	2:222	1	2+
2:190 (p. 181)	2:191	1	2
2:190 (p. 180)	2:194	1	3
2:190 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	7	23+
2:191 (p. 195)	2:191	1	-
2:191 (p. 135)	2:193	8	15
2:191 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	8	13
2:192 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	1
2:194 (p. 135)	17:33	2	10+
2:196 (p. 195)	2:196	4	4
2:215 (p. 188)	9:60	5	19
2:216 (p. 184)	2:286	1	8+
2:216 (p. 184)	9:122	1	8+
2:217 (p. 137)	9:36	9+	21
2:217 (p. 137)	‘Sword Verse’	11	15
2:219 (p. 68)	5:90	19	26
2:219 (p. 188)	9:60	2	3+
2:219 (p. 191)	9:103	7	18
2:221 (p. 185)	5:5	15	37+
2:222 (p. 455)	Sunna	1	3
2:228 (p. 192)	2:229-230	8	2
2:228 (p. 184)	33:49	11	11+
2:228 (p. 184)	65:4	11	11+
2:229 (p. 195)	2:229	3	3+
2:229 (p. 192)	4:4	3	11+
2:229 (p. 185)	4:20	3	11+
2:229 (p. 192)	65:1	2	2
2:229 (p. 195)	Narration	1	-
2:233 (p. 195)	2:233	3	10+
2:235 (p. 195)	2:235	1	1+
2:236 (p. 184)	2:237	13	11
2:240 (p. 51)	2:234	31+	30
2:240 (p. 53)	4:12	1	1
2:240 (p. 51)	65:4	2+	3+
2:256 (p. 135)	9:29	1	1
2:256 (p. 135)	9:73	4	4+
2:256 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	7	23
2:282 (p. 195)	2:282	8	4+
2:282 (p. 184)	2:283	11	18
2:284 (p. 85)	2:286	23+	46
2:284 (p. 85)	Prophetic Narration	1	1
2:286 (p. 192)	2:185	1	3
3:20 (p. 192)	16:125	1	2+

[Claimed Abrogated]	[Claimed Abrogating]	[For]	[Against]
3:20 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	5
3:28 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	6
3:41 (p. 186)	Sunna	3	2+
3:86-88 (p. 185)	2:160	2	3+
3:86-88 (p. 185)	3:89	2	5
3:97 (p. 195)	3:97	2	4
3:102 (p. 42)	64:16	16	24+
3:111 (p. 186)	9:29	2	10
3:145 (p. 186)	17:18	3	4
3:159 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	-
3:186 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	6
4:2 (p. 192)	2:220	7	7
4:3 (p. 192)	4:129	1	2
4:6 (p. 192)	4:10	6	21
4:6 (p. 192)	4:29	6	21
4:7 (p. 184)	4:11	1	5
4:8 (p. 192)	4:11	13	50
4:9 (p. 194)	2:182	3	10
4:10 (p. 192)	2:220	7	7
4:10 (p. 192)	4:6	6	21
4:11-12 (p. 455)	Sunna	3	1+
4:15-16 (p. 75)	24:2	24+	24
4:17 (p. 184)	4:18	4	5
4:18 (p. 166)	4:48	7	2+
4:19 (p. 195)	4:19	2	5
4:19 (p. 455)	Sunna	1	1+
4:22 (p. 195)	4:22	2	5
4:23 (p. 195)	4:23	2	5
4:24 (p. 184)	2:228	17	19+
4:24 (p. 184)	23:5-7	1	-
4:24 (p. 192)	65:1	17	19+
4:24 (p. 455)	Sunna	2	-
4:25 (p. 195)	4:25	2	3+
4:29 (p. 195)	4:29	5	7
4:29 (p. 184)	24:61	5	7
4:33 (p. 144)	33:6	19	33
4:33 (p. 144)	8:75	20	33
4:43 (p. 62)	5:90	12	26
4:43 (p. 62)	5:91	1	-
4:63 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	5	2+
4:64 (p. 192)	9:80	3	6
4:71 (p. 184)	9:91	9	24+
4:71 (p. 184)	9:122	9	25+

[Claimed Abrogated]	[Claimed Abrogating]	[For]	[Against]
4:80 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	6
4:81 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	6	3
4:84 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	2
4:88 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	-
4:90 (p. 192)	9:1-11	13	13
4:90 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	16	10
4:91 (p. 192)	2:191	1	-
4:91 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	9	4
4:92 (p. 178)	9:1	2	12+
4:92 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	9+
4:93 (p. 175)	4:48	3+	11
4:93 (p. 175)	4:116	2	14+
4:93 (p. 175)	25:68	2	14+
4:93 (p. 177)	25:70	3+	11
4:99 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	1
4:101 (p. 455)	Sunna	3	3
4:141 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	-
4:145 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	-
4:145 (p. 185)	4:146	3	5+
5:2 (p. 195)	9:17	10	21+
5:2 (p. 137)	9:28	10	21+
5:2 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	8	15+
5:3 (p. 161)	5:5	2	3
5:5 (p. 185)	6:121	6	7+
5:6 (p. 455)	Sunna	8	11+
5:13 (p. 192)	3:159	2+	4
5:13 (p. 192)	8:58	6	8
5:13 (p. 135)	9:29	6	8
5:13 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	6	8
5:33 (p. 185)	5:34	3	9+
5:38 (p. 455)	Sunna	2	-
5:42 (p. 146)	5:49	23	35
5:69 (p. 169)	3:85	5	15
5:92 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	1
5:95 (p. 185)	5:96	1	1+
5:99 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	4
5:105 (p. 195)	5:105	11	13+
5:105 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	11	13+
5:106-108 (p. 148)	65:2	15	50+
6:15 (p. 187)	48:2	4	6+
6:66 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	10
6:66-67 (p. 195)	9:36	1	4+
6:68 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	2

[Claimed Abrogated]	[Claimed Abrogating]	[For]	[Against]
6:68-69 (p. 192)	4:140	9	9
6:70 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	9	11+
6:91 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	7	7
6:104 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	4+
6:106 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	5	2
6:107 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	5	2
6:108 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	3
6:112 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	6
6:121 (p. 161)	5:5	6	11
6:135 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	5	5
6:137 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	4
6:141 (p. 191)	9:60	21	43
6:145 (p. 164)	5:3	2	20
6:145 (p. 164)	Sunna	2	20
6:152 (p. 192)	2:220	1	2+
6:158 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	5	4
6:159 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	15
7:180 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	5
7:183 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	2
7:199 (p. 188)	9:60	9	19
7:199 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	9	7+
8:1 (p. 193)	8:41	10	25+
8:15-16 (p. 192)	8:66	2	14+
8:33 (p. 186)	8:34	5	12+
8:38 (p. 192)	8:39-40	3	4
8:38 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	1
8:61 (p. 192)	9:29	7	7+
8:61 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	8	12
8:61 (p. 192)	47:35	1	-
8:65 (p. 102)	8:66	18+	40
8:67 (p. 192)	47:4	2	3+
8:72 (p. 144)	33:6	19	5
8:72 (p. 144)	8:75	19	5
9:1 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	1
9:2 (p. 184)	8:58	2	16
9:2 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	16
9:5 (p. 192)	9:29	3	1
9:5 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	1
9:5 (p. 192)	47:4	3	6
9:7 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	1
9:34 (p. 188)	9:60	6	11+
9:34 (p. 192)	9:103	6	11+
9:36 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	2

[Claimed Abrogated]	[Claimed Abrogating]	[For]	[Against]
9:39 (p. 185)	9:91	9	24
9:39 (p. 185)	9:122	10	25
9:41 (p. 150)	9:91	9	24
9:41 (p. 150)	9:122	10	25
9:43-44 (p. 184)	24:62	6	14
9:80 (p. 192)	63:6	4	4
9:80 (p. 192)	9:84	4	4
9:97-98 (p. 186)	9:99	2	4
9:103 (p. 193)	9:84	1	2
9:120 (p. 184)	9:122	2	3
9:123 (p. 192)	9:36	1	1
10:15 (p. 187)	48:2	4	6+
10:20 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	1	1
10:41 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	5	2
10:46 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	4	2
10:99 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	5	2
10:102 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	4	2
10:108 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	4	2
10:109 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	6	4
11:12 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	1	3
11:15 (p. 186)	17:18	7	9
11:121 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	2	3
11:122 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	2	3
12:109 (p. 195)	87:6	1	3+
12:109 (p. 455)	Sunna	1	6
13:6 (p. 186)	4:48	2	5
13:40 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	3	3
14:34 (p. 195)	16:18	2	4
15:3 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	3	4
15:85 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	9	4
15:88 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	1	4
15:89 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	1	2
15:94 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	4	4
16:67 (p. 186)	5:90	18	13
16:82 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	1	3
16:91 (p. 184)	5:89	1+	-
16:106 (p. 185)	4:98	2	4
16:106 (p. 195)	16:106	1	5+
16:106 (p. 192)	16:110	1	5+
16:106 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	2	4
16:115 (p. 161)	5:5	2	3
16:125 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	4+	5
16:126 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	3	10+

[Claimed Abrogated]	[Claimed Abrogating]	[For]	[Against]
16:127 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	10+
17:24 (p. 184)	9:113	8	11
17:25 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	3
17:34 (p. 192)	2:220	3	4
17:34 (p. 192)	3:77	1	1+
17:35 (p. 192)	83:1	1	1+
17:54 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	6
17:110 (p. 192)	15:94	5	13
17:110 (p. 192)	7:205	5	13
18:29 (p. 184)	76:30	4	6
18:29 (p. 184)	81:29	4	6
19:26 (p. 455)	Sunna	1	1
19:39 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	4
19:59 (p. 184)	19:60	3	3
19:71 (p. 186)	19:72	3	4
19:75 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	4
19:84 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	5	4
20:114 (p. 192)	87:6	3	2
20:130 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	2
20:135 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	3
21:78-79 (p. 186)	Sunna	3	8
21:98-100 (p. 186)	21:101-103	3	4
21:109 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	-
22:28 (p. 195)	Not mentioned	2	6
22:30 (p. 184)	5:3	1	1
22:39 (p. 192)	39:3	1	1
22:49 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	-
22:52 (p. 192)	87:6	2	7
22:56 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	-
22:68 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	4
22:69 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	5	2
22:78 (p. 184)	2:286	6	5
22:78 (p. 184)	64:16	6	5
23:54 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	3
23:96 (p. 195)	Not mentioned	1	1
23:96 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	4
24:2 (p. 192)	4:25	5	1
24:2 (p. 455)	Sunna	20	16
24:3 (p. 152)	24:32	19	57
24:4 (p. 185)	24:5	5	10+
24:4 (p. 185)	24:6	1	4
24:4 (p. 192)	24:7	2	4
24:6 (p. 184)	24:7,9	3	5



[Claimed Abrogated]	[Claimed Abrogating]	[For]	[Against]
24:27 (p. 36)	24:29	7	12+
24:31 (p. 195)	24:31	3	3
24:31 (p. 185)	24:60	3	3
24:32 (p. 192)	24:3	1	-
24:54 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	1	5
24:58 (p. 195)	Not mentioned	1	9
24:58 (p. 184)	24:59	9	24+
24:61 (p. 192)	4:29	7	5
25:43 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	4+	7+
25:63 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	4+	7+
25:68-69 (p. 185)	25:70	4	6+
25:68-70 (p. 186)	4:48	4	6+
25:68-70 (p. 186)	4:93	4	6+
26:224 (p. 184)	26:227	6	9
27:92 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	5	4
28:55 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	6+	6
29:46 (p. 184)	9:29	3	3
29:46 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	5	6+
29:50 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	1	2
30:44 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	1	-
30:60 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	3	4
31:14 (p. 455)	Sunna	1	-
31:23 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	2	3
32:30 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	7	1
33:4-5 (p. 455)	Sunna	1	2
33:48 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	6	4
33:49 (p. 192)	2:237	2	6
33:51 (p. 192)	33:50	3	4
33:52 (p. 155)	33:50	18	30
34:25 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	5	5
35:23 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	4	2
36:76 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	1	2
37:102 (p. 186)	37:107	1	-
37:174 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	6	4
37:175 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	1	2
37:178 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	1	3
37:179 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	1	2
38:17 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	6	5
38:33 (p. 186)	Sunna	3	1+
38:44 (p. 192)	Analysis	2	4
38:70 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	1	3
38:88 (p. 129)	'Sword Verse'	1	3
39:3 (p. 135)	22:39	1	1

[Claimed Abrogated]	[Claimed Abrogating]	[For]	[Against]
39:3 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	4
39:13 (p. 187)	48:2	4	6+
39:15 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	5
39:23 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	1
39:36 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	1
39:39 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	6
39:40 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	6
39:41 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	3
39:46 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	3
39:53 (p. 195)	Not mentioned	1	1
40:12 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	1
40:55 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	2
40:77 (p. 195)	40:77	1	-
40:77 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	3
41:34 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3+	4
42:5 (p. 186)	40:7	4	13
42:6 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	2+
42:15 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	6	4
42:20 (p. 186)	17:18	3	8+
42:23 (p. 192)	34:47	3	12
42:39 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	6
42:39-42 (p. 192)	42:43	4	8
42:40 (p. 195)	42:40	2	5
42:40 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	3+
42:42 (p. 192)	23:96	1	1
42:42 (p. 192)	41:34	1	1
42:48 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	3
43:41 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	1
43:83 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	6	3
43:89 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	9	1
44:59 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	6	4
45:14 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	12	3
46:9 (p. 192)	33:47	9	13+
46:9 (p. 192)	48:2	10	13+
46:9 (p. 192)	48:5	10	13+
46:35 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	2
47:4 (p. 192)	8:57	11	10
47:4 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	15	21
47:36 (p. 188)	9:60	1	5
47:36 (p. 192)	47:37	1	5
47:36-37 (p. 192)	47:38	1	-
48:2 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	-
48:25 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	3

[Claimed Abrogated]	[Claimed Abrogating]	[For]	[Against]
50:39 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	5	4
50:45 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	6+	1
51:19 (p. 188)	9:60	3	14
51:19 (p. 189)	9:103	1	-
51:54 (p. 37)	51:55	2	3
51:54 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	5	5
52:31 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	3
52:45 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	3
52:48 (p. 196)	Regular prayers	2	2
52:48 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	3
53:29 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	2
53:39 (p. 193)	52:21	3	4+
54:6 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	4
56:13-14 (p. 192)	56:39-40	5	3+
58:12 (p. 91)	58:13	21+	23
59:3 (p. 186)	9:29	1	2
59:7 (p. 193)	8:41	7	21+
60:8 (p. 192)	9:1-11	14	13
60:8 (p. 39)	60:9	1	-
60:8 (p. 186)	58:22	-	-
60:8 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2+	11
60:9 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2+	11
60:10 (p. 185)	5:5	4	-
60:10 (p. 157)	9:1	1	-
60:10 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	10+	2
60:11 (p. 157)	8:41	10+	12
60:11 (p. 192)	9:1	3	-
60:11 (p. 192)	Sunna	2	-
60:11 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	10+	2
60:12 (p. 455)	Unanimity	1	2
63:10 (p. 188)	9:60	1	5
64:14 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	1	6
65:2 (p. 455)	Unanimity	1+	12
65:6 (p. 455)	Sunna	1	7
67:16 (p. 192)	54:46	2	5
68:44 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	4
68:48 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	5	2
70:24-25 (p. 188)	9:60	3	14
70:5 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	5
70:42 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	4	2
73:1-2 (p. 192)	73:3	2	-
73:1-4 (p. 111)	73:20	26	21
73:1-4 (p. 196)	Regular prayers	1	-

[Claimed Abrogated]	[Claimed Abrogating]	[For]	[Against]
73:3 (p. 192)	73:4	1	-
73:4 (p. 195)	20:2	1	-
73:5 (p. 40)	4:28	1	-
73:10 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	5	3
73:11 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	2
73:19 (p. 192)	76:30	2	3
74:11 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	3	7
75:16 (p. 192)	87:6	1	1
76:8 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	3
76:24 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	2	3
76:26 (p. 195)	17:79	2	3
76:29 (p. 192)	76:30	2	3
80:12 (p. 192)	76:30	2	3
81:28 (p. 192)	76:30	2	3
81:28 (p. 192)	81:29	2	3
86:17 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	7	6
87:6 (p. 184)	87:7	1	1
87:14 (p. 188)	9:60	1	2
88:22 (p. 192)	9:73	1	1
88:22 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	9	6
94:7 (p. 195)	Not mentioned	2	5
95:8 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	6	10
103:2 (p. 34)	103:3	2	3
107:7 (p. 195)	Not mentioned	1	5
109:6 (p. 129)	‘Sword Verse’	5	5

Total: **432** claims.

## A.3 Abrogation Claim Narrations

This appendix is concerned with collecting all the narrations attributed to the Prophet (PBUH), or his fellows or their followers (second generation scholars), which have been rated authentic by a recognized narration rating scholar, and whose texts assert or reject the abrogation of specific verses in the Quranic script. The reader will notice that the attribution of almost all such narrations is stopped at a fellow of the Prophet or at a second-generation scholar. Only a few are attributed all the way back to the Prophet (PBUH), and all of those are parts of narrations by Ibn Abbas (RA) that reject the abrogation claim.

We obtained these narrations by conducting searches in available classical books. We started by searching the narration encyclopedia ([Al-Dorar Al-Saniyya \[89\]](#)) for all narrations whose text contains the word *naskh* or any of its derivations and conjugations.<sup>6</sup> The result set had 505 narrations<sup>7</sup>. We filtered out narrations that did not speak of the abrogation of a specific verse in the Quranic script. Then we filtered out narrations that were not rated authentic, or a word to that effect,<sup>8</sup> resulting in the final list of 83 narrations. We followed a similar discipline in searching the narration index by [Wensinck \[205\]](#). Finally, we looked up the sourcing and the texts of all the narrations in their stated sources and documented that in our list below, so that the benefit of this appendix may be complete.<sup>9</sup>

A study of the abrogation of verses requires knowing which of the narrations that assert abrogation are certain in sourcing, that is which narrations have been ubiquitously told, see §2.3.1, and their sourcing chain is connected.<sup>10</sup> Such narrations qualify to be juristic evidence for abrogation.

Scholars defined ubiquity to be narrating by many from many, but they did not agree on how many is that, so we took the minimum they suggested which is three narrators. Thus, if we can find three narrations whose sourcing is authentic and connected, and each has an independent chain of narrators from the other, then the condition of ubiquity has been verified.<sup>11</sup>

Since our subject here is the abrogation of Quranic verses, we divided the narrations about abrogating each verse into two groups: one group lists

<sup>6</sup>The encyclopedia made that possible by availing search by root.

<sup>7</sup>As of March 2019.

<sup>8</sup>Words such as “Its narrators are trustworthy”, “Authentic per the criteria of the two elders (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)”, “Soundly authentic”, “Sound or authentic”, “Established”, “Valid”, “Depended on”, “Used for evidence”, but not words such as “Authentic by virtue of other narrations”, “Authentic by virtue of other evidence”, “Hopefully authentic”. The rating “valid” was made by Abu-Dawoud, and scholars differed in interpreting what it meant, so we decided to include it to be on the safe side.

<sup>9</sup>For narrations that we could not find in their stated source, we wrote them as they appeared in the narration encyclopedia site.

<sup>10</sup>Connectedness of sourcing is a condition of authentication with Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

<sup>11</sup>Some narrations differ slightly in their text, which the scholars called “ubiquity of meaning”, so we decided to include such narrations to be on the safe side.

the ones asserting abrogation regardless of their text or originator, followed by a group that lists the narrations that reject the abrogation of the verse specified in them, regardless of their text or originator. We considered in each group all of its narrations, even if their text or originator differed, as long as they all agree on asserting or on rejecting the abrogation of the verse.<sup>12</sup>

While the filtered search described above produced narrations whose sourcing chains are not completely connected but a scholar rated them authentic, we did not include these narrations in the ubiquity verification because the missing narrators could be common between two narrations, thus violating the condition for independent narration chains. And we make clear whether the narrations in a group meet the ubiquity (“tawator” in Arabic) test or fail it, based on the above criteria.

This is done by examining the sourcing chains of all narrations in each group and observing their independence from each other, i.e., there is no narrator common between them except the originator of the narration. If we can find this condition in at least three of the narrations (the minimum number suggested by *hadith* scholars), then ubiquity is established.

For narrations that pass this test and state abrogation, we follow the group header with an affirmative checkmark (✓), followed by the number of narrations that passed the ubiquity test. For those that pass the ubiquity test and state rejection of abrogation, we follow the group header with a negatory checkmark (✗), followed by the number of narrations that passed the ubiquity test. This is the primary purpose of this appendix: to find narrations certain in sourcing which assert or reject abrogation of specific verses in the Quranic script.

Interestingly, narrations regarding the abrogation of a specific verse can have both ubiquitous evidence stating abrogation *and* ubiquitous evidence rejecting it. This is not illogical; it is the result of differing opinions about a claim of abrogation, and also the use of the word *naskh* in its broad linguistic sense and not the strict conventional sense of abrogation.

As part of our discussion of each narration, we list its originator and the direct narrator from him in the narration chain. We present in the sourcing validation section the scholars’ analysis of whether it is connected all the way and authenticated, and in the abrogation validation section, whether the scholars’ analysis of its text led them to conclude abrogation.

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<sup>12</sup>Proper ubiquity is supposed to be verified for each originator by himself, but some may find that too limiting, as they see ubiquity in the opinion about abrogation that comes from early Muslims collectively. Therefore, we decided to consider all originators in the verification as long as the sourcing chains ending with them are independent.

## Narrators rated untrustworthy

Two narrators in the sourcing chains of many narrations listed below have been rated untrustworthy for various reasons by the *hadith* scholars. The presence of these narrators in a sourcing chain weakens its validity. Nevertheless, some scholars chose to rate such narrations authentic. Because of this, we will still count these narrations in determining ubiquity, while pointing out this weakness. The two narrators rated as untrustworthy appear in the chains of 28 out of the 83 narrations of this appendix. They are:

### Ataa Al-Khorasani

Muhammad bin Saleh Al-Mudayfer, who verified Ibn Sallam's book on abrogation ([Ibn Sallam \[171\]](#)), reported that Al-Khorasani "*was often confused, left out narrators from the chain and imposed* - يهيم كثيرا ويرسل ويدلس -". [Ibn Hajar \[158\]](#) confirmed.

In his book on narrator appraisal, [Ibn Hibban \[162\]](#) wrote that Al-Khorasani "*had a poor memory and was often confused, and erred without knowing ... so as that became common in his narrating, he ceased to be used for evidence* - كان رديء الحفظ، كثير الوهم، يخطئ ولا يعلم ... فلما كثر ذلك في روايته، - بطل الاحتجاج به".

[Al-Bukhari \[36\]](#) listed him among the "weak", and reported a narration by Sulayman ibn Harb from Hammad ibn Zayd from Ayyoub from Al-Qasem ibn Aasem that he said to Said ibn Al-Musayyeb, "*Ataa Al-Khorasani told me that you told him that the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered one who mated with his wife during the daytime in Ramadan to apply the expiation of Zahar (a pre-Islamic divorce practice). He said: Ataa lied about me. I did not talk to him. What I learned was that the Prophet said: Give charity.*"

Finally, we found confirmation of all that in [S. Al-Zahabi \[119\]](#), his landmark book, including that Al-Khorasani (who frequently narrated from Ibn Abbas (RA)) did not even meet Ibn Abbas (RA).

Al-Khorasani was in the narration chains of 3 narrations below, narrations number 1, 2, and 7.

It is important to point out that there are many narrations attributed to an Ataa, *without specifying the last name*. There is another notable Ataa whose last name is Ibn Abi-Rabah, and *hadith* scholars agreed that he was a trustworthy narrator. This ambiguity of the last name caused some scholars, most notably Al-Bukhari, to authenticate narrations attributed to an Ataa, thinking he was Ibn Abi-Rabah, but further scrutiny revealed that the narrations came through Al-Khorasani instead ([Ibn Hajar \[159\]](#)). This posed a sourcing

problem for 9 more narrations which are narrations number 5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, part of 26, and part of 27.

### Al-Hussein ibn Waqid

Also referred to as “Hussein ibn Waqid”, since it is customary to drop the definite article “Al-” in proper names, Ibn Hajar [157] wrote about him that “*he has illusions* - له أوهام”. Many scholars of narrator appraisal rated him untrustworthy because he imposed - scholars such as Abu-Yaala Al-Khalili, Al-Daraqutni, S. Al-Zahabi, Al-Alaai, Al-Maqdesi, Al-Halabi, and Al-Suyuti. Al-Munziri rated him weak (Ibn Al-Jawzi [147]). Al-Albani [11] added Ibn Waqid’s son, Ali, to the criticism.

Ibn Waqid was in the narration chains of 16 narrations below, narrations number 3, 21, 22, 23, 25, 40, 41, 43, 49, 72, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, and 82.

### • List of narrations

The 83 narrations listed below are grouped by the Quranic verses that were claimed to be abrogated, in their order of the Quranic script.

#### 1. On abrogating verse 2:115

*Ubiquity verification:* We could not find a narration with connected sourcing that asserts the abrogation of this verse. Therefore, ubiquity is not verified.

[Narration # 1] Narrator: Ibn Sallam, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

روى ابن سلام عن ابن عباس قال: أول ما نُسَخَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ - فيما ذُكِرَ لَنَا وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ - شَأْنُ الْقِبْلَةِ. قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى

﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١١٥]

فاستقبل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فصلَّى نحوَ بَيْتِ الْمَقْدِسِ وتركَ الْبَيْتَ الْعَتِيقَ، ثُمَّ صرفَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَى بَيْتِهِ ونسخَهَا. فقال

﴿وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٥٠]



*Translation:*

Narrated Ibn Sallam that Ibn Abbas (RA) said, “The first to be abrogated in the Quran - of what we’ve been told, and God knows best - is the qibla. God said, “And to God belongs the East and the West, so, wherever you turn - there is the Face of God ...” [2:115]. The Messenger of God (PBUH) prayed toward Jerusalem and left the ancient house (the Kaaba in Mecca), then God diverted him to His house and abrogated it when He said, “And wherever you go out, turn your face toward the Sacrosanct Mosque. And wherever you all may be, turn your faces toward it ...” [2:150]

*Sourcing validation:*

Invalid because it has a gap in the narration chain; Ibn Sallam was not a contemporary of Ibn Abbas (RA). We looked for the text elsewhere and found similar text narrated by Al-Khorasani (Ibn Sallam [171], Ibn Abi-Hatem [142]), but that too is invalid because Al-Khorasani, as we mentioned above, has been rated untrustworthy in narrating. Al-Hakem, however, authenticated it.

*Abrogation validation:*

In his book of exegesis, Shaker [196] reported interpretations made by Ibn Umar (RA), Mujahid, Al-Basri, and Al-Tabari that make the claim of abrogation unnecessary.

**Summary** : Sourcing is invalid, and abrogation is not agreed.

## 2. On abrogating verse 2:180

*Ubiquity verification:* We found only two narrations with independent, connected sourcing chains that assert the abrogation of this verse. Therefore, ubiquity is not verified.

[Narration # 2] Narrator: Ibn Sirin, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

روى ابن حنبل عن ابن سيرين قال: جلس ابن عباس فقرأ سورة البقرة حتى أتى هذه الآية:

﴿... إِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرًا الْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٠]

فقال: نُسِخت هذه الآية.

*Translation:*

Narrated Ibn Hanbal from Ibn Sirin saying, “Ibn Abbas sat down and read Chapter 2 until he reached the verse, “... if he (a muslim about to decease) leaves wealth, [there should be] a will for the parents and closest relatives ...” [2:180], and said, ‘This verse was abrogated.’ ”

*Sourcing validation:*

Invalid because it has a gap in the narration chain; Ibn Hanbal was born after the death of Ibn Sirin, so the sourcing is disconnected. We looked for that text elsewhere and found similar wording narrated by Al-Khorasani ([Ibn Abi-Hatem \[142\]](#)), but that too is invalid because Al-Khorasani was rated untrustworthy in narrating, as we mentioned above. [Shaker \[196\]](#) wrote that he could not find this text in its stated source, but he nevertheless decided to authenticate it.

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary**: The text states abrogation, but the sourcing is invalid.

[Narration # 3] *Narrator*: Ikrima, *originator*: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمَرْوَزِيُّ، حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُسَيْنِ بْنِ وَقِيدٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ،  
عَنْ عِكْرِمَةَ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ،

﴿... إِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرًا الْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْأَدْنَى وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٠]  
فَكَانَتْ الْوَصِيَّةُ كَذَلِكَ حَتَّى نَسَخَتْهَا آيَةُ الْمِيرَاثِ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad Al-Marwazi from Ali ibn Al-Hussein ibn Waqid from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA), quoting the verse, "... if he (a muslim about to decease) leaves wealth, [there should be] a will for the parents and closest relatives ..." [2:180], "So, wills were like that until they were abrogated by the inheritance verse."

*Sourcing validation:*

Invalid because Al-Hussein ibn Waqid was rated untrustworthy in narrating, as we mentioned above. [Abu-Dawoud \[3\]](#) reported it without a rating. The verifier of his book, Al-Arnaoot, rated it sound. [Al-Albani \[12\]](#) rated it reasonably authentic. [Shaker \[196\]](#) authenticated it.

*Abrogation validation:*

Shaker, in the reference mentioned above, reported the opinion of Al-Asfahani that verse 2:180 is explained by the inheritance verse, and the opinions of Ibn Abbas (RA), Al-Basri, Tawoos, Masrouq, Al-Dahhak, and others that verse 2:180 was abrogated for the heirs mentioned in the inheritance verse but not for others. Shaker commented on that opinion, saying that this is not called abrogation, but a specification of a generality. [Al-Zahiri \[121\]](#) rejected the claim, saying "there is nothing in the inheritance verse that prevents a bequest

to parents and relatives.” Al-Qurtubi [80] stated “No inheritance until after debts and bequests are done.” These opinions refute the claim of abrogation.

**Summary**: Sourcing is unreliable, and scholars did not agree that the text confirms abrogation.

[Narration # 4] Narrator: Unnamed, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

(The narration is quoted here as it appears in the narration encyclopedia, including their comments on its attribution and authentication)

عن ابن عباسٍ في قوله تعالى:

﴿كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٠]

أنّها منسوخةٌ بآيةِ الموارِيث. الراوي: - | المحدث: ابن العربي | المصدر: عارضة الأحوذى  
الصفحة أو الرقم: 4/431 | خلاصة حكم المحدث: ثابت

*Translation:*

According to Ibn Abbas (RA), regarding the verse, “Prescribed for you, when death approaches one of you ...” [2:180] that it is abrogated by the inheritance verse.

*Sourcing validation:*

Missing chain of narrators.

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration. See the discussion in narration number 3 for more details.

**Summary**: The text confirms abrogation, but the sourcing chain is missing.

**Note:** We included this narration because the narration encyclopedia (Al-Dorar Al-Saniyya [89]) rated it authentic, but we could not find it in the source from which it said it was, which is Ibn Al-Arabi’s book “عارضة الأحوذى”.

[Narration # 5] Narrator: Ataa, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

أخبرنا أبو عبد الله الحافظ، أخبرني عبد الرحمن بن الحسن القاضي، ثنا إبراهيم بن الحسين، ثنا آدم بن أبي إياس، ثنا ورقاء، عن ابن أبي نجيح، عن عطاء بن أبي رباح، عن ابن عباسٍ في قوله عز وجل:

﴿يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ ...﴾ [النساء: ١١]

قال: كان الميراث للولد، وكانت الوصية للوالدين والأقربين، فنسخ الله من ذلك ما أحب، فجعل للولد الذكر مثل حظ الأنثيين، وجعل للوالدين الشُّدُس، وجعل للزوج النصف أو الربع، وجعل للمرأة الربع أو الثمن.

*Translation:*

Narrated Abu-Abdillah Al-Hafez from Abdul-Rahman ibn Al-Hasan Al-Qadi from Ibrahim ibn Al-Hussein from Adam ibn Abi-Iyas from Warqaa from Ibn Abi-Najeeh from Ataa from Ibn Abbas (RA) regarding the verse, “God commands to you [to will] to your children, for the male like the share of two females ...” [4:11], that he said, “Inheritance used to be for children and bequests for parents and relatives, then God abrogated from that as He favored and gave the male child like the share of two females, for the parents a sixth, for the husband a half or a quarter and for the woman (wife) a quarter or an eighth.”

*Sourcing validation:*

[Al-Bayhaqi \[32\]](#) reported it in the chapter on wills and did not offer his opinion on it except to say, “Al-Bukhari reported it in his authenticated (narrations compilations book) from Muhammad ibn Yusuf from Warqaa.” See narration [6](#) which weighs in that the ‘Ataa’ mentioned in this narration is more likely Al-Khorasani and not Ibn Abi-Rabah. Therefore, this sourcing is in doubt because of the ambiguity about one of the narrators, Ataa, whether he was Al-Khorasani who has been rated untrustworthy, or he was Ibn Abi-Rabah who is trustworthy. Narration [7](#) coming up preponderates that it was Al-Khorasani.

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is mentioned in the text of the narration, but the wording suggests exception not abrogation.

**Summary**: The text states *naskh*, but the sourcing is unsettled.

**[Narration # 6]** *Narrator:* Ambiguous but more likely Al-Khorasani, *originator:* Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا محمد بن يوسف عن ورقاء عن ابن أبي نجيح عن عطاء عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما، قال: كان المال للولد، وكانت الوصية للوالدين، فنسخ الله من ذلك ما أحب، فجعل للولد الذكر مثل حظ الأنثيين، وجعل للأبوين لكل واحد منهما الشُّدُس، والثُلث، وجعل للمرأة الثمن والربع، وللزوج الشطر والربع.

*Translation:*

Narrated Muhammad ibn Yusuf from Warqaa from Ibn Abi-Najeeh from Ataa that Ibn Abbas (RA) said, “Property used to be for the children and there were bequests for parents, then God abrogated from that as He favored and gave to males the share of two females, to each parent a sixth and a third, and to the woman (wife) an eighth and a quarter and to the husband a half and a quarter.”

*Sourcing validation:*

Al-Bukhari [35] authenticated it. However, Ibn Hajar [159] explained that Al-Bukhari did not narrate from Ataa ibn Abi-Rabah. If he is correct, and the preponderance of evidence is on his side, then the Ataa mentioned in the narration chain must be Al-Khorasani who was rated an untrustworthy narrator by the scholars, as we mentioned above.

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary**: The text states abrogation, but the sourcing is uncertain and is likely invalid.

**Note:** The verse claimed abrogated was not mentioned in this narration, but the other narrations make it clear that it is 2:180.

[Narration # 7] Narrator: Al-Khorasani, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

روى ابن أبي حاتم قال: حدثنا الحسن بن محمد بن الصباح، ثنا حجاج بن مجاهد، أن ابن جريج وعثمان بن عطاء، عن عطاء عن ابن عباس، في قوله:

﴿... الْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٠]

نَسَخْتُهَا هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ:

﴿لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَٰلِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَٰلِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا﴾ [النساء: ٧]

*Translation:*

Narrated Ibn Abi-Hatem from Al-Hasan ibn Muhammad Al-Sabah from Hajja ibn Mujahid from Ibn Juraij and Uthman ibn Ataa from Ataa that Ibn Abbas (RA) said about the verse, “... a will for the parents and closest relatives ...” [2:180], that it was abrogated by “For men is a share of what parents and close relatives have left, and for women is a share of what parents and close relatives have left - be it little or much, a mandated share” [4:7]

*Sourcing validation:*

**Shaker** [196] authenticated it and said, “*Its sourcing reported by Ibn Abi-Hatem is authentic.*” However, the sourcing chain includes Uthman ibn Ataa narrating from his father. That *decisively proves* that the Ataa mentioned in the narration chains of this claim is indeed Al-Khorasani who had a son named Uthman. The other Ataa, Ibn Abi-Rabah, on the other hand, did not have anyone narrating from him named Uthman. This invalidates the sourcing because Al-Khorasani was rated untrustworthy in narrating.

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary**: The text states abrogation, but the sourcing chain has issues.

✓4  
X3

**3. On abrogating verse 2:184**

*Ubiquity verification:* Of the narrations with connected source chains that assert abrogation of this verse are four independent ones. They are narrations numbers 8 by Ibn Jubair, 9 by Nafe, 10 by Yazid, and 11 by Qutaiba. Thus, the ubiquity of narrations asserting abrogation is verified. And of the narrations with connected sourcing chains that reject the abrogation of this verse are three independent ones. They are narrations number 13 by Ataa, 15 by Mujahid, and 18 by Ibn Al-Akwaa. Thus, the ubiquity of narrations rejecting abrogation is *also* verified.

[**Narration # 8**] *Narrator:* Ibn Jubair, *originator:* Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

روى الطبري وابن الجارود والبيهقي من طرق عن سعيد بن أبي عروبة عن قتادة عن عَزْرَةَ عن سعيد بن جبيرة عن ابن عباس قال رُحِّصَ للشيخ الكبير والعجوز الكبيرة في ذلك وهما يُطَيِّقان الصوم أن يُفْطِرا إن شاءا ويَطْعِما كلَّ يومٍ مسكينًا ولا قضاءَ عليهما ثم نُسخَ ذلك في هذه الآية:

﴿... فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٥]

وثبت للشيخ الكبير والعجوز الكبيرة إذا كانا لا يُطَيِّقان الصومَ والحُبْلَى والمرضعُ إذا خافتا أفطرتا وأطعمتا كلَّ يومٍ مسكينًا.

*Translation:*

Narrated Al-Tabari, Ibn Al-Jarud, and Al-Bayhaqi, by various ways, from Said ibn Abi-Aruba, from Qatada, from Azra, from Said Ibn Jubair that Ibn Abbas (RA) said, “A license was given to an old man and an old woman, who could

*still manage to fast, to not fast if they chose and feed every day a poor person, and they do not have to fast later, then that was abrogated in this verse, "... so whoever attains the month [of Ramadan], he is to fast it ..." [2:185], and was confirmed for the old man and old woman who can hardly fast and for the pregnant woman and nursing woman if they fear (illness if they fast) and feed every day a poor person."*

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Albani \[11\]](#) per the criteria of the two elders.

*Abrogation validation:*

In his verification of Ibn Dawban's book, "Lighting of the Road - منار السبيل", [Al-Albani \[11\]](#) criticized the author for referring to the word يطيقونه in verse 2:182 once that it means "can do it" and another time that it means "cannot do it". Al-Albani defined it as "*that is, they can but with arduity*". He opined that the license was general and then its generality was abrogated by the exception of the named individuals. These words negate the abrogation claim because specifying a generality is elaboration, not abrogation. He had previously reported the narration reported by Al-Bukhari, Al-Nasai, and Al-Daraqutni from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he said, "*Not abrogated. It's the old man and the old woman who cannot fast, so they may feed for each day they do not fast a poor person*".

**Summary**: Sourcing is reliable, and while abrogation is stated in the text, some scholars disagreed.

**[Narration # 9]** *Narrator*: Nafe, *originator*: Ibn Umar (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا عياش حدثنا عبد الأعلى حدثنا عبيد الله عن نافع عن ابن عمر رضي الله عنهما، قرأ: فِدْيَةُ طَعَامِ مَسَاكِينَ قَالَ: هِيَ مَنْسُوخَةٌ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Ayyash from Abdul-Aala from Ubaidullah from Nafe that Ibn Umar (RA) recited, "a ransom of feeding poor people",<sup>13</sup> and said, "it is abrogated."

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration, but the abrogating text is not mentioned.

**Summary**: The text states abrogation, and the sourcing is connected.

<sup>13</sup>The plural, poor people, is what was said in the narration. However, the ubiquitous recitation attributed to Hafs from Aasem of verse 2:184 is in the singular, a poor person.

[Narration # 10] *Narrator:* Yazid, servant of Salama ibn Al-Akwaa, *originator:* Salama ibn Al-Akwaa

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا قُتَيْبَةُ حَدَّثَنَا بَكْرُ بْنُ مُضَرَ عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ الْحَارِثِ عَنْ بُكَيْرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَنْ يَزِيدَ مَوْلَى سَلَمَةَ  
بْنِ الْأَكْوَعِ عَنْ سَلَمَةَ، قَالَ: لَمَّا نَزَلَتْ

﴿... وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

كَانَ مَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُفْطِرَ وَيُفْتَدِيَ، حَتَّى نَزَلَتْ الْآيَةُ الَّتِي بَعْدَهَا فَنَسَخَتْهَا.  
مَاتَ بُكَيْرٌ، قَبْلَ يَزِيدَ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Qutaiba from Bakr ibn Mudar from Amr ibn Al-Hareth from Bukair ibn Abdullah from Yazid, servant of Salama ibn Al-Akwaa, from Salama that he said, “When this verse was revealed, “... And upon those who would endure [the fast] - a ransom of feeding a poor person ...” [2:184], it used to be that whoever wanted not to fast could offer the ransom, until the verse after it was revealed and abrogated it.”

Bukair died before Yazid.<sup>14</sup>

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary**: The text states abrogation, and the sourcing is connected.

[Narration # 11] *Narrator:* Qutaiba ibn Said, *originator:* Salama ibn Al-Akwaa

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا بَكْرُ بْنُ مُضَرَ، عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ الْحَارِثِ، عَنْ بُكَيْرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْأَشْجِيِّ،  
عَنْ يَزِيدَ مَوْلَى سَلَمَةَ بْنِ الْأَكْوَعِ عَنْ سَلَمَةَ بْنِ الْأَكْوَعِ قَالَ: لَمَّا نَزَلَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ:

﴿... وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

كَانَ مَنْ أَرَادَ مِنَّْا أَنْ يُفْطِرَ وَيُفْتَدِيَ فَعَلَّ، حَتَّى نَزَلَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ الَّتِي بَعْدَهَا فَنَسَخَتْهَا.

<sup>14</sup> [Ibn Hajar \[155\]](#) explained this sentence as follows: Bukair ibn Abdullah ibn Al-Ashajj, who narrated from Yazid (ibn Abi-Ubaid), died before him.



*Translation:*

Narrated Qutaiba ibn Said from Bakr ibn Mudar from Amr ibn Al-Hareth from Bukair ibn Abdullah Al-Ashajj from Yazid, servant of Salama ibn Al-Akwaa, from Salama Ibn Al-Akwaa that he said: “when this verse was revealed, “... And upon those who would endure [the fast] - a ransom of feeding a poor person ...” [2:184], that it used to be that whoever wanted not to fast can offer the ransom, until the verse after it was revealed and abrogated it.”

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by Abu-Dawoud [3] who did not rate it. Muslim [189] authenticated it, as well as Al-Albani in two books (Al-Albani [12] and Al-Albani [13]) and pointed also to a third book, Al-Albani [11]. Al-Arnaoot authenticated it in his analysis of Al-Tahawi [108]. Al-Tirmizi [113] authenticated it as “sound, authentic, odd”. Al-Nasai [73] reported it and rated it authentic. Ibn Hibban [161] authenticated it and the verifier of his book, Al-Arnaoot, wrote in the footnotes, “Authenticated by Al-Bukhari in the exegesis chapter.” Al-Zahiri [122] reported it with the above-listed content and did not offer an opinion about its authenticity.

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary**: The text states abrogation, and the sourcing is connected.

[Narration # 12] *Narrator*: Most likely Al-Khorasani, *originator*: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

روى الحافظ أبو بكر بن مَرْدُويه، حدثنا محمد بن أحمد، حدثنا الحسين بن محمد بن بهرام المحرمي، حدثنا وهب بن بَقِيَّة، حدثنا خالد بن عبد الله عن ابن أبي ليلى قال: دخلت على عطاء في رمضان وهو يأكل، فقال قال ابنُ عَبَّاسٍ: نزلت هذه الآية:

﴿... وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

فَكَانَ مِنْ شَاءَ صَامٍ وَمِنْ شَاءَ أَفْطَرَ وَأَطْعَمَ مِسْكِينًا، ثُمَّ نَزَلَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ فَنَسَخَتْ الْأُولَى، إِلَّا الْكَبِيرَ الْفَانِي إِنْ شَاءَ أَطْعَمَ عَنْ كُلِّ يَوْمٍ مِسْكِينًا وَأَفْطَرَ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Al-Hafez ibn Marduwaih from Muhammad ibn Ahmad from Al-Hussein ibn Muhammad ibn Bihram Al-Mahrami from Wahb Ibn Baqiyya from Khaled ibn Abdullah from Ibn Abi-Layla that he visited Ataa in Ramadan and he was eating and said that Ibn Abbas (RA) said, “This verse was revealed, “... And upon those who would endure [the fast] - a ransom of feeding a poor person ...” [2:184], so whoever willed could fast and whoever willed

could eat and feed a poor person, then when this [other] verse was revealed, it abrogated the first one and excepted the old, aging person, if he willed he may feed a poor person and eat.”

*Sourcing validation:*

Mentioned by [Shaker \[196\]](#) without complete sourcing, and he did not give his opinion on its authenticity except to say that it's reported by Abu-Dawoud and that the part of it that Al-Hakem reported only referred to conditions of fasting and authenticated it.

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration, but it states exceptions for the elderly.

**Summary**: The text states abrogation, with exceptions, but the sourcing is unreliable.

**[Narration # 13]** *Narrator: Ataa, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)*

*Arabic text:*

حدثني إسحاق أخبرنا روح حدثنا زكرياء بن إسحاق حدثنا عمرو بن دينار عن عطاء سمع ابن عباس، يقرأ وعلى الذين يطوقونه فدية طعام مسكين قال ابن عباس: ليست بمنسوخة هو الشئخ الكبير، والمرأة الكبيرة لا يستطيعان أن يصوما، فليطعمان مكان كل يوم مسكيناً.

*Translation:*

Narrated Isshaq from Rawh from Zakariyaa ibn Isshaq from Amr ibn Dinar from Ataa that he heard Ibn Abbas (RA) reciting, “and upon those encumbered with it (fasting) is a ransom, feeding every day a poor person”.<sup>15</sup> Then said, “it is not abrogated. It was about an old man or an old woman who cannot fast, so they feed a poor person for every day.”

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

*Abrogation validation:*

Explicitly rejects abrogation.

**Summary**: The text rejects abrogation, and the sourcing is connected.

**[Narration # 14]** *Narrator: Ataa, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)*

*Arabic text:*

<sup>15</sup>The wording is different from the verse, using another conjugation of the verb (translated into ‘encumbered with it’).

حدثنا أبو بكر النيسابوري، حدثنا حسن بن محمد بن الصباح، حدثنا شَبَابَة، حدثنا وَرْقَاء، عن ابن أبي نجیح، عن عمرو بن دينار، عن عطاء، عن ابن عباس قال:

﴿... وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

واحد،

﴿... فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

قال: زاد مسكينًا آخرَ

﴿... فهو خيرٌ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

قال: وليست بمنسوخةٍ إلا أنه رَخَّصَ للشيخ الكبير الذي لا يستطيعُ الصيامَ وأمر أن يطعمَ الذي يعلمُ أنه لا يُطِيقُهُ.

#### Translation:

Narrated Abu-Bakr Al-Naisapuri from Hasan ibn Muhammad Al-Sabbah from Shababa from Warqaa from Ibn Abi-Najeeh from Amr ibn Dinar from Ataa from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he said about the verse, "... And upon those who would endure [the fast] - a ransom of feeding a poor person ..." [2:184], he said that was one then with the clause "... and whoever volunteers more good ..." [2:184], he added another poor person "... so that is more good ..." [2:184]. He said it is not abrogated but God gave a license for the old person who cannot fast and ordered that he be fed.

#### Sourcing validation:

Authenticated by [Al-Daraqutni \[40\]](#), and [Al-Azimabadi \[22\]](#) confirmed.

#### Abrogation validation:

[Al-Sanaani \[87\]](#) drew attention to the differences between scholars on this abrogation claim.

**Summary:** The sourcing is connected, and the text rejects abrogation, although several disagreed.

[Narration # 15] Narrator: Mujahid and Ataa, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

#### Arabic text:

حدثنا أحمد بن عبد الله وكيل أبي صخرة، حدثنا الحسن بن عرفة، حدثنا روح، حدثنا شَيْبَل، عن ابن أبي نجیح، عن مجاهد وعطاء عن ابن عباس في قوله

﴿... وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

قال:

﴿... فِدْيَةُ طَعَامِ مَسْكِينٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

واحدٍ

﴿... فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

فَرَادَ مَسْكِينًا آخَرَ لَيْسَتْ بِمَنْسُوخَةٍ

﴿... فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ وَأَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

فَلَا يُرَخَّصُ فِي هَذَا إِلَّا لِلْكَبِيرِ الَّذِي لَا يَطِيقُ الصِّيَامَ أَوْ مَرِيضٍ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لَا يَشْفَى.

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Abdullah on behalf of Abu-Sakhra from Al-Hasan ibn Arafa from Rawh from Shibl from Ibn Abi-Najeeh from Mujahid and Ataa from Ibn Abbas (RA) of his saying about the verse, "... And upon those who would endure [the fast] - a ransom of feeding a poor person ..." [2:184], that he commented that was one (poor person) then he commented on "... and whoever volunteers more ..." [2:184] that this is another poor person, and that the verse is not abrogated. Then he commented on "... so it is better for him and that you fast is better for you ..." [2:184] that the license to break the fast is only for the old person who cannot fast or a sick person who will not recover.

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Daraqutni](#) [40].

*Abrogation validation:*

Rejecting abrogation.

**Summary**: The text rejects abrogation, and the sourcing is connected.

[Narration # 16] Narrator: Ataa, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا أحمد بن عبد الله وكيل أبي صخرة، حدثنا الحسن بن عرفة، حدثنا روح، حدثنا زكريا بن إسحاق، عن عمرو بن دينار، عن عطاء أنه سمع ابن عباس يقرأها

﴿... وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةُ طَعَامِ مَسْكِينٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

قال ابن عباس ليس بمَنْسُوخَةٍ هو الشَّيْخُ الْكَبِيرُ وَالْمَرْأَةُ لَا يَسْتَطِيعَانِ أَنْ يَصُومَا فَيَطْعَمَا مَكَانَ كُلِّ يَوْمٍ مَسْكِينًا.

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Abdullah on behalf of Abu-Sakhra from Al-Hasan ibn Arafa from Rawh from Shibl from Zakariya ibn Isshaq from Amr ibn Dinar

from Ataa that he heard Ibn Abbas (RA) recite the verse, "... And upon those who would endure [the fast] - a ransom of feeding a poor person ..." [2:184], that he commented that it is not abrogated but it's about an old man or woman who cannot fast, so they feed a poor person per day.

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by Al-Daraqutni [40].

*Abrogation validation:*

Rejecting abrogation.

**Summary**: The text rejects abrogation, and the sourcing is connected.

**[Narration # 17]** *Narrator: Ataa, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)*

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا علي بن شيبه، قال: حدثنا رُوْح بن عُبادَة، قال: حدثنا زكريا بن إسحاق، قال: حدثنا عمرو بن دينار عن عطاءٍ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ ابْنَ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا يَقُولُ:

﴿... وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

ليست بَمَنْسُوخَةٍ، هو الشَّيْخُ الْكَبِيرُ، والمرأةُ الْكَبِيرَةُ، لا يَسْتَطِيعَانِ أَنْ يَصُومَا، فَيُطْعِمَانِ مَكَانَ كُلِّ يَوْمٍ مِسْكِينًا.

*Translation:*

Narrated Ali ibn Shaiba from Rawh ibn Ubada from Zakariya ibn Isshaq from Amr ibn Dinar from Ataa that he heard Ibn Abbas (RA) say about the verse, "... And upon those who would endure [the fast] - a ransom of feeding a poor person ..." [2:184], that it is not abrogated but it is about an old man or an old woman who cannot fast, so they can feed a poor person per day.

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by Al-Arnaoot (Al-Tahawi [108]) per the criteria of the two elders.

*Abrogation validation:*

Al-Arnaoot mentioned Ibn Al-Jawzi's objection to the recitation "يَطِيقُونَهُ" (as written in several versions of the narration), which means 'encumbered thereby' because it contradicts the apparent meaning of the text of the verse that the word means ability to fast by evidence of the part that follows, "... and that you fast is better for you ..." [2:184] while the other recitation necessities inability to fast. He backed up his opinion by referring to a narration from Said Ibn Jubair from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he interpreted the word "يَطِيقُونَهُ" to mean try hard to do it but cannot except with arduity, such as the case of a pregnant woman, an elderly person, or a sick person or one who is constantly thirsty.

**Summary**: The text rejects abrogation, and the sourcing is connected.

[**Narration # 18**] *Narrator*: Yazid, servant of Salama ibn Al-Akwaa, *originator*: Salama ibn Al-Akwaa

*Arabic text*:

أخبرنا قتيبة بن سعيد، حدثنا بكر -يعني ابن مُضَر- عن عمرو بن الحارث عن بُكَيْر عن يزيد مولى سلمة بن الأكوع عن سلمة بن الأكوع قال: لما نزلت هذه الآية:

﴿... وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

يطيقونه: يكلفونه، فدية طعام مسكين واحدٍ

﴿... فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

طعام مسكين آخر، ليست بمنسوخة

﴿... فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ وَأَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٤]

لا يرخّص في هذا إلا للذي لا يطيق الصيام، أو مريض لا يُشْفَى.

*Translation*:

Narrated Qutaiba ibn Said from Bakr (ibn Mudar) from Amr ibn Al-Hareth from Bukair from Yazid, servant of Salama Ibn Al-Akwaa, that Salama ibn Al-Akwaa commented on the verse, "... And upon those who would endure [the fast] - a ransom of feeding a poor person ..." [2:184], that "would endure" means are encumbered by it, that the ransom is for one poor person, and that the clause "... and whoever volunteers more ..." [2:184] means another poor person, and that the verse is not abrogated, "... so it is better for him and that you fast is better for you ..." [2:184], so the license to not fast is only for a person who cannot fast or is so ill he will not recover.

*Sourcing validation*:

[Al-Nasai \[73\]](#) reported and authenticated it, and [Al-Albani \[14\]](#) authenticated it and pointed to his other book, [Al-Albani \[11\]](#), and said that Al-Bukhari authenticated something like it.

*Abrogation validation*:

Abrogation was rejected.

**Summary**: The text rejects abrogation by highlighting a license, and the sourcing is connected.

#### 4. On abrogating verse 2:185

*Ubiquity verification:* Ubiquity is not verified as we found only one narration asserting abrogation of this verse, and even for that narration we could not validate its sourcing.

[Narration # 19] *Narrator:* Unnamed, *originator:* Ibn Umar (RA)

*Arabic text:*

(The narration is quoted here as it appears in the narration encyclopedia, including their comments on its attribution and authentication)

عن ابن عمر قال قوله تعالى:  
﴿... فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٥]  
نسخها قوله تعالى:  
﴿... وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ١٨٥]  
الآية

الراوي: - | المحدث: ابن حجر العسقلاني | المصدر: فتح الباري لابن حجر الصفحة أو الرقم:  
4/213 | خلاصة حكم المحدث: إسناده صحيح

*Translation:*

According to Ibn Umar (RA), the verse "... So whoever attains the month [of Ramadan], he is to fast it ..." [2:185] was abrogated by the clause that followed "... and whoever is ill or on a journey ..." [2:185].

*Sourcing validation:*

Unverifiable because the narrator is missing.

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation of an earlier part of verse 2:185 by a later part of the same verse is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary:** The text states abrogation, but the sourcing chain cannot be verified.

**Note:** We included this narration because the narration encyclopedia (Al-Dorar Al-Saniyya [89]) rated it authentic, but we could not find that text in the reference from which it said it was.

## 5. On abrogating verses 2:219 and 4:43

*Ubiquity verification:* We found only one narration with a connected sourcing chain that asserts abrogation of these two verses. Therefore, ubiquity is not verified.

[Narration # 20] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمَرْوَزِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُسَيْنٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ، عَنْ عِكْرِمَةَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرُبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَى ...﴾ [النساء : ٤٣]

و

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ ...﴾ [البقرة : ٢١٩]

نَسَخْتُهُمَا الَّتِي فِي الْمَائِدَةِ

﴿... إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ ...﴾ [المائدة : ٩٠]

الآية.

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad Al-Marwazi from Ali ibn Al-Hussein from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima that Ibn Abbas (RA) said that the verses, “O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while you are intoxicated ...” [4:43], and “They ask you [, O Muhammad,] about intoxicants and gambling. Say, ‘In them is great sin and [yet, some] benefits for people’ ...” [2:229] were abrogated by the verse in Chapter 5, “... intoxicants, gambling, stone altars, ...” [5:90]

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by [Abu-Dawoud \[3\]](#) who did not rate it. [Al-Albani \[12\]](#) rated it “sound in its sourcing”. Al-Arnaoot who verified Abu-Dawoud’s book said, “Sourcing is sound but for Ali ibn Al-Hussein” who, as preceded, scholars have criticized. He also mentioned that Al-Tabari reported it from Yahya ibn Wadeh whose narrating has been abandoned, and that Ibn Sallam reported it from Al-Khorasani and drew attention to that he never met Ibn Abbas (RA), as has been mentioned before, and that Ibn Al-Jawzi reported it from Ali ibn Abi-Talha and drew attention to that he too never met Ibn Abbas (RA), but Al-Arnaoot saw fit that the sum of all these reports elevates the sourcing to the rank of authentic.



*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary**: The text confirms abrogation, but the sourcing is unreliable.

## 6. On abrogating verse 2:228

*Ubiquity verification:* All the narrations with connected sourcing chains that assert the abrogation of this verse were narrated by one man, Ikrima. Therefore, ubiquity is not verified, since the minimum number of independent narration chains required before ubiquity may be verified is three.

[Narration # 21] *Narrator:* Ikrima, *originator:* Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا أحمد بن محمد بن ثابت المروزي، حدثني علي بن حسين عن أبيه عن يزيد النحوي عن  
عكرمة عن ابن عباس

﴿ مَا نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا ... ﴾ [البقرة: ١٠٦]

وقال:

﴿ وَإِذَا بَدَلْنَا آيَةً مَّكَانَ آيَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُنَزِّلُ ... ﴾ [النحل: ١٠١]

الآية، وقال:

﴿ يَمْحُو اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثَبِّتُ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ ﴾ [الرعد: ٣٩]

فأول ما نسخ من القرآن القبله، وقال:

﴿ وَالْمُطَلَّقَاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ ... ﴾ [البقرة: ٢٢٨]

وقال:

﴿ وَاللَّائِي يَئِسْنَ مِنَ الْمَحِيضِ مِنْ نِّسَائِكُمْ إِنْ ارْتَبْتُمْ فَعِدَّتُهُنَّ ثَلَاثَةُ أَشْهُرٍ ... ﴾

[الطلاق: ٤]

فنسخ من ذلك قال تعالى

﴿ ... ثُمَّ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ فَمَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ عِدَّةٍ تَعْتَدُونَهَا ... ﴾

[الأحزاب: ٤٩]

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Thabet Al-Marwazi from Ali ibn Al-Hussein from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA), citing verses 2:106, 16:101 and 13:39, said that the first thing to be abrogated from the Quran was the *qibla*, then said that the verses, “And divorced women are to wait for three periods ...” [2:228] and “And menopausal women, if you are not sure, their grace period is three months ...” [65:4] were in part abrogated by the verse, “... then you divorce them before you touch them, then there is no grace period for them that you are to observe ...” [33:49]

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by Al-Nasai [73] with a different chain and rated it “soundly authentic”. Al-Albani [14] also rated it “soundly authentic”, and pointed to his two books, Al-Albani [11] in which we could not find the text of this narration, and Al-Albani [12] in which we found the text but not the first three verses, see narration 22. The father of Ali ibn Al-Hussein mentioned in the sourcing chain is Ibn Waqid, who has been rated untrustworthy as mentioned above.

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration, but in the sense of exception.

**Summary**: The text confirms *naskh* in the sense of exception, but the sourcing is unreliable.

[Narration # 22] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنُ ثَابِتٍ الْمَرْوَزِيُّ، حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُسَيْنٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ، عَنْ عِكْرِمَةَ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ:

﴿وَالْمُطَلَّاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٢٨]

وَقَالَ

﴿وَاللَّائِي يَكُونُ مِنَ الْمَحِيضِ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ إِنْ ارْتَبْتُمْ فَعِدَّتُهُنَّ ثَلَاثَةُ أَشْهُرٍ ...﴾

[الطلاق: ٤]

فَنَسِخَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ، وَقَالَ:

﴿... ثُمَّ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ فَمَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ عِدَّةٍ تَعْتَدُونَهَا ...﴾

[الأحزاب: ٤٩]

*Translation:*

Narrated Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he said that the verses, “And divorced women are to wait for three periods ...” [2:228] and “And menopausal women,

if you are not sure, their grace period is three months ..." [65:4] were in part abrogated by the verse, "... then you divorce them before you touch them, then there is no grace period for them that you are to observe ..." [33:49]

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by [Abu-Dawoud \[3\]](#) who did not rate it. The verifier of his book, Al-Arnaoot said, "*Its sourcing is sound. Ali ibn Al-Hussein is the son of Ibn Waqid Al-Marwazi, whose narrating is sound.*" See the aforementioned criticism by the scholars of Al-Hussein ibn Waqid and his son. [Al-Albani \[12\]](#) also rated it "sound".

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration, but in the sense of exception. Al-Arnaoot also rejected the abrogation case saying, "*As mentioned before, there is no abrogation here.*"

**Summary**: There is a criticized narrator in the sourcing chain, and the scholars did not agree that the text means conventional abrogation.

**Note:** Research showed that this narration was not explicitly authenticated by anyone, but we followed the narration encyclopedia's conclusionary rating of the narration being authentic to be on the safe side.

[Narration # 23] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمَرْزُوقِيُّ، حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُسَيْنِ بْنِ وَاقِدٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ، عَنْ عِكْرَمَةَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ:

﴿وَالْمُطَلَّقاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٢٨]

الآية، وَذَلِكَ أَنَّ الرَّجُلَ كَانَ إِذَا طَلَّقَ امْرَأَتَهُ، فَهُوَ أَحَقُّ بِرَجْعَتِهَا، وَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا ثَلَاثًا، فَتُسَخِّحُ ذَلِكَ، وَقَالَ:

﴿الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٢٩]

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad Al-Marwazi from Ali ibn Al-Hussein ibn Waqid from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) that the verse, "And divorced women are to wait for three periods and it is not lawful to them to conceal what God created in their wombs ..." [2:228] that a man who divorced his wife had the right to take her back even if he had divorced her for the third time, then that was abrogated by the verse, "Divorce is twice ..." [2:229].

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by [Abu-Dawoud \[3\]](#) who did not rate it. The verifier of his book, Al-Arnaoot, said, “*Its sourcing is sound.*” [Al-Albani \[12\]](#) said, “*soundly authentic.*” See the aforementioned criticism of scholars of Ibn Waqid Al-Marwazi.

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration. However, Al-Arnaoot referenced above, mentioned the rejection of [Ibn Al-Jawzi \[147\]](#) of abrogation, as he wrote, “*It is not said about this that it has an abrogator or abrogated. Rather, it is the launching of a new legislation and cancellation of a pre-Islamic tradition.*” [Makki \[184\]](#) also rejected the abrogation statement, saying, “*And a group of people of semantics said that this verse is abrogating of what they (people) were used to in the pre-Islamic era ... This verse should not have been mentioned in [the subject of] the abrogating and the abrogated.*”

**Summary**: There is a criticized narrator in the sourcing chain, and the scholars did not agree that the text means conventional abrogation.

**7. On abrogating verse 2:240**

*Ubiquity verification:* The narrations with connected sourcing chains that assert abrogation of this verse were made by only two narrators, Mujahid and Ikrima. Therefore, ubiquity is not verified, since the minimum required is three.

**[Narration # 24]** *Narrator:* Ikrima, *originator:* Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

أخبرنا إسحاق بن إبراهيم بن راهويه قال: أخبرنا علي بن الحسين بن واقد قال: حدثني أبي قال: حدثنا يزيد النحوي عن عكرمة عن ابن عباس، في قوله:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لِّأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَّتَاعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرِ إِخْرَاجٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٤٠]

نُسخَ ذلكَ بآية الميراثِ ممَّا فرضَ لها من الربعِ والثُّمنِ، ونسخَ أجلَ الحولِ، أنْ جُعِلَ أجلُها أربعةَ أشهرٍ وعشرًا.

*Translation:*

Narrated Isshaq ibn Ibrahim ibn Rahuwaih from Ali ibn Al-Hussein ibn Waqid from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) that the verse, “And those who decease among you and leave wives behind - a will for their wives: provision for a year without eviction ...” [2:240], was abrogated by

the inheritance verse where she is given a quarter or an eighth, and the period of a year was abrogated to four months and ten days.

*Sourcing validation:*

Invalid because two of its narrators, Ibn Waqid and his son, were rated un-trustworthy in narrating.

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary**: The text states abrogation, but the sourcing is unreliable.

[Narration # 25] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمَرْوَزِيُّ، حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ وَاقِدٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ،  
عَنْ عِكْرَمَةَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لِأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَتَاعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرِ إِخْرَاجٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٤٠]

فَنُسخَ ذَلِكَ بِآيَةِ الْمِيرَاثِ بِمَا فَرَضَ لَهُنَّ مِنَ الرَّبْعِ وَالْثُمْنِ، وَنُسخَ أَجَلُ الْحَوْلِ بِأَنْ جُعِلَ أَجَلُهَا أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا.

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad A-Marwazi from Ali ibn Al-Hussein ibn Waqid from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) that the verse, "And those who decease among you and leave wives behind - a will for their wives: provision for a year without eviction ..." [2:240], that it was abrogated by the inheritance verse, and the year term was abrogated to four months and ten days.

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by Abu-Dawoud [3] who did not rate it, and the verifier of the book rated it 'sound'. Al-Albani [12] also rated it 'sound'. See the aforementioned criticism by the scholars of Al-Hussein ibn Waqid and his son.

*Abrogation validation:*

Commenting on this narration, Al-Arnaoot in the footnotes of his verification of the above reference wrote, "And some predecessors opined that the verse is taut (not abrogated) and that a part of the year was specific [to mourning] and the rest of it is a bequest to her and if she wishes she can stay or if she wanted to she can leave but the mourning period is unchanged. And this was reported by Al-Bukhari from Mujahid." (see narration 26). Explaining that, Ibn Kathir [163] wrote: 'So, this opinion on which Ataa and Mujahid depended

that this verse does not indicate a requirement to mourn for a year, as claimed by the consensus [of scholars] such that it would be abrogated by [the shorter mourning period of] four months and ten days - rather, it is a bequest to wives that they can stay in the homes of their deceased husbands for a whole year ... and not be deprived of that, evidenced by the words '... without eviction ...' [2:240]". So, if after their mourning period they (the widows) chose "to leave and move out of that house, they should not be prevented from that, evidenced by the words '... But if they leave ...' [2:240]. This opinion has a precept and there is support for it in the words, and was chosen by some, such as Abul-Abbas Ibn Taymia."

**Summary**: Sourcing is unreliable, and scholars did not agree that the text confirms abrogation.

**Note:** Research showed that this narration was not explicitly authenticated by anyone, but we followed the narration encyclopedia's conclusionary rating of the narration being authentic to be on the safe side.

[Narration # 26] Narrator: Ibn Abi-Najeeh, originator: Mujahid

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا إسحاق بن منصور، حدثنا روح بن عباد، حدثنا شبل عن ابن أبي نجيح عن مجاهد

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٣٤]

قال: كانت هذه العدة تعتد عند أهل زوجها واجب. فأنزل الله:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لَّأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَّتَعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ فَإِنْ

خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنْ مَّعْرُوفٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٤٠]

قال: جعل الله لها تمام السنة سبعة أشهر وعشرين يوما وصية، إن شاءت سكنت في وصيتها وإن شاءت خرجت، وهو قول الله تعالى:

﴿... غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٤٠]

فَالْعِدَّةُ كما هي واجبٌ عَلَيْهَا زَعَمَ ذَلِكَ عن مجاهد، وقال عطاء، قال ابن عباس: نَسَخَتْ هَذِهِ

الآيَةُ عِدَّتَهَا عِنْدَ أَهْلِهَا فَتَعَتَّدُ حَيْثُ شَاءَتْ، وَهُوَ قَوْلُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى:

﴿... غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٤٠]

قَالَ عَطَاءُ: إِنْ شَاءَتْ اعْتَدَّتْ عِنْدَ أَهْلِهَا وَسَكَنْتْ فِي وَصِيَّتِهَا، وَإِنْ شَاءَتْ خَرَجَتْ، لِقَوْلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى:

﴿... فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٣٤]

قَالَ عَطَاءٌ: ثُمَّ جَاءَ الْمِيرَاثُ، فَنَسَخَ السُّكْنَى، فَتَعَتَدُ حَيْثُ شَاءَتْ، وَلَا سُكْنَى لَهَا وَعَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ  
يُوسُفَ، حَدَّثَنَا وَرْقَاءُ، عَنْ ابْنِ أَبِي نَجِيحٍ، عَنْ مُجَاهِدٍ بِهَذَا، وَعَنْ ابْنِ أَبِي نَجِيحٍ، عَنْ عَطَاءٍ، عَنْ  
ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ: نَسَخَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ عِدَّتَهَا فِي أَهْلِهَا فَتَعَتَدُ حَيْثُ شَاءَتْ، لِقَوْلِ اللَّهِ  
﴿... غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٤٠]  
نَحْوَهُ.

*Translation:*

There are two parts of this narration, one attributes it to Mujahid and the other attributes it to Ibn Abbas (RA) via Ataa<sup>16</sup> who attributed it to Ibn Abbas (RA). Here are the two parts,

First part: Narrated Isshaq ibn Mansur from Rawh ibn Ubada from Shibl from Ibn Abi-Najeeh from Mujahid about the verse, "And those who decease among you and leave wives behind ..." [2:234] that Mujahid said: It refers to the mourning period for the widow that she is required to spend at her late husband's family home, but then God revealed "And those who decease among you and leave wives behind - a will for their wives: provision for a year without eviction ..." [2:240] giving her the remainder of the year, seven months and twenty days, as an option if she wanted to she can live there or if she wanted she can leave. That is what God's words mean, "... without eviction. But if they leave [of their own accord], then there is no violation on your part ..." [2:240], so the mourning period continued to be required; that's what was claimed that Mujahid said.

Second part: Ataa said that Ibn Abbas (RA) said: This verse abrogated her mourning period at her late husband's home so she can mourn wherever she wants and that is what God's words mean, "... then there is no violation on your part in what they do ..." [2:234]. Ataa added: Then came the inheritance [verses] to abrogate the residence such that she can mourn wherever she wants, narrated that to us Muhammad ibn Yousuf from Warqaa from Ibn Abi-Najeeh from Mujahid. Ibn Abi-Najeeh also narrated from Ataa from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he said: This verse abrogated her mourning at her husband's home such that she can mourn wherever she wants, and that is what God's words mean, "... without eviction ..." [2:240].

*Sourcing validation:*

Rated authentic by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#). By scrutinizing the sourcing chain of the second part, however, *hadith* scholars came to the conclusion that it included Al-Khorasani whom they rated an untrustworthy narrator.

<sup>16</sup>As mentioned earlier, there are two narrators whose first name was Ataa, Ataa ibn Abi-Rabah and Ataa Al-Khorasani. The narration encyclopedia says that the one reported by Al-Bukhari in this narration was Ibn Abi-Rabah, but narration appraisal scholars, such as [Ibn Hajar \[159\]](#), have established that Al-Bukhari did not narrate from Ibn Abi-Rabah. Therefore, he must be Al-Khorasani who has been rated untrustworthy.

*Abrogation validation:*

What Mujahid said in this narration (the first part) reconciles the two verses; the widow spends the mourning period at her late husband's family home for four months and ten days, and it's up to her to stay there for the rest of the year if she chooses, therefore no abrogation.

As for what Ibn Abbas (RA) said and confirmed by Ataa (in the second part of the narration) was that verse 2:240 abrogated verse 2:234 by giving the widow the choice of where she wants to spend her mourning period. Notably, this abrogation statement is the opposite of the consensus opinion that it was verse 2:234 that abrogated verse 2:240. Ataa added that inheritance law abrogated the right of residence for the remainder of the year, stated in verse 2:240.

**Summary**: Sourcing of the second part has a weakness. The first part is connected, and the text of the first part reconciles the two verses.

[Narration # 27] Narrator: Ibn Abi-Najeeh, originator: Mujahid

*Arabic text:*

حدثني إسحاق بن منصور أخبرنا روح بن عبادة حدثنا شبل عن ابن أبي نجيح عن مُجاهِدٍ  
﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٣٤]  
قال: كانت هذه العدة تعتد عند أهل زوجها واجبا، فأنزل الله:  
﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَتَاعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ  
فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنْ مَعْرُوفٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٤٠]  
قال: جعل الله لها تمام السنة سبعة أشهر وعشرين ليلة وصية، إن شاءت سكنت في وصيتها، وإن  
شاءت خرجت، وهو قول الله تعالى:  
﴿... غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٤٠]  
فالعدة كما هي واجبٌ عليهنَّ زعم ذلك عن مُجاهِدٍ وقال عطاء: قال ابن عباس: نسخت هذه  
الآية عدتها عند أهلها، فتعتد حيث شاءت، وقول الله تعالى:  
﴿... غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٤٠]  
وقال عطاء: إن شاءت اعتدت عند أهلها، وسكنت في وصيتها، وإن شاءت خرجت لقول الله:  
﴿... فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٣٤]  
قال عطاء: ثم جاء الميراث فنسخ السكنى، فتعتد حيث شاءت، ولا سكنى لها.



*Translation:*

Just like the previous narration, there are two parts of this narration, the first one is:

Narrated Isshaq ibn Mansur from Rawh ibn Ubada from Shibl from Ibn Abi-Najeeh that Mujahid commented on the verse, “And those who decease among you and leave wives behind ...” [2:234] saying: that was the mourning period she spent at her husband’s as a duty, then God revealed, “And those who decease among you and leave wives behind - a will for their wives: provision for a year without eviction. But if they leave [of their own accord], then there is no violation on your part in what they do with themselves of proper norms ...” [2:240], God assigned for her the remainder of a year, seven months and twenty days, as a bequest if she wills she can live in what is bequeathed to her or if she wills she can leave, and that is what God says in, “... without eviction. But if they leave [of their own accord], then there is no violation on your part ...” [2:240]. So, the mourning is the same duty, Ibn Abi-Najeeh claimed that Mujahid said that.

The second part of this narration is by Ataa. He said that Ibn Abbas (RA) said: This verse abrogated her [duty of] spending the mourning period at her husband’s family’s, so she can spend it anywhere she wants, and that is what God says in “... without eviction ...” [2:240]. Ataa said: If she wills, she may mourn at her family’s and live in her bequeathed residence, and if she wills she may leave, for what God says in “... then there is no violation on your part in what they do with themselves ...” [2:240]. Ataa said: Then came the inheritance so the residence was abrogated, thus she may mourn wherever she wants but there is no residence for her.

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#). The text is almost identical to the previous narration.

*Abrogation validation:*

What Mujahid said in the narration reconciles the two verses; the widow mourns four months and ten days at her late husband’s home and may continue to live there for the remainder of one year if she wants. Therefore, there is no abrogation. But what Ibn Abbas (RA) said, and was backed by Ataa, is that verse 2:240 abrogated verse 2:234, which is the opposite of what the abrogation claim states, by giving the widow the option of where to mourn. Ataa added that inheritance, in turn, abrogated her residence for the remainder of the year.

**Note:** The narration encyclopedia ([Al-Dorar Al-Saniyya \[89\]](#)) says that the narrator is Al-Khorasani, and as mentioned before, the consensus of the scholars was that he never met Ibn Abbas (RA).

**Summary:** Sourcing has a problem. The text reconciles the two verses in the Mujahid part, and reverses the abrogation claim in the Ataa part.

[Narration # 28] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

(The narration is quoted here as it appears in the narration encyclopedia, including their comments on its attribution and authentication)

عن ابن عباس قال:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لِأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَتَاعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٤٠]

ونسخ الوصية للزوجات بآية الموارث، لما فرض الله لها من الربع أو الثمن، ونسخ أجل الحول بأن جعل أجلها أربعة أشهر وعشراً.

الراوي: عكرمة مولى ابن عباس | المحدث: ابن عبد البر | المصدر: الاستذكار الصفحة أو الرقم: 5/243 | خلاصة حكم المحدث: ثابت صحيح | انظر شرح الحديث رقم 62899

*Translation:*

According to Ibn Abbas (RA), commenting on verse 2:240, he said: The bequest (of residence) was abrogated because God mandated for her a quarter or an eighth (as her inheritance) and abrogated the year-long (residence) by making the duration four months and ten days.

*Sourcing validation:*

We could not locate this text in the stated source, neither on the mentioned page nor any other, but we decided to include it in this appendix because the narration encyclopedia rated it authentic.

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary**: We could not find the text in the source from which it was reported, so we could not verify that the chain is connected.

[Narration # 29] Narrator: Ibn Abi-Mulaika, originator: Ibn Al-Zubair (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا أمية بن بسطام حدثنا يزيد بن زريع عن حبيب عن ابن أبي مليكة قال ابن الزبير قلت لعثمان بن عفان:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٤٠]

قال: قد نسختها الآية الأخرى، فلم تكتبها أو تدعها؟ قال: يا ابن أخي لا أغير شيئاً منه من

مكانه.

*Translation:*

Narrated Umayya ibn Bestam from Yazid ibn Zuraie from Habib ibn Mulaika from Ibn Al-Zubair (RA) that he said to Uthman (RA), concerning verse 2:240, “It was abrogated by the other verse, so why would you write it (in the Quranic script) or let it (stay in)?” Uthman (RA) replied, “O son of my brother (figurative), I do not change anything from its place.”

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

*Abrogation validation:*

The text states abrogation in the opinion of Ibn Al-Zubair (RA)<sup>17</sup> but neither confirms it nor rejects it in the response of Uthman (RA).

**Summary:** Sourcing is connected, but the text neither confirms nor rejects abrogation in the statement by Uthman (RA). However, it states abrogation in the statement by Ibn Al-Zubair (RA).<sup>17</sup>

**[Narration # 30]** *Narrator:* Ibn Abi-Mulaika, *originator:* Ibn Al-Zubair (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثني عبد الله بن أبي الأسود حدثنا حميد بن الأسود ويزيد بن زريع قالوا: حدثنا حبيب بن الشهيد عن ابن أبي مليكة قال: قال ابن الزبير: قلت لعثمان: هذه الآية التي في البقرة:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٤٠]

إلى قوله: ﴿غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ﴾ قد نسختها الأخرى فلم تكتبها؟ قال: تدعها يا ابن أخي. لا أغير شيئاً منه من مكانه. قال حميد: أو نحو هذا.

*Translation:*

Narrated Abdullah ibn Abil-Aswad from Humaid ibn Al-Aswad from Ibn Abi-Mulaika and Yazid ibn Zuraie from Habib ibn Al-Shaheed from Ibn Abi-Mulaika that Ibn Al-Zubair (RA) said to Uthman (RA), “This verse in Chapter 2”, and quoted verse 2:240, “It was abrogated by the other one, so why do you write it (in the Quranic script)?” Uthman replied, “Leave it (in), O son of my brother (figurative), I do not change anything from its place.” One narrator, Humaid, in the sourcing chain said, “or something like that”.

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

<sup>17</sup>Notice that Ibn Al-Zubair (RA) asked for the removal of the verse from the Quranic script, which goes against ‘abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation’.

*Abrogation validation:*

The text states abrogation in the opinion of Ibn Al-Zubair (RA),<sup>17</sup> but neither confirms it nor rejects it in the response of Uthman (RA).

**Summary:** Sourcing is connected, but the text neither confirms nor rejects abrogation in what Uthman (RA) said. However, it states abrogation in what Ibn Al-Zubair (RA) said.<sup>17</sup>

✓4

**8. On abrogating verse 2:284**

*Ubiquity verification:* Of the narrations with connected sourcing chains that assert the abrogation of this verse are four independent ones. They are narrations number 31 by Abu-Hurayra, 33 by Marwan Al-Asfar, 34 by Mujahid, and 35 by Salem, son of Ibn Umar (RA). Therefore, ubiquity is verified, as the minimum required is three.

[Narration # 31] Narrator: Abul-Alaa, originator: Abu-Hurayra

*Arabic text:*

حدثني محمد بن منهال الضرير وأمّية بن بسطام العيشي، واللفظ لأمّية، قال: حدثنا يزيد بن زريع: حدثنا روح، وهو أبو القاسم، عن العلاء عن أبيه عن أبي هريرة قال: لَمَّا نَزَلَتْ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

﴿لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِنْ تُبَدُّوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفَوُهُ يُحَاسِبْكُمْ بِهِ اللَّهُ فَيَعْفُرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٤]

قال: فاشتد ذلك على أصحاب رسول الله صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فأتوا رسول الله صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ثُمَّ بَرَكُوا عَلَى الرُّكْبِ، فقالوا: أَيُّ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ، كُلُّنَا مِنَ الْأَعْمَالِ مَا نُطِيقُ، الصَّلَاةَ وَالصِّيَامَ وَالْجِهَادَ وَالصَّدَقَةَ، وَقَدْ أُنْزِلَتْ عَلَيْكَ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ وَلَا نُطِيقُهَا، قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَقُولُوا كَمَا قَالَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا؟ بَلْ قُولُوا: سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ، قَالُوا: سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ، فَلَمَّا اقْتَرَأَهَا الْقَوْمُ، ذَلَّتْ بِهَا أَلْسِنَتُهُمْ، فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِي إِثْرِهَا:

﴿أَمِنْ الرَّسُولِ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٥]

فَلَمَّا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ نَسَخَهَا اللَّهُ تَعَالَى، فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ

﴿ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِن نَّسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا ... ﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٦]

قال: نَعَمْ

﴿ ... رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إَصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِنَا ... ﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٦]

قال: نَعَمْ

﴿ ... رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ ... ﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٦]

قال: نَعَمْ

﴿ ... وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴾

[البقرة: ٢٨٦]

قال: نَعَمْ.

#### *Translation:*

Narrated Muhammad ibn Minhal Al-Dareer and Umayya ibn Bestam Al-Aishi (and the text is Umayya's) from Yazid ibn Zuraie from Rawh (Abul-Qasem) from Al-Alaa from his father from Abu-Hurayra that when verse 2:284 was revealed, the fellows of the Prophet (ﷺ) took it hard. They went to him and knelt, saying: O Messenger of God, we've been assigned work that we could do - prayer, fasting, fighting, and charity - and this verse was revealed to you, and we cannot do it. He replied: Do you want to say what the people of the two Books before you said, "we heard and we disobey?" No. Say: We hear and we obey, Your forgiveness (we seek), our Lord, and to You is the destiny. They said it, and when they did, their tongues were humbled. Then God revealed, after it, verse 2:285 (confirming that they attained faith). Then God revealed verse 2:286 abrogating it (verse 2:284). When the verse said, "... Our Lord, do not reprimand us if we forgot or erred ...", the Prophet said: Yes. When it said, "... Our Lord, and do not load on us a bond such as you loaded it upon those before us ...", the Prophet said: Yes. When it said, "... Our Lord, and do not have us carry that which no stamina have we for it ...", the Prophet said: Yes. And when it said, "... and pardon us; and forgive us; and have mercy upon us. You are our protector, so give us victory over the disbelieving folk.", the Prophet said: Yes.

#### *Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Muslim](#) [189].

#### *Abrogation validation:*

Muslim also authenticated another narration that he listed after this one, also narrated by Abu-Hurayra, in which the Prophet (ﷺ) said: Verily, God has pardoned for my community what they say to themselves as long as they do

not speak it or do it. A similar narration is also reported by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is authenticated, and abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

[Narration # 32] Narrator: Not mentioned<sup>18</sup>, originator: Abu-Hurayra

*Arabic text:*

روى الإمام أحمد عن أبي هريرة قال: لَمَّا نَزَلَتْ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

﴿لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِنْ تُبَدُّوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفَوُهُ يُحَاسِبْكُمْ بِهِ اللَّهُ فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٤]

اشْتَدَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى أَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَأَتَوْا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، ثُمَّ جَثَوْا عَلَى الرُّكْبِ، وَقَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، كُلفْنَا مِنَ الْأَعْمَالِ مَا نَطِيقُ: الصَّلَاةُ وَالصَّيَامُ وَالْجِهَادُ وَالصَّدَقَةُ، وَقَدْ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ وَلَا نَطِيقُهَا. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَقُولُوا كَمَا قَالَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ: سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا؟ بَلْ قُولُوا: سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا، غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ. فَلَمَّا أَقْرَبَ بِهَا الْقَوْمُ وَذَلَّتْ بِهَا أَلْسِنَتُهُمْ، أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِي أَثَرِهَا:

﴿أَمِنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٥]

فَلَمَّا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ نَسَخَهَا اللَّهُ فَأَنْزَلَ:

﴿لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٦]

...إِلَى آخِرِهَا.

*Translation:*

Narrated Imam Ahmad (Ibn Hanbal) from Abu-Hurayra that when verse 2:284 was revealed, the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) took it hard and went to him and kneeled and said: We've been assigned work that we could do - prayer, fasting, fighting, and charity - but this verse we cannot do. He replied: Do you want to say what the people of the two Books before you said, "We heard and we do not obey"?! Rather, say: We heard and we obey. Your forgiveness (we seek), our Lord, and to You is the destination. When they said it and

<sup>18</sup>Sourcing says Imam Ahmad was the narrator, but he was born long after Abu-Hurayra (RA) died.

their tongues were humbled, God revealed after it verse 2:285, confirming that they did, and then revealed verse 2:286 to abrogate it (verse 2:284).

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by way of similar narrations by [Shaker \[196\]](#) who did not connect its sourcing chain.<sup>19</sup>

**Note:** We found a connected sourcing chain with Ibn Hanbal in it in [Ibn Mandah \[167\]](#) but its originator is Ibn Abbas (RA), not Abu-Hurayra, so perhaps that's what Shaker meant by a corroborating authentic narration.

*Abrogation validation:*

In his book referenced above, Shaker mentions a narration by Al-Tabari from Al-Hasan Al-Basri that he said: It is not abrogated. Ibn Jarir (Al-Tabari) chose that and justified it by noting that accounting does not necessarily lead to punishment, for God may account and then forgive or account and then punish, as in a narration he reported from Safwan ibn Muhrez quoting God saying, “I covered it for you from the people and I forgive it for you Today” ([Ibn Hibban \[161\]](#)). This is supported by what God says in the same verse, “... then He forgives for whoever He wills and torments whoever He wills ...” [2:284].

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is not connected, and the scholars did not agree that the use of the word *naskh* in the text meant abrogation.

[Narration # 33] Narrator: Marwan Al-Asfar, originator: Ibn Umar (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا محمد حدثنا الثَّقَلِي حَدَّثَنَا مِسْكِينٌ عَنْ شُعْبَةَ عَنْ خَالِدِ الْحِذَاءِ عَنْ مِرْوَانَ الْأَصْفَرِ عَنْ رَجُلٍ  
مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَهُوَ ابْنُ عُمَرَ: “أَنَّهَا قَدْ نُسِخَتْ  
﴿... وَإِنْ تُبْدُوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٤]  
الآية “

*Translation:*

Narrated Muhammad from Al-Nufaily from Miskeen from Shueba from Khalid Al-Hazae from Marwan ibn Al-Asfar from a man of the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) who is Ibn Umar (RA) (according to one of the narrators in the sourcing chain), that he said about the verse, “... and whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it ...” [2:284] that it was abrogated.

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#) who mentioned that its completion of the sourcing chain is in a narration by Isshaq ibn Mansur from Rawh from Shueba.

<sup>19</sup>Imam Ibn Hanbal was born after the death of Abu-Hurayra.

**Note:** The front narrator, Muhammad, is Al-Bukhari, in the opinion of most scholars except Ibn Hajar [155] who opined that he was either Ibn Idris, which is the agnomen name of Ibn Abi-Hatem Al-Razi, or Ibn Ibrahim Al-Bushanji.

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary**: Abrogation is stated in the text, but without mentioning the abrogating verse. The sourcing chain was authenticated, although it mentions an ambiguous originator who was later identified, making the chain connected.

[Narration # 34] *Narrator:* Mujahid, *originator:* Ibn Umar (RA)

*Arabic text:*

أنبا علي بن العباس بن الأشعث، ثنا محمد بن حماد الطهراني، أنبا عبد الرزاق عن جعفر بن سليمان عن حميد الأعرج عن مجاهد قال: كنت عند ابن عمر فقرأ ﴿... وَإِنْ تُبْدُوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٤]

فبكى فدخلت على ابن عباس فذكرت ذلك له فضحك ابن عباس فقال: يرحم الله ابن عمر أوما يدري فيم نزلت وكيف نزلت؟ إن هذه الآية حين نزلت غممت أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم غمًا شديدًا وقالوا: يا رسول الله هلكننا، فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: قولوا: سمعنا وأطعنا. فنسختها

﴿أَمَنْ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٥]  
إلى قوله:

﴿... وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبْتُ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٦]

فتجوّز لهم من حديث النفس وأخذوا بالأعمال.

*Translation:*

Narrated Ali ibn Al-Abbas ibn Al-Ashaath from Muhammad ibn Hammad Al-Tahrani from Abdul-Razeq from Jaafar ibn Sulaiman from Hameed Al-Aaraj from Mujahid that he was at Ibn Umar (RA)'s as he was reciting the verse, "... and whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it ..." [2:284] after which he began to weep. Mujahid mentioned that to Ibn Abbas (RA) who smiled and said: May God have mercy on Ibn Umar. Does he not know about what it was revealed and how? This verse, when it was revealed, caused the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) much distress. They said to him: O Messenger



of God, we are doomed! He said to them: Say “We heard and we obey”. So verses 2:285-286 abrogated it, thus He pardoned them for what they were thinking and accounted them by their deeds.

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by [Ibn Mandah \[167\]](#) who said: This is an authentic sourcing per the consensus, except Al-Bukhari who did not narrate from Jaafar ibn Sulaiman. The verifier of the book criticized Al-Tahrani for narrating from Abdul-Razzaq after the latter began to be mixed up. But we found the same text attributed via Umayya ibn Bestam in one narration and another attributed via Ibn Hanbal. They are two previous narrations, [31](#) and [32](#).

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary**: The sourcing chain has problems, but the other narrations give it support. Abrogation is stated in the text.

**[Narration # 35]** *Narrator*: Salem ibn Abdullah ibn Umar, *originator*: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

قال ابن جرير: حدثني المثنى، حدثنا إسحاق، حدثنا يزيد بن هارون، عن سفيان بن حسين، عن الزهري، عن سالم أن أباه قرأ:

﴿... وَإِنْ تُبْدُوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ يُحَاسِبْكُمْ بِهِ اللَّهُ ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٤]

فدمعت عيناه فبلغ صنيعة ابن عباس فقال يرحم الله أبا عبد الرحمن لقد صنع كما صنع أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حين أنزلت نسختها الآية التي بعدها

﴿لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٦]

*Translation:*

Narrated Ibn Jareer from Al-Muthanna from Isshaq from Yazid ibn Harun from Sufyan ibn Hussein from Al-Zuhri from Salem that his father (Ibn Umar (RA)) recited the verse, “... and whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it ...” [2:284] and his eyes started to tear up. That story reached Ibn Abbas (RA) who reacted: May God have mercy on Abu Abdul-Rahman (Ibn Umar’s agnomen name). He did as the fellows of the Prophet (ﷺ) did when it was revealed. It was abrogated by the verse that followed it, citing verse 2:286.

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by [Ibn Kathir \[163\]](#) who attributed it to Ibn Abbas (RA), and said that it was also narrated from Ibn Umar (RA) and commented that these were

authentic sourcing paths.

*Abrogation validation:*

In his book referenced above, Ibn Kathir mentioned the quote by Al-Hasan Al-Basri, which was chosen by Al-Tabari, that it is not abrogated, as shown previously.

**Summary**: The sourcing chain is judged authentic. Abrogation is stated in the text, but some scholars did not agree.

[Narration # 36] Narrator: Mujahid, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

قال الإمام أحمد: حدثنا عبد الرزاق، أخبرنا معمر، عن حميد الأعرج، عن مجاهد، قال: دخلت على ابن عباسٍ فقلتُ يا أبا عباسٍ كنتُ عند ابن عمرَ فقرأ هذه الآيةَ فبكى قال آيَةُ آيَةٍ قلتُ

﴿... وَإِنْ تُبْدُوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٤]

قال ابن عباسٍ إِنَّ هذه الآيةَ حِينَ أُنْزِلَتْ غَمَّتْ أَصْحَابَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ غَمًّا شَدِيدًا وَغَاظَتْهُمْ غِيظًا شَدِيدًا يَعْنِي وَقَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ هَلَكْنَا إِنْ كُنَّا نَتَّخِذُ بِمَا تَكَلَّمْنَا وَبِمَا نَعْمَلُ فَأَمَّا قُلُوبُنَا فَلَيْسَتْ بِأَيْدِينَا فَقَالَ لَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قُولُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا قَالَ فَنَسَخْتُهَا هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ

﴿أَمَّا الرُّسُولُ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ...﴾ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٥-٢٨٦]

فَتَجَوَّزَ لَهُمْ عَنْ حَدِيثِ النَّفْسِ وَأَخَذُوا بِالْأَعْمَالِ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Imam Ahmad from Abdul-Razzaq from Maamar from Hameed Al-Aaraj from Mujahid that he visited Ibn Abbas (RA) and related to him that he was at Ibn Umar (RA)'s and he was reading this verse and crying. He asked him: Which verse? He replied, "... and whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it ..." [2:284]. Ibn Abbas replied: When this verse was revealed, it distressed the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) a lot and frustrated them a lot. They said to him: O Messenger of God, we are doomed! If we are held accountable for what we say and do [then we are fine] but our hearts are not in our hands (under our control). He told them: Say, "We heard and we obey". They said it. Ibn Abbas said: Then it was abrogated by this [verses 2:285-286], thus He pardoned them for what they were thinking and accounted them by their deeds.

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by **Ibn Kathir** [163] who attributed it to Ibn Umar (RA) as well as Ibn Abbas (RA) and said both are authentic sourcing paths. A version of it is also reported by **Ibn Hajar** [155] who wrote that its origin is at Muslim (See narration 31) but without the story of Ibn Umar (RA). Also reported by **Al-Tabari** [107] with an authentic sourcing chain, attributed to Al-Zuhri, who said he heard Said ibn Marjana tell it.

It was also reported by **Shaker** [197] who wrote that its sourcing chain is authentic and clarified that Hameed Al-Aaraj is Hameed ibn Qays Al-Makki, and by Al-Arnaoot (**Ibn Hanbal** [160]) who wrote that its sourcing chain is authentic per the criteria of the two elders.

*Abrogation validation:*

In his book referenced above, Ibn Kathir mentioned a narration by Ali ibn Abi-Talha from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he said: It was not abrogated. Rather, when God assembles all creation on the Day of Resurrection, He will say to them, “*I tell you what you concealed in yourselves that My angels did not have access to.*” As for the believers, He tells them and then forgives them and that is what the words “... He accounts you by it and then He forgives whom He wills ...” [2:284], but the people of doubt and uncertainty, He tells them what they concealed of belying, and that is what He refers to in “... but He reproaches you by what your hearts earned ...” [2:225]

**Summary**: The sourcing chain is connected, but the scholars did not agree that the word *naskh* in the text meant abrogation.

[**Narration # 37**] *Narrator*: Salem, *originator*: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

(The narration is quoted here as it appears in the narration encyclopedia, including their comments on its attribution and authentication)

أَنَّ أَبَاهُ قَرَأَ:

﴿... إِنَّ تُبْدُوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٤]

... الآية فدمعت عيناه، فبلغ صنيعة ابن عباس فقال: يرحم الله أبا عبد الرحمن لقد صنع كما صنع أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حين نزلت فنسختها الآية التي بعدها:

﴿... لها ما كسبت وعليها ما اكتسبت...﴾ [البقرة: ٢٨٦]

الراوي: سالم بن عبد الله بن عمر | المحدث: البوصيري | المصدر: إتحاف الخيرة المهرة  
الصفحة أو الرقم: 6/186 | خلاصة حكم المحدث: إسناده صحيح | انظر شرح الحديث رقم 76715

*Translation:*

Narrated Salem that his father (Ibn Umar (RA)) was reading the verse, "...And whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it..." and his eyes started to tear up. That action reached Ibn Abbas (RA) who said: May God have mercy on Abu Abdul-Rahman (Ibn Umar (RA)'s agnomen name); he did as the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) did when it was revealed. It was abrogated by the verse that followed it, citing verse 2:286.

*Sourcing validation:*

We could not find this text in the source from which the narration encyclopedia said it was. However, it is identical to narration 35.

*Abrogation validation:*

Stated, but abrogation was challenged for the identical version of the narration.

**Summary**: Sourcing cannot be found in the reporting reference, but the narration is identical to a previous narration. Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

## 9. On abrogating verse 4:8

*Ubiquity verification:* No. Only two independent, authentic narrations, one short of the required minimum of three.

[Narration # 38] Narrator: Ibn Jubair, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا محمد بن الفضل أبو النعمان حدثنا أبو عَوَانة عن أبي بَشْرٍ عن سَعِيدِ بْنِ جُبَيْرٍ عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما قال: إِنَّ نَاسًا يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّ هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ

﴿وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ أُولُو الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينُ ...﴾ [النساء: ٨]

نُسخَتْ، وَلَا وَاللَّهِ مَا نُسخَتْ وَلَكِنهَا مِمَّا تَهَاوَنَ النَّاسُ بِهَا، هُمَا وَالْيَتَامَى: وَالْإِرْثُ وَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَرِثُ، وَوَالٍ لَا يَرِثُ وَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَقَالُ لَهُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ، يَقُولُ: لَا أَمْلِكُ لَكَ أَنْ أُعْطِيكَ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Muhammad ibn Al-Fadl Abu-Al-Numan from Abu-Awana from Abi-Bashir from Said Ibn Jubair from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he said, "Some people claimed that this verse, 'And if [other] relatives, orphans, and needy people attend the division (of the estate) ...' [4:8], was abrogated but by God, it was not. Rather, people neglected the practice. There are two heirs here; one inherits and that is the one who gives charity, and one does not inherit and

that is the one who gently tells the poor relatives that he cannot afford to give them charity.”

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#) without saying which verse it is talking about, but he did make the verse the title of this section of his book. [Ibn Hajar \[155\]](#) did include the verse in the text of the narration and attributed it to Ahmad ibn Humaid from Ubaidullah from Sufyan from Al-Shaybani from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) and commented that these two sourcing chains from Ibn Abbas (RA) are the two authentic, approved ones, and that the mentioned Al-Shaybani is Abu-Isshaq.

*Abrogation validation:*

The text explicitly rejects abrogation.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text asserts no abrogation.

**[Narration # 39]** *Narrator:* Ikrima, *originator:* Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا أحمد بن حميد أخبرنا عبيد الله الأشجعي عن سفيان عن الأشباني عن عكرمة عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما

﴿وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةُ أُولُو الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينُ ...﴾ [النساء: ٨]

قال: هي مُحْكَمَةٌ وَلَيْسَتْ بِمَنْسُوخَةٍ. تابعه سعيد بن جبير عن ابن عباس.

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Humaid from Ubaidullah Al-Ashjaai from Sufyan from Al-Ashbani from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) regarding the verse, “And if [other] relatives, orphans and poor people attend the division (of the estate) ...” [4:8], that it is not abrogated. Ibn Jubair followed him (Ikrima) on that.

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

*Abrogation validation:*

The text is explicit in rejecting abrogation.

**Summary**: The sourcing chain is connected, and the text rejects abrogation.

**Note:** This sourcing chain is the same as the one reported by Ibn Hajar in the previous narration, number 38, except that it called Al-Shaybani Al-Ashbani instead.

## 10. On abrogating verse 4:15

*Ubiquity verification:* No. Only one authentic narration, which is short of the minimum requirement of three.

[Narration # 40] Narrator: Mujahid, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا موسى بن إسحاق قال: نا منجاب بن الحارث، نا علي بن مُسهر، عن مسلم عن مجاهد عن ابن عباس في قوله:

﴿وَاللَّاتِي يَأْتِينَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ ...﴾ [النساء: ١٥]

قال: كُنَّ يُحْبَسْنَ فِي الْبُيُوتِ حَتَّى يَمُوتْنَ فَلَمَّا نَزَلَتْ سُورَةُ النُّورِ وَنَزَلَتْ الْحُدُودُ نَسَخْتُهَا.

*Translation:*

Narrated Musa ibn Isshaq from Minjab ibn Al-Hareth from Ali ibn Mussheer from Muslim from Mujahid from Ibn Abbas (RA) who commented on the verse, “And those who commit the debauchery from your women ...” [4:15], saying, “They were detained in the homes until they would die, and when Chapter 24 was revealed and the legal penalties sent down, it abrogated that.”

*Sourcing validation:*

Al-Haythami [50] included a version of it and said that Al-Tabarani narrated it from his teacher Ibn Abi-Maryam, who is weak, and Al-Bazzar narrated something similar and said that its narrators are men of authentic books except Musa ibn Isshaq ibn Musa Al-Ansari who is trustworthy, but he did not mention the sourcing chain. So, we looked for it in Al-Bazzar [34] and found it there, and it is what we list above. Verifier of Al-Bazzar’s book said that Ibn Mussheer is trustworthy with oddities, and Muslim (ibn Kaysan Al-Dabbi)<sup>20</sup> is weak from the fifth class (of narrator appraisal rankings).

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

Summary: Sourcing chain is weak, and the text states abrogation.

## 11. On abrogating verse 4:29

*Ubiquity verification:* No. Only two narrations, one for abrogation and one against it, both short of the minimum requirement of three.

<sup>20</sup>Not to be confused with Muslim ibn Al-Hajjaj who wrote the seminal book of narration compilations.

[Narration # 41] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

Arabic text:

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمَرْوَزِيُّ، حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ وَاقِدٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ، عَنْ عِكْرِمَةَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ:

﴿... لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْكُمْ ...﴾ [النساء: ٢٩]

فَكَانَ الرَّجُلُ يَخْرُجُ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ عِنْدَ أَحَدٍ مِنَ النَّاسِ بَعْدَ مَا نَزَلَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ، فَنَسَخَ ذَلِكَ الْآيَةَ الَّتِي فِي الثَّوَرِ، قَالَ: <sup>21</sup>

﴿... وَلَا عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَنْ تَأْكُلُوا مِنْ بُيُوتِكُمْ ... أَشْتَاتًا ...﴾ [النور: ٦١]

كَانَ الرَّجُلُ الْغَنِيُّ يَدْعُو الرَّجُلَ مِنْ أَهْلِهِ إِلَى الطَّعَامِ، قَالَ: إِنِّي لَا جَنَحَ أَنْ أَكُلَ مِنْهُ، وَالتَّجَنَّحُ: الْحَرَجُ، وَيَقُولُ: الْمُسْكِينُ أَحَقُّ بِهِ مِنِّي، فَأُحِلَّ فِي ذَلِكَ أَنْ يَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا ذَكَرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ، وَأُحِلَّ طَعَامُ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ.

Translation:

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad Al-Marwazi from Ali ibn Al-Hussein ibn Waqid from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he said about the verse, "... do not consume your properties among yourselves in vain unless it is a trade out of consent from you ..." [4:29], "so a man would shy away from eating at someone's (home) after this verse was revealed, then that was abrogated by the verse in Chapter 24 '... nor [a constraint] on yourselves in eating at your homes ... separately ...' [24:61].<sup>21</sup> It used to be that a rich man would invite a family member to food and the person would say: I refrain from it; a poor person has more right to it than me. Then [this verse] made lawful eating from what was [blessed with] mentioning God's Name on it, as well as the food of the people of the Scripture."

Sourcing validation:

Reported by Abu-Dawoud [3] without rating it. Al-Albani [12] rated it "sound sourcing." Al-Arnaoot, who verified Abu-Dawoud's book, discussed it and said that its sourcing was sound. Then he mentioned what Makki ibn Abi-Talib said that the narration is not attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA) but to Ibn Abi-Hatem from Ibn Masoud (RA). Al-Suyuti and Al-Arnaoot agreed. As has been forwarded, the scholars criticized Ibn Waqid, and Al-Arnaoot mentioned that among his critics were Ibn Abi-Hatem and Al-Uqaily, but he viewed their

<sup>21</sup>The narration misquotes verse 24:61 as saying "لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَأْكُلُوا مِنْ بُيُوتِكُمْ" ("there is no blame on you in eating at your homes") whereas the correct wording is what we substituted above.

criticism as having been influenced by the fact that the man was one of those who believed in the reprieval doctrine.<sup>22</sup>

*Abrogation validation:*

In the book that he verified, referenced above, Al-Arnaoot mentions Makki's agreement with Ibn Masoud (RA) that there is no abrogation here. He said, "This may not be abrogated because consuming property in vain can only be abrogated into allowing that, which neither is good nor lawful."

**Summary**: Some scholars invalidated the sourcing chain, and several of them rejected the abrogation case.

[Narration # 42] Narrator: Alqama, originator: Ibn Masoud (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا علي بن حرب الموصلي، ثنا ابن فضيل عن داود الأودي عن عامر عن علقمة عن عبد الله وهو ابن مسعود

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ ...﴾ [النساء : ٢٩]

قَالَ إِنَّهَا مُحْكَمَةٌ مَا نُسِخَتْ وَلَا تُنْسَخُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Ali ibn Harb Al-Mawsili from Fudail from Dawoud Al-Awdi from Aamir from Alqama from Abdullah (Ibn Masoud (RA)) about the verse, "O you who have believed, do not consume your properties among yourselves in vain ..." [4:29], that "it is not abrogated and will not be abrogated until the Day of Resurrection."

*Sourcing validation:*

Al-Suyuti [102] mentioned it and said that Ibn Abi-Hatem and Al-Tabarani reported it from Ibn Masoud (RA) but he did not connect its sourcing chain. We looked for the sourcing chain in Ibn Abi-Hatem [142] and found it there, so we used it above. Al-Haythami [50] writes that Al-Tabarani narrated it and that the narrators are trustworthy.

*Abrogation validation:*

The text rejects abrogation strenuously.

**Summary**: The sourcing chain is connected, and the text emphatically rejects abrogation.

**Note:** The narration encyclopedia confirmed that the narrator from

<sup>22</sup>The reprieval doctrine states that faith is achieved by belief in the heart and testimony by the tongue only; that deeds are not part of it nor increase it nor decrease it, which contradicts the consensus that emphasizes that deeds are an integral part of faith.



Ibn Masoud (RA) was Alqama. This is helpful because the original text mentions Ibn Masoud (RA) by his first name, Abdullah, only. There are four prominent narrators with that first name. By confirming that Alqama was the narrator from him, the attribution to Ibn Masoud (RA) is also confirmed because he was his fellow.

## 12. On abrogating verse 4:33

*Ubiquity verification:* No. All narrations are through two people only, Ikrima and Ibn Jubair. That is one short of the minimum requirement of three.

[Narration # 43] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنُ ثَابِتٍ، حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُسَيْنٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ، عَنْ عِكْرِمَةَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا، قَالَ: «وَالَّذِينَ عَاقَدْتَ أَيْمَانُكُمْ» كَانَ الرَّجُلُ يُحَالِفُ الرَّجُلَ، لَيْسَ بَيْنَهُمَا نَسَبٌ، فَيَرِثُ أَحَدُهُمَا الْآخَرَ، فَنَسَخَ ذَلِكَ الْأَنْفَالُ، فَقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿... وَأُولُو الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَى بِبَعْضٍ ...﴾ [الأَنْفَالُ: ٧٥]

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Thabet from Ali ibn Al-Hussein from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) about “and those who were covenanted by your oaths”<sup>23</sup> that men held alliances with one another without kinship that they inherit each other. That was abrogated by the verse in Chapter 8, “... and blood relatives are more entitled to each other ...” [8:75]

*Sourcing validation:*

Abu-Dawoud [3] reported it and the book’s verifier, Al-Arnaoot, said, “Authentic by support from other narrations.” He mentioned that Al-Tabari narrated it from Muhammad ibn Humaid Al-Razi, who has been dismissed, and that among those who narrated it was Ibn Sallam by way of Ataa Al-Khorasani and Ali ibn Abi-Talha, neither of whom heard from Ibn Abbas (RA), also from Atiya Al-Awfi who has been rated weak in narrating. Al-Albani [12] rated “soundly authentic”.

<sup>23</sup>This is a different recitation of verse 4:33 in which the verb means “covenanted” (عَاقَدْتَ) and this is how it appears in the narration encyclopedia, but the ubiquitous *Hafs* recitation of the verse uses another verb that means “contracted” (عَقَدْتَ).

*Abrogation validation:*

In his book referenced above, Al-Arnaoot mentioned what Ibn Al-Jawzi wrote about the differences between scholars on what is meant by the covenanting, as well as the statement by Abu-Hanifa, “*And this ruling remains, except that blood relatives have priority over covenanted people.*” He also mentioned the narration by Mujahid and Ibn Abbas (RA) that the covenanting was on help and counsel only; no inheritance.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain has a criticized narrator, and scholars did not agree that the text means abrogation.

[Narration # 44] Narrator: Ibn Jubair, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثني إسحاق بن إبراهيم قال: قلت لأبي أسامة: حدثكم إدریس حدثنا طلحة عن سعيد بن جُبَيْرٍ عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ

﴿وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِي ... وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدْتَ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ...﴾ [النساء: ٣٣]

قال: كَانَ الْمُهَاجِرُونَ حِينَ قَدِمُوا الْمَدِينَةَ يَرِثُ الْأَنْصَارِيُّ الْمُهَاجِرِيَّ ذُونَ ذَوِي رَحِمِهِ، لِلْأُخُوَّةِ الَّتِي آخَى النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَيْنَهُمْ، فَلَمَّا نَزَلَتْ:

﴿وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِي ...﴾ [النساء: ٣٣]

قال: نَسَخَتْهَا:

”وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدْتَ أَيْمَانُكُمْ“.

*Translation:*

Narrated Isshaq ibn Ibrahim: I said to Abi-Usama, “Idris told you that Talha relayed to him from Said Ibn Jubair from Ibn Abbas (RA), regarding the verse, “And to each We set up charges ... and those who were contracted by your oaths ...” [4:33], he said, “When the migrants (from Mecca) went to Medina, the Medinite would inherit from the (Meccan) migrant leaving out his blood relatives, for the fraternity that the Prophet (ﷺ) established between them. Then when the verse “And to each We set up charges ...” [4:33] was revealed, it was abrogated by “and those who were covenanted by your oaths”<sup>23</sup>

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari](#) [35].

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and abrogation is stated.

**Note:** In the first part of the narration, as it was written in its source, the verb used in the quoted verse was “contracted” (عقدت), and in the end the verb was “covenanted” (عاهدت). That is why we wrote it that way.

[Narration # 45] Narrator: Ibn Jubair, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا الصلت بن محمد حدثنا أبو أسامة عن إدريس عن طلحة بن مصرف عن سعيد بن جبيرة عن  
ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما

﴿ وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِي ... ﴾ [النساء: ٣٣]

قال: ورثته، “وَالَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتَ أَيْمَانَكُمْ” كَانَ الْمُهَاجِرُونَ لَمَّا قَدِمُوا الْمَدِينَةَ يَرِثُ الْمُهَاجِرِيُّ  
الْأَنْصَارِيَّ، ذُوْن ذَوِي رَحِمِهِ لِلْأُخُوَّةِ الَّتِي آخَى النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَيْنَهُمْ، فَلَمَّا نَزَلَتْ

﴿ وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِي ... ﴾ [النساء: ٣٣]

نُسِخَتْ. ثُمَّ قَالَ: “وَالَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتَ أَيْمَانَكُمْ” مِنَ النَّصْرِ وَالرَّفَادَةِ وَالنَّصِيحَةِ، وَقَدْ ذَهَبَ الْمِيرَاثُ  
وَيُوصِي لَهُ. سَمِعَ أَبُو أُسَامَةَ إِدْرِيْسَ وَسَمِعَ إِدْرِيْسَ طَلْحَةَ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Al-Salt ibn Muhammad from Abu-Usama from Idris from Talha ibn Musarraf from Said Ibn Jubair from Ibn Abbas (RA), regarding the verse, “And to each We set up charges ...” [4:33], meaning heirs, “and those who were covenanted by your oaths”<sup>23</sup> that when the migrants went to Medina, they would inherit from the Medinite while their blood relatives would not, and that was for the fraternity the Prophet (ﷺ) established between them. Then when this verse was revealed, “And to each We set up charges ...” [4:33], it was abrogated, then he said about “and those who were covenanted by your oaths”<sup>23</sup> [that it means] help, support, and advice after the estate is distributed, and may bequeath to him. Abu-Usama heard from Idris, and Idris heard from Talha.

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and abrogation is stated in the text.

**Note:** This narration says the migrant inherited from the Medinite while the previous narration says the opposite, so taken together, it means that they

inherited from each other, which was stated in narration 43 above.

[Narration # 46] Narrator: Ibn Jubair, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا الصَّلْتُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ عَنْ إِدْرِيسَ عَنْ طَلْحَةَ بْنِ مَصْرُوفٍ عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ جُبَيْرٍ عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا

﴿وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِي ...﴾ [النساء: ٣٣]

قَالَ: وَرَثَةٌ "وَالَّذِينَ عَاقَدْتَ أَيْمَانُكُمْ" قَالَ: كَانَ الْمُهَاجِرُونَ لَمَّا قَدِمُوا الْمَدِينَةَ، يَرِثُ الْمُهَاجِرُ الْأَنْصَارِيَّ دُونَ ذَوِي رَحِمِهِ؛ لِلْأُخُوَّةِ الَّتِي آخَى النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَيْنَهُمْ، فَلَمَّا نَزَلَتْ

﴿وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِي ...﴾ [النساء: ٣٣]

نَسَخَتْ. ثُمَّ قَالَ: "وَالَّذِينَ عَاقَدْتَ أَيْمَانُكُمْ" إِلَّا النَّصْرَ، وَالرِّقَادَةَ، وَالنَّصِيحَةَ، وَقَدْ ذَهَبَ الْمِيرَاثُ، وَيُوصِي لَهُ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Al-Salt ibn Muhammad from Abu-Usama from Idris from Talha ibn Musarrif from Said ibn Jubair from Ibn Abbas (RA), about the verse, "And to each We set up charges ..." [4:33], meaning heirs, and about the part that says "and those who were covenanted by your oaths",<sup>23</sup> that the migrants (from Mecca) coming to Medina used to inherit from the Medinite whose blood relatives don't. That was because of the fraternity the Prophet (PBUH) established between them. Then when the verse, "And to each We set up charges ..." [4:33] was revealed, it abrogated the part that says, "and those who were covenanted by your oaths"<sup>23</sup> except in help, support, and advice, after the estate is distributed, and may bequeath to him.

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary**: The sourcing chain is connected, and abrogation is stated in the text.

[Narration # 47] Narrator: Ibn Jubair, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا هَارُونُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ، حَدَّثَنِي إِدْرِيسُ بْنُ يَزِيدَ، حَدَّثَنَا طَلْحَةُ بْنُ مَصْرُوفٍ، عَنْ

سَعِيدُ بْنُ جُبَيْرٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، فِي قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: "وَالَّذِينَ عَاقَدْتَ أَيْمَانَكُمْ فَآتُوهُمْ نَصِيبَهُمْ" قَالَ: كَانَ الْمُهَاجِرُونَ حِينَ قَدِمُوا الْمَدِينَةَ تُورَثُ الْأَنْصَارَ، ذُو ذَوِي رَحِمِهِ لِلْأُخُوَّةِ الَّتِي آخَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَيْنَهُمْ، فَلَمَّا نَزَلَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ:

﴿وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِي مِمَّا تَرَكَ ...﴾ [النساء: ٣٣]

قَالَ: نَسَخْتُهَا: "وَالَّذِينَ عَاقَدْتَ أَيْمَانَكُمْ فَآتُوهُمْ نَصِيبَهُمْ" مِنَ النَّصْرِ وَالنَّصِيبَةِ وَالرَّفَادَةِ، وَيُوصِي لَهُ، وَقَدْ ذَهَبَ الْمِيرَاثُ.

#### Translation:

Narrated Haroon ibn Abdullah from Abu-Usama from Idris ibn Yazid from Talha ibn Musarrif from Ibn Jubair, Said from Ibn Abbas (RA) in regards to the verse<sup>23</sup> "and those who were covenanted by your oaths, grant them their share", he said that when the migrants went to Medina, they would inherit from the Medinites while their blood relatives did not. That was because of the fraternity the Prophet (PBUH) established between them. Then when this verse was revealed, "And to each We setup charges of what he (a decedent) left ..." [4:33], he said it was abrogated by "and those who were covenanted by your oaths, grant them their share"<sup>23</sup> of help, advice, and support, and may bequeath to him after the estate is distributed.

#### Sourcing validation:

Reported by [Abu-Dawoud \[3\]](#) who did not rate it, but the verifier of his book, Al-Arnaoot, authenticated it and identified Abu-Usama as Hammad ibn Usama. [Al-Albani \[12\]](#) also authenticated it.

#### Abrogation validation:

Al-Arnaoot, who verified Abu-Dawoud's book referenced above, mentioned what Abu-Hanifa and his fellows said, that "This ruling stays, except that He gave blood relatives more priority than the covenanted person." [Ibn Hajar \[155\]](#) wrote that Al-Tabari narrated by way of Ali ibn Abi-Talha from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he said, "A man would covenant another man that when he dies he inherits from him, then God, may He be glorified and prominent, revealed "... and blood relatives are more entitled to each other in the Book of God than believers (at large) and migrants unless you do for your covenanted people a virtue ..." [33:6], that is to bequeath to your charges whom you covenanted." We say that this means that the mutual fraternity inheritance was a decision made by them, not by God or His Messenger, and that the verse in Chapter 4 was revealed to correct it, and attesting to that is what Al-Tabari reported.

**Summary:** Sourcing chain is connected, but the scholars did not agree that the text asserts abrogation per the Abrogation Doctrine.

[Narration # 48] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

Arabic text:

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُسَيْنٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ، عَنْ عِكْرِمَةَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ،

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا ... وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يُهَاجِرُوا ... ﴾ [الأنفال: ٧٢]

فَكَانَ الْأَعْرَابِيُّ لَا يَرِثُ الْمُهَاجِرَ، وَلَا يَرِثُهُ الْمُهَاجِرُ، فَسَخَّطَهَا فَقَالَ:

﴿ ... وَأُولُو الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَى بِبَعْضٍ ... ﴾ [الأنفال: ٧٥]

Translation:

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad from Ali ibn Al-Hussein from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) that the verse, “Verily, those who have believed and migrated ... and those who have believed and did not migrate ...” [8:72], meant that the Bedouin does not inherit from the migrant nor the migrant from him. Then it was abrogated by, “... and blood relatives are more entitled to each other ...” [8:75]<sup>24</sup>

Sourcing validation:

Reported by [Abu-Dawoud \[3\]](#) who did not rate it. Al-Arnaoot rated it “sound.” As mentioned at the top, the scholars have dismissed Ali ibn Al-Hussein. As for Ahmad ibn Muhammad, he is Ibn Thabet.

Abrogation validation:

The forbiddance, in the verse in Chapter 8, of befriending those who did not migrate (from Mecca to Medina) does not require depriving them of inheritance, and we do not know that the Prophet (ﷺ) explicitly forbade it.

**Summary:** The sourcing chain has a dismissed narrator, and the text indicates abrogation.

**Note:** Research showed that this narration was not explicitly authenticated by anyone, but we followed the narration encyclopedia’s conclusionary rating of the narration being authentic to be on the safe side.

[Narration # 49] Narrator: Not mentioned, originator: Not mentioned

Arabic text:

كَانَ الْمُهَاجِرِيُّ يَرِثُ الْأَنْصَارِيَّ دُونَ قَرَابَاتِهِ وَذَوِي رَحِمِهِ، حَتَّى نُسَخَّ ذَلِكَ.

<sup>24</sup>Identical words appear in verse 33:6, but the text of the narration in [Abu-Dawoud \[3\]](#) identifies verse 8:75.

*Translation:*

The migrant used to inherit from the Medinite whose kin and blood relatives did not, until that was abrogated.

*Sourcing validation:*

Shaker [196] attributed this sourcing to Ibn Abbas (RA) without a sourcing chain or authentication, so he may have extracted the text from the preceding narrations.

*Abrogation validation:*

In his exegesis referenced above, Shaker said, “Meaning that kin are more entitled to inheritance than the migrants and Medinites, and this is abrogating of what has been before of inheriting by alliance and fraternity that was between them.” Then he mentioned what Al-Tabari said that there is no abrogation, substantiated by the words of God, may He be exalted, “... unless you do your charges a virtue ...” [33:6], which he interpreted to mean: Unless you bequeath to your charges whom you covenanted.

**Summary**: Sourcing is not mentioned, and the scholars did not agree that the text refers to abrogation per the Abrogation Doctrine.

**13. On abrogating verse 4:93 and verse 25:68****X3**

*Ubiquity verification:* Yes for verse 4:93. Narrations about its abrogation were sourced through three different narrators: Ibn Jubair, Ibn Abil-Jaad, and Ibn Dinar, and all of those narrations reject the abrogation claim. As for verse 25:68, narrations about its abrogation all come through Ibn Jubair only, so there is no ubiquity.

[Narration # 50] Narrator: Ibn Jubair, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا إبراهيم بن موسى أخبرنا هشام بن يوسف أن ابن جريج أخبرهم قال: أخبرني القاسم بن أبي بزة أنه سأل سعيد بن جبير: هل لمن قتل مؤمناً متعمداً من توبته؟ فقرأت عليه:

﴿... وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ...﴾ [الفرقان: ٦٨]

فقال سعيد: قرأتها على ابن عباس كما قرأتها علي فقال: هذه مكية نسختها آية مدنية التي في سورة النساء.

*Translation:*

Narrated from Ibrahim ibn Musa from Hisham ibn Yousuf that Ibn Juraij told

them that Al-Qasem ibn Abi-Bazza told him that he asked Said Ibn Jubair: Is there for one who killed a believer intentionally a repentance? I recited, "... and do not kill the soul that God sanctioned except by right ..." [25:68], Then Said said: I recited it to Ibn Abbas (RA) as you recited it to me and he said, "This is Meccan and it was abrogated by a Medinite verse, the one in Chapter 4."

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

*Abrogation validation:*

The text states that verse 25:68 was abrogated by the verse in Chapter 4.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text supports abrogation of verse 25:68.

**Note:** He did not name the Chapter 4 verse but the other narrations that follow clearly indicate that it is verse 4:93.

[Narration # 51] *Narrator:* Ibn Jubair, *originator:* Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثني عبد الله بن هاشم وعبد الرحمن بن بشر العبدي قالا: حدثنا يحيى، وهو ابن سعيد القطان، عن ابن جريج، حدثني القاسم بن أبي بزة عن سعيد بن جبير قال: قلت لابن عباس: أَلَمْ يَكُنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا مِنْ تَوْبَةٍ؟ قَالَ: لَا، قَالَ: فَتَلَوْتُ عَلَيْهِ هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ الَّتِي فِي الْفُرْقَانِ: ﴿وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ...﴾ [الفرقان: ٦٨]

إِلَى آخِرِ الْآيَةِ، قَالَ: هَذِهِ آيَةٌ مَكِّيَّةٌ نَسَخَتْهَا آيَةٌ مَدَنِيَّةٌ:

﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا ...﴾ [النساء: ٩٣]

وَفِي رَوَايَةِ ابْنِ هَاشِمٍ: فَتَلَوْتُ عَلَيْهِ هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ الَّتِي فِي الْفُرْقَانِ:

﴿إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ ...﴾ [الفرقان: ٧٠]

*Translation:*

Narrated Abdullah ibn Hashem and Abdul-Rahman ibn Bishr Al-Abdi that Yahya (ibn Said Al-Qattan) narrated from Ibn Juraij from Al-Qasem ibn Abi-Bazza from Said Ibn Jubair that he asked Ibn Abbas (RA): Is there repentance for one who killed a believer intentionally? He said: No. So, I recited to him the verse in Chapter 25, "And those who do not call with God another deity and do not kill the soul which God has sanctioned except by right ..." [25:68] till



its end. He said: This is a Meccan verse abrogated by this Medinite verse, “And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Gehenna, staying perpetually ...” [4:93]. In the narration by Ibn Hashem, [he added] so I recited to him this (other) verse in Chapter 25, “Except him who repented ...” [25:70]

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Muslim](#) [189].

*Abrogation validation:*

The text indicates that verse 25:68 was abrogated by verse 4:93.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text states abrogation.

[Narration # 52] Narrator: Ibn Jubair, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

أخبرنا عمرو بن علي، قال: حدثنا يحيى، قال: حدثنا ابن جُرَيْجٍ، قال: حدثنا القاسم بن أبي بزة، عن سعيد بن جبیر، قال: قلت لابن عباس: هل لمن قتل مؤمناً مُتَعَمِّداً من توبة؟ قال: لا. وقرأت عليه الآية التي في الفرقان

﴿وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ...﴾  
[الفرقان: ٦٨]

قال: هذه آية مَكِّيَّةٌ نَسَخَتْهَا آيةٌ مَدَنِيَّةٌ

﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِناً مُتَعَمِّداً فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ ...﴾ [النساء: ٩٣]

*Translation:*

Narrated Amr ibn Ali that Yahya narrated from Ibn Juraij from Al-Qasem ibn Abi-Bazza from Said Ibn Jubair that he asked Ibn Abbas (RA): Is there for one who killed a believer intentionally a repentance? He said: No. I recited to him the verse in Chapter 25, “And those who do not call with God another deity and do not kill the soul which God has sanctioned, except by right ...” [25:68]. He said: This is a Meccan verse abrogated by a Medinite verse, “And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Gehenna ...” [4:93]

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by [Al-Nasai](#) [73] who rated it authentic.

*Abrogation validation:*

The text indicates the abrogation of verse 25:68 by verse 4:93.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text indicated abrogation of verse 25:68.

**Note:** The narration encyclopedia mentions that Al-Albani authenti-

cated this narration, but we did not find his authentication of this particular narration. He did authenticate other narrations as will be shown later.

[Narration # 53] Narrator: Ibn Jubair, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا آدم بن أبي إياس حدثنا شعبة حدثنا مُغيرة بن النعمان قال: سَمِعْتُ سَعِيدَ بْنَ جُبَيْرٍ قَالَ: آيَةٌ اخْتَلَفَ فِيهَا أَهْلُ الْكُوفَةِ، فَرَحَلْتُ فِيهَا إِلَى ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ فَسَأَلْتُهُ عَنْهَا، فَقَالَ: نَزَلَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ: ﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ ...﴾ [النساء: ٩٣] هي آخِرُ مَا نَزَلَ، وما نَسَخَهَا شَيْءٌ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Adam ibn Abi-Iyas from Shueba from Mugheera ibn Al-Numan that he said: I heard Said Ibn Jubair say: The people of Kufa differed about a verse, so I traveled for it to Ibn Abbas (RA) and asked him about it. He said: This verse, "And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Gehenna ..." [4:93] is the last of what was revealed, and nothing abrogated it.

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

*Abrogation validation:*

The text asserts the rejection of abrogation.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text asserts rejection of abrogation of verse 4:93.

[Narration # 54] Narrator: ibnjabeer, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا عُبيد الله بن معاذ العنبري، حدثنا أبي، حدثنا شعبة عن المغيرة بن النعمان عن سعيد بن جُبَيْرٍ قَالَ: اخْتَلَفَ أَهْلُ الْكُوفَةِ فِي هَذِهِ الْآيَةِ: ﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ ...﴾ [النساء: ٩٣] فَرَحَلْتُ إِلَى ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ فَسَأَلْتُهُ عَنْهَا، فَقَالَ: لَقَدْ أُنْزِلَتْ آخِرَ مَا أُنْزِلَ، ثُمَّ مَا نَسَخَهَا شَيْءٌ. فِي حَدِيثِ ابْنِ جَعْفَرٍ: نَزَلَتْ فِي آخِرِ مَا أُنْزِلَ. وَفِي حَدِيثِ النَّضْرِ: إِنَّهَا لَمِنْ آخِرِ مَا أُنْزِلَتْ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Ubaidullah ibn Muaazh Al-Anbari from his father from Shueba from

Al-Mugheera ibn Al-Numan from Said Ibn Jubair that he said: The people of Kufa differed on this verse, “And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Gehenna ...” [4:93], so I traveled to Ibn Abbas (RA) and asked him about it. He said: It was revealed last in what was revealed, then nothing abrogated it. In the narration of Ibn Jaafar: It was revealed in what was revealed last. In the narration of Al-Nadhr: It is among what was revealed last.

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Muslim](#) [189].

*Abrogation validation:*

The text asserts the rejection of abrogation.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text asserts rejection of abrogation of verse 4:93.

[**Narration # 55**] *Narrator*: Ibn Jubair, *originator*: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَنْبَلٍ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنِ الْمُغِيرَةِ بْنِ النُّعْمَانِ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ جُبَيْرٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ:  
﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا ...﴾ [النساء: ٩٣]  
قَالَ: مَا نَسَخَهَا شَيْءٌ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Hanbal from Abdul-Rahman from Sufyan from Al-Mugheera ibn Al-Numan from Said Ibn Jubair from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he said about the verse, “And whoever kills a believer intentionally ...”, that nothing abrogated it.

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by [Abu-Dawoud](#) [3] who did not rate it. His book’s verifier, Al-Arnaoot, authenticated it and added the helpful information that Sufyan is Ibn Said Al-Thawri and that Abdul-Rahman is Ibn Mahdi. [Al-Albani](#) [12] said: “Authentic: Kh”, Kh being an abbreviation of Al-Bukhari.

*Abrogation validation:*

The text rejects abrogation.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text rejects abrogation of verse 4:93.

[Narration # 56] Narrator: Ibn Abil-Jaad, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا محمد بن جعفر حدثنا شعبة سمعت يحيى بن المجبر التميمي يحدث عن سالم بن أبي الجعد عن ابن عباس أن رجلاً أتاه فقال: أرايت رجلاً قتل رجلاً مُتعمداً قال: ﴿... فجزاؤه جهنم خالداً فيها وغضب الله عليه ولعنه وأعد له عذاباً عظيماً﴾ [النساء: ٩٣]

قال: لقد أنزلت في آخر ما نزل ما نسخها شيء حتى قبض رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وما نزل وحي بعد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: أرايت إن تاب وأمن وعمل صالحاً ثم اهتدى قال: وأنتى له بالتوبة وقد سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: تَكَلَّمَتْ أُمُّهُ رَجُلٌ قَتَلَ رَجُلًا مُتَعَمِّدًا يَجِيءُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَخْذًا قَاتَلَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ أَوْ بِيَسَارِهِ وَأَخْذًا رَأْسَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ أَوْ شِمَالِهِ تَشْحُبُ أَوْدَاجُهُ دَمًا فِي قَبْلِ الْعَرْشِ يَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ سَلْ عَبْدَكَ فِيمَ قَتَلْتَنِي.

*Translation:*

Narrated Muhammad ibn Jaafar from Shueba from Yahya ibn Al-Mujabber Al-Tamimi from Salem ibn Abil-Jaad from Ibn Abbas (RA) that a man came to him and said: How do you see a man who killed a man intentionally. He replied, "... so his recompense is Gehenna, staying perpetually therein, and God is angry with him, cursed him, and prepared for him a grand torment." [4:93]. He explained further, "It was revealed among the last verses revealed and nothing abrogated it until the Messenger of God was deceased, and there has not been any revelation after him." He argued with him, saying, "What if he repented, had faith and worked a good deed and then found guidance?" He replied, "Far for him is repentance! I heard the Messenger of God (ﷺ) say: May his mother lose him to death, he who killed a man intentionally. He (the victim) comes on the Day of Resurrection, grabbing his killer by his right hand or left hand and holding his head by his right or left hand, his body pouring blood, in front of the Throne, asking: O Lord, ask your worshiper for what did he kill me?"

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by Ahmad in his compilation book, Al-Musnad (Shaker [197]). The verifier of his book, Ahmad Shaker said, "Its sourcing is authentic. Yahya ibn Al-Mujabber is Yahya ibn Abdullah ibn Al-Harth Al-Mujabber. Ahmad said about him: he is not bad. Ibn Mueen and Al-Nasai said he was weak. For me, he is trustworthy as Shueba narrated from him and Al-Bukhari had a biography of him in his narrator appraisal book "Al-Kabeer", and did not mention any criticism of him and did not include him among the weak."

*Abrogation validation:*

The text asserts no abrogation.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text asserts no abrogation of verse 4:93.

[**Narration # 57**] *Narrator*: Ibn Abil-Jaad, *originator*: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text*:

أخبرنا قتيبة بن سعيد، قال: حدثنا عن عمار الدُّهني عن سالم بن أبي الجعد أن ابنَ عباسٍ سُئِلَ عمن قَتَلَ مؤمناً متعمداً، ثم تاب وأَمَرَ وعَمِلَ صالحاً، ثم اهتدى؟ فقال ابنُ عباسٍ: وأنى له التوبة! سَمِعْتُ نَبِيَّكُمْ صلى الله عليه وسلم يقولُ: يَجِيءُ متعلقاً بالقاتلِ تَشْخُبُ أوداجُه دماً، يقولُ سَلْ هذا فيم قَتَلَنِي. ثم قال: والله لقد أُنْزِلَها الله ثم ما نَسَخَها.

*Translation*:

Narrated Qutaiba ibn Said from Ammar Al-Duhni from Salem ibn Abil-Jaad that Ibn Abbas (RA) was asked about one who killed a believer intentionally and then repented, had faith, did righteous deeds, and then found guidance. Ibn Abbas replied: And far from him is repentance! I heard your Prophet (PBUH) saying: he comes clutching to the killer while his body pours blood, saying: Ask this man, for what did he kill me? Then he said, by God, He revealed it (the verse), then did not abrogate it.

*Sourcing validation*:

Reported by [Al-Nasai \[73\]](#) who rated it authentic. [Al-Albani \[14\]](#) also authenticated it.

*Abrogation validation*:

The text emphasizes rejection of abrogation.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text emphasizes no abrogation of verse 4:93.

**Note**: The narrator did not name the verse claimed abrogated, but the other narrations make it clear that it is verse 4:93.

[**Narration # 58**] *Narrator*: Ibn Jubair, *originator*: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text*:

أخبرنا أزهري بن جميل، حدثنا خالد بن الحارث، حدثنا شعبة عن المغيرة بن نعمان عن سعيد بن جبيرة قال: اختلف أهل الكوفة في هذه الآية

﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا ...﴾ [النساء: ٩٣]

فَرَحَلْتُ إلى ابنِ عباسٍ فسأَلْتُهُ فقال: نَزَلَتْ في آخِرِ ما أُنْزِلْتُ، وما نَسَخَها شيءٌ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Azhar ibn Jameel from Khalid ibn Al-Harith from Shueba from Al-Mugheera ibn Al-Numan from Said Ibn Jubair that he said: People of Kufa differed in regard to this verse, “And whoever kills a believer intentionally ...” [4:93], so I traveled to Ibn Abbas (RA) and asked him. He answered: It was revealed among what was revealed last, and nothing abrogated it.

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by [Al-Nasai \[73\]](#) who rated it authentic. [Al-Albani \[14\]](#) also authenticated it.

*Abrogation validation:*

The text rejects abrogation.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text rejects abrogation of verse 4:93.

[Narration # 59] Narrator: Ibn Abil-Jaad, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

عن سالم بن أبي الجعد قال: سئل ابن عباس عمن قتل مؤمناً متعمداً ثم تاب وآمن وعمل صالحاً ثم اهتدى، قال: ويحّه، وأنّى له الهدى؟ سمعتُ نبيكم صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: يجيء القاتل والمقتول يوم القيامة متعلق برأس صاحبه يقول: ربّ سل هذا لِمَ قتلني؟ والله لقد أنزلها الله عزّ وجلّ على نبيّكم، ثمّ ما نسخها بعد ما أنزلها.

*Translation:*

Narrated Salem ibn Abil-Jaad that Ibn Abbas (RA) was asked regarding one who killed a believer intentionally and then repented, had faith, did righteous deeds, and then found guidance. He replied, “Woe unto him! How far from him is guidance? I heard your Prophet (ﷺ): The killer and the killed come on the Day of Resurrection with him clutched by his fellow, saying: Lord, ask this one why he killed me. By God, may He be glorified and prominent, He sent it down upon your Prophet and then He never abrogated it after He sent it down.”

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Albani \[15\]](#) and he pointed to his other book ([Al-Albani \[10\]](#)) where he rated a similar version “sound” and then took that back and said: Rather, it is authentic and mentioned its other sourcing paths. See also narration number [57](#) which lists the complete sourcing chain with a similar text.

*Abrogation validation:*

The text asserts rejection of abrogation.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text asserts rejection of abrogation of verse 4:93.

[**Narration # 60**] *Narrator*: Salem, likely Ibn Abil-Jaad, *originator*: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text*:

حدثنا سفيان عن عمار عن سالم: سُئِلَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ عَنْ رَجُلٍ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا، ثُمَّ تَابَ، وَأَمَنَ، وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا، ثُمَّ اهْتَدَى، قَالَ: وَيْحَكَ، وَأَنْتَى لَهُ الْهُدَى؟! سَمِعْتُ نَبِيَّكُمْ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: يَجِيءُ الْمَقْتُولُ مُتَعَلِّقًا بِالْقَاتِلِ، يَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ، سَلْ هَذَا فِيمَ قَتَلَنِي؟ وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ أَنْزَلَهَا اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ عَلَى نَبِيِّكُمْ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَمَا نَسَخَهَا بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْزَلَهَا، قَالَ: وَيْحَكَ، وَأَنْتَى لَهُ الْهُدَى؟!

*Translation*:

Narrated Sufyan from Ammar from Salem that Ibn Abbas (RA) was asked about a man who killed a believer and then repented, had faith, worked good deeds, and then found guidance. He answered, “Woe unto you! How far from him is guidance? I heard your Prophet (ﷺ) say: The murder victim comes on the Day of Resurrection hanging on his killer, saying: O Lord, why did he kill me? By God, God revealed it, may He be glorified and prominent, and He never abrogated it after He revealed it. Woe unto you, how far from him is guidance?!”

*Sourcing validation*:

Reported by Ahmad in his book *Al-Musnad* (Ibn Hanbal [160]). The verifier of his book, Al-Arnaoot, authenticated it per the conditions of Muslim and said that Ammar (Ibn Muawiya Al-Duhni) is one of the narrators Muslim trusted, and the rest of the narrators are men trusted by the two elders. He added that Salem is Ibn Abil-Jaad Al-Ghatfani Al-Ashjaai.

*Abrogation validation*:

The text asserts rejection of abrogation. Al-Arnaoot, who verified the book referenced above, mentioned the comment by Al-Sindi on the rejection of abrogation, “And that was his belief, may God have been pleased with him, but the people of knowledge after him did not agree with him on that. Rather, they said that verses like it should be limited after repentance, by the necessity of [the fact] that repentance from *shirk* is beneficial, so what about other (sins)? The people of Sunna said, ‘The meaning of recompense is that he deserves that if he died without repentance, and he may be pardoned without repentance for what God said, “Verily, God does not forgive that [other deities] be associated with Him” [4:48].’ God knows best.”

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text emphasizes rejection of abrogation of verse 4:93.

**Note:** The sentence “Woe unto you! How far from him is guidance?” is repeated in this version of the narration as it appears in the above reference, so we copied that though the second mention of the sentence may have been a printing error.

[Narration # 61] Narrator: Ibn Abil-Jaad, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا محمد بن جعفر، حدثنا شعبة قال: سمعت يحيى بن المجبر التيمي يحدث عن سالم بن أبي الجعد عن ابن عباس أن رجلاً أناه، فقال: أرايت رجلاً قتل رجلاً مُتَعَمِّدًا؟ قال:

﴿... فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا﴾  
[النساء: ٩٣]

قال: لقد أنزلت في آخر ما نزل، ما نسخها شيء حتى قبض رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وما نزل وحي بعد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: أرايت إن تاب وأمن وعمل صالحًا، ثم اهتدى؟ قال: وأني له بالتوبة، وقد سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: ثكلته أمه: رجل قتل رجلاً مُتَعَمِّدًا، يجيء يوم القيامة آخذًا قاتله يمينه، أو ييساره، وآخذًا رأسه يمينه، أو بشماله، تشخب أوداجه دمًا في قُبُل العرش، يقول: يا رب، سل عبدك فيم قتلني؟

*Translation:*

Narrated Muhammad ibn Jaafar from Shueba from Yahya ibn Al-Mujabbir Al-Taymi from Salem ibn Abil-Jaad from Ibn Abbas (RA) that a man came to him and said: How do you see a man who killed a man intentionally? He replied, “... so his recompense is Gehenna, staying perpetually therein, and God is angry with him, cursed him, and prepared for him a grand torment.” [4:93]. He added, “It was revealed among the verses revealed last, and nothing abrogated it until the Messenger of God was deceased, and there was no revelation after him.” He argued, “What if he repented, had faith, worked good deeds and was guided?” He replied, “How far for him is repentance! I heard the Messenger of God (PBUH) say: May his mother lose him to death who killed a man intentionally! He (the victim) comes on the Day of Resurrection, grabbing his killer by his right hand or left hand and holding his head by his right or left hand, his body pouring blood, in front of the Throne, asking: O Lord, ask your worshiper for what did he kill me?”

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by Ahmad in his book Al-Musnad (Ibn Hanbal [160]). The verifier of his book, Al-Arnaoot, said: “An authentic narration, its sourcing chain of narrators has trustworthy narrators who are men trusted by the two elders, except Yahya ibn Al-Mujabbir, who is Yahya ibn Abdullah ibn Al-Harith Al-Kufi, judged weak by Ibn Abi-Hatem, Ibn Mueen, and Al-Nasai, but Ahmad



and Ibn Udayy said there was nothing bad about him. Al-Daraqutni said he could be considered.” We found the sourcing chain in the reporting book like this: Narrated Muhammad ibn Jaafar and Rawh from Shueba from Muslim Al-Qurri. This is a more complete sourcing than what was documented in the narration encyclopedia, and it is the one we listed above. See also preceding narration number 56.

*Abrogation validation:*

The text asserts no abrogation.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text asserts rejection of abrogation of verse 4:93.

[Narration # 62] *Narrator*: Not mentioned, *originator*: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

عن ابن عباسٍ أَنَّهُ سُئِلَ عَمَّنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا، ثُمَّ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا، ثُمَّ اهْتَدَى، فَقَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ: وَأَنَّى لَهُ التَّوْبَةُ، سَمِعْتُ نَبِيَّكُمْ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: يَجِيءُ مُتَعَلِّقًا بِالْقَاتِلِ تَشْحَبُ أَوْدَاجُهُ دَمًا، فَيَقُولُ: أَيُّ رَبِّ، سَلْ هَذَا فِيمَ قَتَلَنِي؟ ثُمَّ قَالَ: وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ أَنْزَلَهَا اللَّهُ، ثُمَّ مَا نَسَخَهَا.

*Translation:*

Ibn Abbas (RA) was asked about one who killed a believer intentionally and then repented, had faith, did good deeds, and then found guidance. He answered, “How far from him is repentance! I heard your Prophet (ﷺ) say: (The victim) comes on the Day of Judgment hanging on his killer and his body is pouring blood, saying: O Lord, ask this one for what did he kill me?” He added, “By God, He sent it down and never abrogated it.”

*Sourcing validation:*

Ibn Al-Wazir [152] mentioned it, and the verifier of his book, Al-Arnaoot, said that Ahmad, Al-Tirmizi, Al-Nasai, Ibn Majah, and Al-Tabari reported it and attributed it to Ibn Abbas (RA).

*Abrogation validation:*

The text emphasizes rejection of abrogation. However, verifier Al-Arnaoot mentioned that a number of scholars differed with Ibn Abbas on this opinion of his, see the reporting book above (Ibn Al-Wazir [152]). They offered several arguments and also argued that a generality does not abrogate a specificity; the Chapter 4 verse is general while the Chapter 25 verse is specific. Al-Arnaoot commented on that argument, saying that a generality states the ruling for those not covered by the specificity, and that is not called abrogation but rather a second ruling covering a different group, namely, those who kill a believer intentionally. As for the verse in Chapter 25, it has generalized the ruling for killing a soul. Al-Albani [10] said, “The consensus differs with him, and that is the correct opinion in which there is no doubt. The Chapter 25 verse is

explicit about this, and the Chapter 4 verse does not contradict it because this is about the penalty for the killer and the other is about his repentance.”

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is not connected, and the text emphasizes rejection of abrogation.

[Narration # 63] Narrator: Ibn Jubair, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا محمد بن بَشَّار حدثنا غُنْدَرٌ حدثنا شُعْبَةُ عن المغيرة بن النعمان عن سعيد بن جبیر قال: اختلف أهل الكوفة في قتل المؤمن، فرحلت فيه إلى ابن عباس، فقال: نزلت في آخر ما نزل ولم ينسخها شيء.

*Translation:*

Narrated Muhammad ibn Bashshar from Ghundar from Shueba from Al-Mugheera ibn Al-Numan from Said Ibn Jubair that he said, “The people of Kufa differed on [the ruling] of killing a believer, so I traveled for that to Ibn Abbas (RA). He said: It was revealed among what was revealed last and nothing abrogated it.”

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

*Abrogation validation:*

The text rejects abrogation.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text rejects abrogation of verse 4:93.

**Note:** The narration does not name the verse, but the other narrations indicate that the verse meant here is verse 4:93.

[Narration # 64] Narrator: Ibn Jubair, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا عبدان أخبرنا أبي عن شعبة عن منصور عن سعيد بن جبیر قال: أمرني عبد الرحمن بن أبي، أن أسأل ابن عباس، عن هاتين الآيتين ﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا ...﴾ [النساء: ٩٣] فسالته فقال: لم ينسخها شيء. وعن: ﴿وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ ...﴾ [الفرقان: ٦٨]

قَالَ: نَزَلَتْ فِي أَهْلِ الشِّرْكِ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Abdan from his father from Shueba from Mansur from Said Ibn Jubair who said, “Abdul-Rahman ibn Abza had me ask Ibn Abbas (RA) about these two verses,” “And whoever kills a believer intentionally ...” [4:93], he answered, “Nothing abrogated it”, and “And those who do not call with God another deity ...” [25:68], he answered, “It was revealed about the people of *shirk* (associating others with God in worship)”

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#).

*Abrogation validation:*

The text rejects the abrogation of the Chapter 4 verse and shows no conflict with the Chapter 25 verse. We noticed that the narration immediately preceding this one in [Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#) also states that the verse in Chapter 25 was revealed regarding the people of *shirk*.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text rejects abrogation.

[Narration # 65] Narrator: Ibn Jubair, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا محمد بن المثنى ومحمد بن بشار قالوا: حدثنا محمد بن جعفر، حدثنا شعبة عن منصور عن سعيد بن جبير قال: أَمَرَنِي عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ أَبِيزَى، أَنْ أَسْأَلَ ابْنَ عَبَّاسٍ، عَنْ هَاتَيْنِ الْآيَتَيْنِ:

﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا ...﴾ [النساء: ٩٣]

فَسَأَلْتُهُ فَقَالَ: لَمْ يَنْسَخْهَا شَيْءٌ وَعَنْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةِ:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ، وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ...﴾

[الفرقان: ٦٨]

قَالَ: نَزَلَتْ فِي أَهْلِ الشِّرْكِ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Muhammad ibn Al-Muthanna and Muhammad ibn Bashshar from Muhammad ibn Jaafar from Shueba from Mansur from Said Ibn Jubair that he said, “Abdul-Rahman ibn Abza had me ask Ibn Abbas (RA) about these two verses,” “And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Gehenna, staying perpetually therein ...” [4:93], so I asked him. He replied, “Nothing abrogated it” and about this verse, “And those who do not call with God another deity, and do not kill the soul which God sanctioned, except by right ...” [25:68],

he answered, “It was revealed about the people of *shirk* (associating others with God in worship).”

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by Muslim [189].

*Abrogation validation:*

The text rejects the abrogation of verse 4:93 and shows no conflict with verse 25:68.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text rejects abrogation.

**Note:** The narration encyclopedia attributes this narration to Al-Bukhari and Muslim, but we didn’t find it in Al-Bukhari’s book. However, Al-Bukhari reported two similarly worded narrations.

[**Narration # 66**] *Narrator:* Not mentioned, *originator:* Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

فَأْتَاهُ رَجُلٌ فَنَادَاهُ: يَا عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ عَبَّاسٍ، مَا تَرَى فِي رَجُلٍ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا؟ فَقَالَ:

﴿... فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا﴾  
[النساء: ٩٣]

قَالَ: أَفَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ تَابَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَى؟ قَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ: ثَكَلْتُهُ أُمُّهُ، وَأَنْتَى لَهُ التَّوْبَةُ وَالْهُدَى؟ وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ! لَقَدْ سَمِعْتُ نَبِيَّكُمْ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: ثَكَلْتُهُ أُمُّهُ، قَاتِلُ مُؤْمِنٍ مُتَعَمِّدًا، جَاءَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ آخِذُهُ يَمِينُهُ أَوْ بَشِمَالِهِ، تَشَحَّبُ أَوْدَاجُهُ فِي قُبُلِ عَرْشِ الرَّحْمَنِ، يَلْزَمُ قَاتِلُهُ بِيَدِهِ الْأُخْرَى، يَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ سَلْ هَذَا فِيمَ قَتَلْتَنِي؟ وَابْنُ أَبِي قَتْلَبَةَ يَقُولُ: لَقَدْ أَنْزَلَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ، فَمَا نَسَخَتْهَا مِنْ آيَةٍ حَتَّى فُبِضَ نَبِيُّكُمْ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَمَا نَزَلَ بَعْدَهَا مِنْ بُرْهَانٍ.

*Translation:*

A man came to him and said, “O Abdullah ibn Abbas, what do you see in a man who killed a believer intentionally? He replied, “... so his recompense is Gehenna, staying perpetually therein, and God is angry with him, has cursed him, and prepared for him a grand torment.” [4:93]. He argued, “What about if he repented, did good deeds, and then found guidance?” Ibn Abbas (RA) replied, “May his mother lose him to death; how far for him are repentance and guidance! By Him in whose hand is my soul, I heard your Prophet (PBUH) say: May his mother lose him to death, a killer of a believer intentionally. He (the victim) comes on the Day of Resurrection, taking him by his right or left hand, his body pouring blood in front of the Throne of the Beneficent One, pointing to his killer with his other hand, saying: O Lord, ask this one for what did he kill me? I swear by Him in whose hand is the soul of the worshiper of God that this verse was revealed and was not abrogated by any

verse until your Prophet (PBUH) was deceased and no proof (to the contrary) was revealed after it.”

*Sourcing validation:*

Shaker [196] mentioned it, and said in the footnotes that Al-Tabari narrated it with an authentic sourcing chain.

*Abrogation validation:*

The text emphatically rejects abrogation.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected in Al-Tabari’s narration, and the text emphatically rejects abrogation of verse 4:93.

**[Narration # 67]** *Narrator*: Amr, likely Ibn Dinar, *originator*: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا محمد بن رافع، قال: حدثنا شَبَابَةُ بْنُ سَوَّارٍ، قال: حدثني وَرْقَاءُ عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ عَبَّاسٍ عَنْ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: يَجِيءُ الْمَقْتُولُ بِالْقَاتِلِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ نَاصِيئُهُ، وَرَأْسُهُ فِي يَدِهِ، وَأَوْدَاجُهُ تَشْخُبُ دَمًا يَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ قَتَلَنِي، حَتَّى يُدْنِيَهُ مِنَ الْعَرْشِ، قَالَ: فَذَكَرُوا لِابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ التَّوْبَةَ فَتَلَا هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ:

﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا ...﴾ [النساء: ٩٣]

قال: مَا نُسِخَتْ مِنْذُ نَزَلَتْ، وَأَنْتَى لَهُ التَّوْبَةُ؟!

*Translation:*

Narrated Muhammad ibn Rafie from Shababa ibn Sawwar from Warqaa from Amr from Ibn Abbas (RA) from the Prophet (PBUH) that he said, “The murder victim comes on the Day of Resurrection with his killer, his forehead and head in his hand, and his body pouring blood, saying: O Lord, he killed me. Until he brings him closer to the Throne.” They mentioned to Ibn Abbas (RA) the (question of) repentance, and he recited this verse, “And whoever kills a believer intentionally ...” [4:93] and said, “It was never abrogated since it was revealed, and how far for him is repentance!”

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by Al-Nasai [73] who rated it authentic. Al-Albani [14] also rated it authentic, and referred to his other book, Al-Albani [10], as mentioned before. Also reported by Al-Wadei [115], who said it was authentic per the conditions set by the two elders.

*Abrogation validation:*

The text asserts rejection of abrogation.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text asserts rejection of

abrogation of verse 4:93.

**Note:** There are two authentic sourcing chains by way of Amr in the references of the sourcing validation.

[Narration # 68] Narrator: Ibn Jubair, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

أخبرنا محمد بن المثنى قال: حدثنا شعبة عن منصور عن سعيد بن جبيرة، قال: أمرني عبد الرحمن بن أبيزى أن أسأل ابن عباس عن هاتين الآيتين،  
﴿ومن يقتل مؤمنا متعمدا فجزاؤه جهنم...﴾ [النساء: ٩٣]  
فسألته فقال: لم ينسخها شيء. وعن هذه الآية  
﴿والذين لا يدعون مع الله إلها آخر ولا يقتلون النفس التي حرم الله إلا بالحق...﴾  
[الفرقان: ٦٨]  
قال: نزلت في أهل الشرك.

*Translation:*

Narrated Muhammad ibn Al-Muthanna from Shueba from Mansur from Said Ibn Jubair that he said, “Abdul-Rahman ibn Abza had me ask Ibn Abbas (RA) about these two verses,” “And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Gehenna ...” [4:93], so I asked him. He answered, “Nothing abrogated it”. And about this verse, “And those who do not call with God another deity, and do not kill the soul which God sanctioned, except by right ...” [25:68]. He said, “It was revealed about the people of *shirk* (associating others with God in worship).”

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by Muslim [189]. Al-Albani [14] said it was “Authentic: Kh”, where “Kh” means Al-Bukhari.

*Abrogation validation:*

The text rejects the abrogation of the Chapter 4 verse and shows no conflict with the Chapter 25 verse.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text rejects abrogation.

**Note 1:** The narration encyclopedia attributes this sourcing to Al-Bukhari and Muslim but we did not find it in Al-Bukhari’s book. However, Al-Bukhari reported similar wording from Abdan and Ibn Bashshar.

**Note 2:** In the two narrations reported by Al-Albani [14], he said that the requester’s name was Abdul-Rahman ibn Abi-Layla, not Ibn Abza.

[Narration # 69] Narrator: Amr ibn Dinar, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا محمد بن الحسن الزعفراني، حدثنا شَبَابَةُ، حدثنا وَرْقَاءُ بن عمر، عن عمرو بن دينار عن ابن عباس، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: يَجِيءُ الْمُقْتُولُ بِالْقَاتِلِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ نَاصِيئَتُهُ وَرَأْسُهُ بِيَدِهِ وَأَوْدَاجُهُ تَشَخَّبُ دَمًا يَقُولُ يَا رَبِّ هَذَا قَتَلَنِي حَتَّى يُدْنِيَهُ مِنَ الْعَرْشِ قَالَ فَذَكَرُوا لَابْنَ عَبَّاسٍ التَّوْبَةَ فَتَلَا هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ

﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ ...﴾ [النساء: ٩٣]

قَالَ مَا نُسَخَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ وَلَا بُدِّلَتْ وَأَنَّى لَهُ التَّوْبَةُ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Muhammad ibn Al-Hasan Al-Zaafarani from Shababa from Warqaa ibn Umar from Amr ibn Dinar from Ibn Abbas (RA) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said, “The murder victim comes on the Day of Resurrection with the killer’s forehead and head in his hand, with his body pouring blood saying: O Lord, this one killed me, until he brings it close to the Throne.” They mentioned to Ibn Abbas (RA) the [question about] repentance, and he recited this verse, “And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Gehenna ...” [4:93] then he said, “This verse was not abrogated nor substituted. And how far for him is repentance!”

*Sourcing validation:*

Authenticated by Al-Albani [13] who pointed to two books, Al-Mishkah (3465) and Al-Taaliq Al-Ragheeb (3/203), and said “Abu-Eesa (Al-Tirmizi) said this is a sound narration.”

*Abrogation validation:*

The text asserts rejection of abrogation.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the text asserts rejection of abrogation of verse 4:93.

[Narration # 70] Narrator: Amr ibn Dinar, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

قال شَبَابَةُ: حدثنا وَرْقَاءُ بن عمر عن عمرو بن دينار عن ابن عباس في حديث هل لِلْقَاتِلِ من توبة قال: فَذَكَرُوا لَابْنَ عَبَّاسٍ التَّوْبَةَ، فَتَلَا هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ

﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا ...﴾ [النساء: ٩٣]

قال: وَمَا نُسَخَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ وَلَا بُدِّلَتْ، وَأَنَّى لَهُ التَّوْبَةُ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Shababa from Warqaa ibn Umar from Amr ibn Dinar from Ibn Abbas (RA) in an inquiry about whether the murderer may repent, so they mentioned repentance to Ibn Abbas (RA) and he recited this verse, “And whoever kills a believer intentionally ...” [4:93] then he said, “And this verse was not abrogated nor substituted. And how far for him is repentance!”

*Sourcing validation:*

Al-Albani [10] said: Authentic per the condition of the two elders.

*Abrogation validation:*

The text emphasizes no abrogation.

**Summary:** Sourcing chain is connected, and the text emphasizes no abrogation of verse 4:93.

#### 14. On abrogating verses 5:2 and 5:42

*Ubiquity verification:* No. Only two independent narrations by Mujahid and Ikrima, one short of the minimum requirement of three.

[Narration # 71] *Narrator:* Mujahid, *originator:* Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

أخبرنا محمد بن عبد الملك، قال حدثنا أحمد بن محمد بن زياد، قال: حدثنا الحسن بن محمد الزعفراني، قال حدثنا سعيد بن سليمان، قال حدثنا عباد عن الحكم عن عن مجاهد عن ابن عباس قال: نُسَخَ من المائدة آيتان: آية القلائد، وقوله عز وجل:

﴿... فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ ...﴾ [المائدة: ٤٢]

وكان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مُخَيَّرًا إِنْ شَاءَ حُكْم وَإِنْ شَاءَ أَعْرِض عَنْهُمْ وَرَدَّهُمْ إِلَى حُكَامِهِمْ، فنزلت

﴿وَأَنْ احْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ...﴾ [المائدة: ٤٩]

فأمر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أن يحكم بينهم بما في كتابنا.

*Translation:*

Narrated Muhammad ibn Abdil-Malek from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ziyad from Al-Hasan ibn Muhammad Al-Zaafarani from Said ibn Sulayman from Mujahid from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he said, ‘Two verses in Chapter 5 were abrogated: the verse of Al-Qalaid and His words, may He be glorified and



prominent, "... then if they come to you [, O Muhammad], judge between them or turn aside from them ..." [5:42]; the Messenger of God (PBUH) was given a choice to judge if he willed or turn aside and return them to their judges and then [this verse] was revealed, "And judge between them by what God revealed and do not follow their wishes ..." [5:49], so the Messenger of God (PBUH) was commanded to judge between them by what is in our Book.'

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by **Ibn Abd-Albarr** [140] who said, "Abu-Umar said this is something Sufyan ibn Hussein told and it is not strong, was differed on, and was attributed to Mujahid. That is the correct sourcing, that it is something Mujahid said, not Ibn Abbas."

*Abrogation validation:*

Ibn Abd-Albarr, in his book referenced above, mentioned the disagreements between scholars about the abrogation conclusion, and he chose to reject abrogation. He said, "The [right] perspective to me is the choice, so that a ruling in the Book of God is not annulled without certainty. That is because His words 'And judge between them' may be interpreted to mean 'if you judge'. The verse giving a choice is taut and is not subject to interpretations."

**Summary**: In the sourcing chain is a narrator who is criticized, and the scholars did not agree that the text indicated conventional abrogation.

**Note:** The narration mentions the Qalaid verse (5:2) but does not mention what abrogated it.

[Narration # 72] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمَرْوَزِيُّ، حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُسَيْنٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ، عَنْ عِكْرَمَةَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ:

﴿... فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ، أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ ...﴾ [المائدة: ٤٢]

فَنَسِخَتْ، قَالَ:

﴿... فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ ...﴾ [المائدة: ٤٨]

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad Al-Marwazi from Ali ibn Al-Hussein from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) in reference to the verse, "... then if they come to you [,O Muhammad], judge between them or turn aside from them ..." [5:42], that it was abrogated when He said, "... then judge between them by what God has revealed ..." [5:48]

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by **Abu-Dawoud** [3] who did not rate it. The verifier of his book, Al-Arnaoot, authenticated it then wrote: This is a sound sourcing.<sup>25</sup> **Al-Albani** [12] rated it ‘sound’.

*Abrogation validation:*

In his verification book referenced above, Al-Arnaoot listed that Al-Hasan, Al-Nakhei, Al-Zuhri, Ibn Hanbal, Ataa ibn Abi-Rabah, Malek, Qatada, Said Ibn Jubair, and Al-Tabari all rejected the abrogation, and he agreed with them, saying “*This is the correct conclusion because there is no conflict between the two verses for one of them gave a choice between judging and leaving it out and the other explained how to judge if he chose to judge.*” He listed what Al-Tabari wrote, that there was no abrogation because there was no conflict and because there was no authentic report to the contrary from the Prophet (PBUH).

**Summary**: In the sourcing chain is a dismissed narrator, and the consensus of the scholars is to reject abrogation.

[**Narration # 73**] *Narrator*: Mujahid, it originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا محمد بن سليمان بن الحارث الواسطي الباغندي قال: حدثنا سعيد بن سليمان الواسطي، حدثنا عباد بن العوام عن سفيان بن حسين عن الحكم عن مجاهد عن ابن عباس قال آيتان نُسِختَا من هذه السُّورة، يَعْنِي سورة المائدة:

﴿... فَإِنْ جَاؤُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ...﴾ [المائدة: ٤٢]

فكان رسولُ الله صَلَّى اللهُ عليه وسلَّمَ مُخَيَّرًا، إِنْ شَاءَ حَكَمَ بَيْنَهُمْ، وَإِنْ شَاءَ أَعْرَضَ عَنْهُمْ، فَرَدَّهُمْ إِلَى أَحْكَامِهِمْ، فَنَزَلَتْ:

﴿وَأَنْ أَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ...﴾ [المائدة: ٤٩]

قال: فَأَمَرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عليه وسلَّمَ أَنْ يَحْكَمَ بَيْنَهُمْ عَلَى كِتَابِنَا.

*Translation:*

Narrated Muhammad ibn Sulayman Al-Wasety Al-Baghandy from Said ibn Sulayman Al-Wasety from Ubad ibn Al-Awwam from Sufyan ibn Hussein from Al-Hakam from Mujahid from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he said, “*Two verses in this Chapter, meaning Chapter 5, were abrogated, “... then if they come to you, judge between them or turn aside from them ...” [5:42], then [this verse] was*

<sup>25</sup>Al-Arnaoot stated that the narration is authentic, then stated that it is (only) ‘sound’, without commenting on the reason for providing two different ratings.

revealed, “And judge between them by what God has sent down, and do not follow their wishes ...” [5:49]. He said, “Thus, He ordered the Messenger of God (PBUH) to judge between them according to our Book.”

*Sourcing validation:*

Al-Tahawi [108] reported it, and the verifier of his book, Al-Arnaoot, said about its sourcing chain that its men are trustworthy men trusted by the two elders, except Sufyan ibn Hussein who is trusted by Muslim and others except Al-Zuhri.

*Abrogation validation:*

The verifier of Al-Tahawi’s book referenced above wrote, “It is taut (not abrogated). The leader and his lieutenants in ruling have the choice if they (non-Muslims) ask them for adjudication. They can agree and judge between them, or they may turn aside. This has been reported by Al-Hasan, Al-Shaabi, Al-Nakhei, Al-Zuhri, and Ibn Hanbal. It is the correct finding because there is no conflict between the two verses because giving him (the Prophet (PBUH)) the choice between judging between them in the dispute they levied or turning aside from it and not judging, is not contradicted by the requirement that, if he chooses to judge, to do so by what God revealed. In fact, it clarifies it and verifies it. With this logic, Ataa ibn Abi-Rabah, Qatada, Said Ibn Jubair, Abu-Jaafar Al-Tabari, and Makki ibn Abi-Talib all ruled this way because there is no conflict between the two verses and because there is no authentic report attributed to the Messenger of God (PBUH) and there was no unanimity among the scholars.”

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, and the consensus rejects abrogation.

**Note:** The narration mentions two abrogated verses but names only one. The other narration shows that the second one is the Qalaid verse (5:2).

[Narration # 74] *Narrator:* Not mentioned, *originator:* Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

عن ابن عباس قال نَسَخَتْ مِنْ هَذِهِ السُّورَةِ آيَتَانِ آيَةُ الْقَالِيدِ وَقَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى

﴿... فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ...﴾ [المائدة: ٤٢]

فَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَخِيرًا إِنْ شَاءَ حَكَمَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَإِنْ شَاءَ أَعْرَضَ عَنْهُمْ فَفَرَّهُمْ إِلَى أَحْكَامِهِمْ فَنَزَلَتْ

﴿وَأِنْ أَحْكَمَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ...﴾ [المائدة: ٤٩]

فَأَمَرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْ يَحْكَمَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا فِي كِتَابِنَا.

*Translation:*

Ibn Abbas (RA) said that two verses from this Chapter (Chapter 5) were abrogated; the Qalaid verse (5:2) and, "... then if they come to you, judge between them or turn aside from them ..." [5:42]. So, the Messenger of God (PBUH) had a choice: If he willed, he could judge between them, or if he willed, he could turn aside from them and turn them back to their judges. Then was revealed, "And judge between them by what God has revealed ..." [5:49], thus He ordered the Messenger of God (PBUH) to judge between them by what is in our Book.

*Sourcing validation:*

Mentioned by [Al-Zahiri \[122\]](#) who used it as evidence and said in the introduction of his book that he did not use for evidence except an authentic, sourced report narrated by the trustworthy ([Al-Zahiri \[122\]](#)).

*Abrogation validation:*

The author of the book referenced above, who rejects the abrogation claim, mentioned Abu-Hanifa's edict of referring the people of the Scripture to their Book, and said that Malik ruled likewise, except if the people of the Scripture asked for adjudication by Muslims, then it is the duty of the Muslim judge to apply Islamic ruling to them.

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is vacant, and the scholars did not agree that the text indicates conventional abrogation.

**15. On abrogating verse 5:106**

*Ubiquity verification*: No. Only one narration.

[Narration # 75] *Narrator*: Abdullah ibn Ayyash, *originator*: Zayd ibn Aslam

*Arabic text:*

حدثنا يونس، أخبرنا ابن وهب، أخبرني عبد الله بن عياش، عن زيد بن أسلم في هذه الآية:

﴿... شَهَادَةُ بَيْنَكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ ...﴾ [المائدة: ١٠٦]

الآية، قال: ذلك كان في رجلٍ تُوفِّي، وليس عنده أحدٌ من أهل الإسلام، وذلك في أول الإسلام والأرض حربٌ، والناسُ كُفَّارٌ، إلا رسول الله صَلَّى الله عليه وسلَّم وأصحابه بالمدينة، وكان الناس يتوارثون بالوصية، ثم نُسختِ الوصية، وفُرِضتِ الفرائض، وعَمِلَ بها المسلمون.

*Translation:*

Narrated Yunus from Ibn Wahb from Abdullah ibn Ayyash from Zayd ibn

Aslam, referring to this verse, "... a testimony among you when death has come to one of you ..." [5:106], that it was about a man who died and had no Muslims around him. That was at the beginning of Islam when the status was of war and people were infidels, except the Messenger of God (ﷺ) and his fellows in Medina, and people legated with a will of bequests, then wills were abrogated and mandated shares were required, and Muslims carried that out.

*Sourcing validation:*

The commentator on the reporting book ([Al-Tahawi \[108\]](#)), Al-Arnaoot, wrote: "The men of its sourcing chain are men trusted by the two elders, except Abdullah ibn Ayyash, but Muslim reported from him, and he is among those whose narrations he writes."

*Abrogation validation:*

The book's author, referenced above, wrote, "There is not until now what necessitates the abrogation of this verse."

**Summary**: Sourcing chain is connected, but the scholars did not agree that the text indicated abrogation.

**Note:** The mandated inheritance shares were revealed in Chapter 4, which was revealed before Chapter 5.

## 16. On abrogating verse 6:121

*Ubiquity verification:* No. Only one narration.

[Narration # 76] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنُ ثَابِتٍ الْمَرْوَزِيُّ، حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُسَيْنٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ، عَنْ عِكْرِمَةَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ:

﴿فَكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِّرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ ...﴾ [الأنعام: ١١٨]

﴿وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ ...﴾ [الأنعام: ١٢١]

فَنَسِخَ وَاسْتَشْنَى مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالَ:

﴿... وَطَعَامَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حِلٌّ لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ لَهُمْ ...﴾ [المائدة: ٥]

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Thabet Al-Marwazi from Ali ibn Al-

Hussein from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he said about the verses, “So, eat from [meat] on which the Name of God was mentioned (at slaughter time) ...” [6:118], and “And do not eat from [meat] on which the name of God was not mentioned (at slaughter time) ...” [6:121], that He (God) abrogated and excepted from that “... and the food of the People of the Scripture is lawful to you and your food is lawful to them ...” [5:5]

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by [Abu-Dawoud \[3\]](#) who did not rate it. The verifier of his book, Al-Arnaoot, rated it “sound” and likewise did [Al-Albani \[12\]](#).

*Abrogation validation:*

Al-Arnaoot mentioned in his verification referenced above what Al-Tabari said, that both verses are taut (not abrogated) and that the meats slaughtered by the people of the Scripture are immolate and are lawful to eat whether they named God at the time of its slaughter or did not as long as it was not already dead or was dedicated to false gods, and that he attributed that opinion to the people of knowledge at large. We say that confirming that are the words “abrogated and excepted” which indicate that what he meant by “abrogation” (*naskh*) was exception and not annulment.

**Summary** : In the sourcing chain is a dismissed narrator, and the scholars did not agree that the text indicates conventional abrogation.

**Note:** Research showed that this narration was not explicitly authenticated by anyone, but we followed the narration encyclopedia’s conclusionary rating of the narration being authentic to be on the safe side.

## 17. On abrogating verse 9:39

*Ubiquity verification:* No. Only one narration.

[Narration # 77] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمَرْوَزِيُّ، حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ، عَنْ عِكْرَمَةَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ:

﴿إِلَّا تَنْفَرُوا يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ...﴾ [التوبة: ٣٩]

و

﴿... مَا كَانَ لِأَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ ...﴾ [التوبة: ١٢٠]

إِلَى قَوْلِهِ:

﴿... يَعْْمَلُونَ﴾ [التوبة: ١٢١]

نَسَخَتْهَا آيَةُ النَّبِيِّ تَلِيهَا:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَافَّةً...﴾ [التوبة: ١٢٢]

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad Al-Marwazi from Ali ibn Al-Hussein from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA), about the verses, "If you do not rush (to the call to arms), He will torment you a painful torment ..." [9:39], and "... it is not for the people of Medina ... what they do." [9:120-121], that they were abrogated by the verse that follows them, "And the believers are not to rush (to the call to arms) altogether ..." [9:122]

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by Abu-Dawoud [3] who did not rate it. Al-Arnaoot, the verifier of his book, rated it "sound" and wrote that he did not see harm in narrations by Ali ibn Al-Hussein. Al-Albani [12] also rated it "sound".

*Abrogation validation:*

Ibn Hajar [155] did not agree with the abrogation claim and he opined that verse 9:122 was specifying verse 9:120, not abrogating it.

**Summary**: In the sourcing chain, there is a criticized narrator, and the scholars did not agree that the text indicates conventional abrogation.

**Note:** It seems that no one explicitly authenticated this narration, but we followed the narration encyclopedia's conclusionary rating of the narration being authentic to be on the safe side.

## 18. On abrogating verse 9:44

*Ubiquity verification:* No. Only one narration.

[Narration # 78] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنُ ثَابِتِ الْمَرْزُوقِيِّ، حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُسَيْنٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ، عَنْ عِكْرِمَةَ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ:

﴿لَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ...﴾ [التوبة: ٤٤]

الآيَةَ نَسَخَهَا الَّتِي فِي النُّورِ:

﴿ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ... ﴾ [النور: ٦٢]

إلى قوله

﴿ ... عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴾ [النور: ٦٢]

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Thabet Al-Marwazi from Ali ibn Al-Hussein from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) that the verse, “They do not ask your permission (to excuse them from battle) who believe in God and the Final Day ...” [9:44], that it was abrogated by the verse in Chapter 24, “Verily, the believers are those who have believed in God and His Messenger ... Oft-Forgiving, Merciful.” [24:62]

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by [Abu-Dawoud](#) [3] who did not rate it. The verifier of his book, Al-Arnaoot, rated it “sound” and likewise did [Al-Albani](#) [12].

*Abrogation validation:*

It seems to us that verse 24:62 is specifying of verse 9:44 in the accepted excuses and is delegating to the Prophet (PBUH) of accepting the excuse or rejecting it.

**Summary:** There is a criticized narrator in the sourcing chain, and abrogation is mentioned in the text.

**Note:** Research showed that this narration was not explicitly authenticated by anyone, but we followed the narration encyclopedia’s conclusionary rating of the narration being authentic to be on the safe side.

## 19. On abrogating verse 16:106

*Ubiquity verification:* No. Only one narration.

[Narration # 79] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

أخبرني زكريا بن يحيى، قال: حدثنا إسحاق بن إبراهيم، قال: أخبرنا علي بن الحسين بن واقد، قال: حدثني أبي عن يزيد النحوي عن عكرمة عن ابن عباس في سورة النحل:

﴿ مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ ... ﴾ [النحل: ١٠٦]

إلى قوله ﴿ ... لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴾ [النحل: ١٠٦] فنسخ واستثنى من ذلك، فقال



﴿ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا فُتِنُوا ثُمَّ جَاهَدُوا وَصَبَرُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ بَعْدِهَا  
لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ [النحل: ١١٠]

قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ: وَهُوَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ سَعْدٍ ابْنُ أَبِي سَرْحٍ، الَّذِي كَانَ عَلَى مِصْرَ، كَانَ يَكْتُبُ  
لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ، فَأَزَلَّهُ الشَّيْطَانُ، فَلَحَقَ بِالْكَفَّارِ، فَأَمَرَ بِهِ أَنْ يُقْتَلَ يَوْمَ الْفَتْحِ، فَاسْتَجَارَ لَهُ عُثْمَانُ بْنُ  
عَفَّانٍ، فَأَجَارَهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ.

*Translation:*

Narrated Zakariya ibn Yahya from Isshaq ibn Ibrahim from Ali ibn Al-Hussein ibn Waqid from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) that this verse in Chapter 16, "Whoever disbelieved in God after having believed in Him, except one who has been coerced ... for them is a grand torment." [16:106], that it was abrogated and excepted by "And then your Lord, for they who migrated after they have been persecuted and then strove and endured, verily your Lord, after that, surely is Oft-Forgiving, Merciful." [16:110]. Abu Abdil-Rahman said, "He is Abdullah ibn Saad ibn Abi-Sarh, who was in Egypt and used to write for the Messenger of God, but Satan tripped him and he joined the infidels, so he ordered that he be killed on the day of triumph. Uthman (RA) interceded for sheltering him and the Messenger of God sheltered him."

*Sourcing validation:*

Al-Albani [14] authenticated it.

*Abrogation validation:*

His words "abrogated and excepted" indicate that it is an exception and not an abrogation by annulment.

**Summary:** There is a criticized narrator in the sourcing chain, and the word *naskh* in the text means the broad meaning of the word, not conventional abrogation.

## 20. On abrogating verse 24:31

*Ubiquity verification:* No. Only one narration.

[Narration # 80] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمَرْوَزِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ وَاقِدٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ،  
عَنْ عِكْرَمَةَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ،

﴿ وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ ... ﴾ [النور: ٣١]

الآية، فَنَسَخَ، وَاسْتَثْنَى مِنْ ذَلِكَ:

﴿ وَالْقَوَاعِدُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ اللَّاتِي لَا يَرْجُونَ نِكَاحًا ... ﴾ [النور: ٦٠]  
الآية.

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad Al-Marwazi from Ali ibn Al-Hussein ibn Waqid from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) regarding the verse, “And say to the believing women to lower their gaze ...” [24:31], that He (God) abrogated and excepted from that, “And the retired among women who do not long for a marriage ...” [24:60]

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by [Abu-Dawoud](#) [3]. Al-Arnaoot said: Its sourcing is sound.

*Abrogation validation:*

The verifier of the reporting book referenced above, Al-Arnaoot, rejected the abrogation, saying, “The correct view is that there is no contradiction between the two verses so as to give rise to a claim of abrogation. And those who count the ‘retired women’ verse abrogating, have distanced the sexual desire (of older women). The minimum of what can be said about these two verses is that the first one is about women whose beauty may be alluring, and the second one is about elderly women, which is what Ibn Al-Jawzi said in his book *Nawasekh Al-Quran*. And it is reasonable to say that the second one specified the first, that’s all, which Makki said in his book *Al-Eedah*. That is because specification is the subtraction of a portion of the generality while keeping the remainder taut in its ruling. What gives support to this argument is that several prominent scholars who are highly regarded in this matter have not mentioned any abrogating or abrogated concerning these two verses, scholars such as Ibn Sallam and Al-Tabari and others.” We say that his words “abrogated and excepted from that” support this, that is, it is an exception and not an abrogation by annulment.

**Summary:** There is a criticized narrator in the sourcing chain, and the scholars did not agree that the text indicated conventional abrogation.

**Note:** Researching the sourcing books yielded no one who explicitly authenticated this narration, but we followed the narration encyclopedia’s conclusionary rating of the narration being authentic to be on the safe side.

## 21. On abrogating verse 26:224

*Ubiquity verification:* No. Only one narration.

[Narration # 81] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

Arabic text:

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمَرْوَزِيُّ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُسَيْنٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ، عَنْ عِكْرِمَةَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ:

﴿وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ﴾ [الشعراء: ٢٢٤]

فَنَسَخَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَاسْتَشْنَى فَقَالَ:

﴿إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ...﴾ [الشعراء: ٢٢٧]

Translation:

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad Al-Marwazi from Ali ibn Al-Hussein from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he mentioned the verse, “And the poets, the allured follow them.” [26:224], and said that He (God) abrogated from that and excepted when He said, “Except those who believed, worked the righteous deeds, and mentioned God much...” [26:227]

Sourcing validation:

Reported by Abu-Dawoud [3], who did not rate it. Al-Albani [12] said: Its sourcing is sound. Al-Bukhari [37] authenticated another version.

Abrogation validation:

His words “then He abrogated from that and excepted” indicate that *naskh* is not annulment. What confirms this is that the verifier of Abu-Dawoud’s book referenced above, Al-Arnaoot, mentioned a narration by Ibn Abi-Hatem, by way of Muhammad ibn Isshaq from Yazid ibn Abdullah ibn Qusait from Abul-Hasan Salem Al-Barrad, servant of Tamim Al-Dari, who said, ‘When the verses “And the poets, the allured follow them...And that they say what they do not do.” [26:224-226] were revealed, Hassan ibn Thabet, Abdullah ibn Rawaha, and Kaab ibn Malek came to the Messenger of God (PBUH) weeping. They said: God knew when He sent down these verses that we are poets. The Prophet (PBUH) recited “Except those who believed and worked righteous deeds and commented: That’s you! Then he recited, “And mentioned God much” and commented: That’s you! Then recited, “And sought help after they were wronged” and commented: That’s you!’ Thus confirming the exception. Al-Arnaoot then said that Ibn Abbas (RA), Ikrima, Mujahid, and Zayd ibn Aslam all said the same.

**Summary**: There is a criticized narrator in the sourcing chain, and the majority of the scholars of past have agreed that what is meant by *naskh* in this narration is exception.

## 22. On abrogating verse 73:2

*Ubiquity verification:* No. Only one narration.

**Note:** A famous narration by Aisha (RA) about the abrogation claim of verses 73:1-4 does not have the word *naskh* in it, so it is not included in this Appendix per the specified criteria in the introduction, but it is discussed on page 116.

[Narration # 82] Narrator: Ikrima, originator: Ibn Abbas (RA)

*Arabic text:*

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ الْمَرْوَزِيُّ ابْنُ شُبَّوَيْهِ، حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُسَيْنٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ، عَنْ عِكْرِمَةَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ: فِي الْمُرَّمَلِ

﴿فَمِ اللَّيْلِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا﴾ نِصْفَهُ ... [الْمُرَّمَلِ : ٢-٣]

نَسَخْتَهَا الْآيَةُ الَّتِي فِيهَا:

﴿... عَلِمَ أَنَّ لَنْ تُخْصَوْهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاقْرَءُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ ...﴾ [الْمُرَّمَلِ : ٢٠]

وَنَاشِئَةُ اللَّيْلِ أَوَّلُهُ - وَكَانَتْ صَلَاتُهُمْ لِأَوَّلِ اللَّيْلِ، يَقُولُ: هُوَ أَجْدَرُ أَنْ تُحْصُوا مَا فَرَضَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ قِيَامِ اللَّيْلِ، وَذَلِكَ أَنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ إِذَا نَامَ لَمْ يَدْرِ مَتَى يَسْتَيْقِظُ، وَقَوْلُهُ:

﴿... أَقْوَمُ قِيلًا﴾ [الْمُرَّمَلِ : ٦]

هُوَ أَجْدَرُ أَنْ يَفْقَهَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ، وَقَوْلُهُ:

﴿إِنَّ لَكَ فِي النَّهَارِ سَبْحًا طَوِيلًا﴾ [الْمُرَّمَلِ : ٧]

يَقُولُ: فَرَاغًا طَوِيلًا

*Translation:*

Narrated Ahmad ibn Muhammad Al-Marwazi ibn Shabbuwaih from Ali ibn Al-Hussein from his father from Yazid Al-Nahwi from Ikrima from Ibn Abbas (RA) that he said about Chapter 73, "Rise [during] the night, except a little, half of it..." [73:2-3], that it was abrogated by the verse that has the words, "He knew that you would never span it, so He relieved you, so recite what is easy (for you) of the Quran..." [73:20]. Then he commented on the words "the onset of the night" [73:6] saying, "The onset of the night is its beginning. That was when they prayed. He (God) is saying that this is more effective in you being

able to grasp what He mandated upon you in rising during the night. That is because when one sleeps, one does not know when he will wake up.” He commented further on “...better for articulation” that it means that it is more effective in understanding the Quran. Then on “Verily, there is for you in the daytime prolonged occupation” [73:7] that it says “a long available time”.

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by [Abu-Dawoud \[3\]](#) who did not rate it. Authenticated by his book’s verifier, Al-Arnaoot, saying: This is sound sourcing<sup>26</sup> because of Ali ibn Al-Hussein, and Al-Hussein is Ibn Waqid Al-Marwazi. However, see earlier in this appendix that the scholars criticized Ibn Waqid. [Al-Albani \[12\]](#) also said its sourcing was sound.

*Abrogation validation:*

Abrogation is stated in the text of the narration.

**Summary**: Abrogation is stated in the text, but there is a criticized narrator in the sourcing chain.

## 23. On abrogating verse 62:9

*Ubiquity verification*: No. Only one narration.

[Narration # 83] Narrator: Kharsha ibn Al-Hurr, originator: Umar (RA)

*Arabic text:*

قال أبو عبيد، ثنا هشيم، ثنا مغيرة، عن إبراهيم، عن خَرَشَةَ بن الحَرِّ الفزاري: أَنَّ عَمَرَ بنَ الخطَّابِ رَأَى معه لوحًا مكتوبًا فيه:

﴿... إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ...﴾ [الجمعة: ٩]

فقال: من أقرأك أو من أملى عليك هذا؟ فقال: أُبَيُّ بنُ كَعْبٍ فقال: إِنَّ أُبَيًّا كانَ أقرَّناَ للمنسوخِ أقرأها: فامضوا إلى ذكرِ الله.

*Translation:*

Narrated Abu-Ubaid from Hushaim, from Mugheera, from Ibrahim, from Kharsha ibn Al-Hurr Al-Fazari that Umar (RA) saw with him a tablet on which was written, “... if the call to prayer is announced on the day of congregation (Friday), then proceed to the remembrance of God ...” [62:9], and he said to him, “Who recited or dictated this to you?” He replied, “Ubayy ibn Kaab”. He

<sup>26</sup>Al-Arnaoot stated that the narration is authentic, then stated that it is (only) ‘sound’, without commenting on the reason for providing two different ratings.

said, “Verily, Ubayy was the most among us in reciting what was abrogated. Recite it: Then progress to the remembrance of God.”

*Sourcing validation:*

Reported by Ibn Kathir [164] who said: An authentic sourcing. The verifier of his book mentioned that Al-Albani agreed with him.

*Abrogation validation:*

Ibn Hajar [155] mentioned the narration by Al-Tabari from Abdul-Hamid ibn Bayan from Sufyan from Al-Zuhri from Salem ibn Abdullah ibn Umar from his father that he said, “I never heard Umar ever recite it ‘then progress’,” indicating no abrogation if that was the issue.

**Summary:** Sourcing chain appears to be connected, and there is no abrogation here.

## Summary:

- Number of abrogation claims narrations: 83.
- Number of narrations attributed to Ibn Abbas (RA): 67.
- Number of narrations stating abrogation: 62.
- Number of narrations stating abrogation of any of the Big Three: One, narration number 82.
- Number of narrations rejecting abrogation: 21.
- Number of originators: 9 (Ibn Abbas (RA), Ibn Umar (RA), Salama ibn Al-Akwaa, Mujahid, Abu-Hurayra (RA), Ibn Masoud (RA), Zayd ibn Aslam, Umar ibn Al-Khattab (RA), and Ibn Al-Zubair (RA)).
- Number of verses whose abrogation was stated or rejected by these narrations: 26.
- **Number of verses whose abrogation was stated by ubiquitous narrations: Two** (2:184 and 2:284).
- **Number of verses whose abrogation was rejected by ubiquitous narrations: Two** (2:184 and 4:93).
- **Number of narrations asserting abrogation which were attributed<sup>27</sup> to the Prophet (PBUH): Zero** (56, 57, 59-62, 66, 67, 69 are the ones attributed to the Prophet (PBUH), and all of them are parts of narrations by Ibn Abbas (RA) that reject the abrogation claim).

<sup>27</sup>Where hearing directly from the Prophet (PBUH) is stated.

## A.4 Short Biographies

The following are brief biographies of 15 scholars who have influenced this book. The biographies are listed in chronological order, and the dates follow the Gregorian calendar.

### **Ibn Abbas, Abdullah (RA)**

A young cousin of the Prophet (PBUH), and one of the most prominent scholars of early Islam. He was born in Mecca, circa 620, three years before the Muslims migrated to Medina. To him are attributed the most narrations about *naskh* of verses in the Quran. He was 13 years old when the Prophet (PBUH) died. Ibn Abbas (RA) died in Al-Taif, Arabia circa 690. The redefinition of *naskh* to mean abrogation only was made many years after his death.

### **Abu-Hanifa, Al-Numan**

The first of the foremost scholars of Sunni Islam and the founder of the most followed school of thought among Muslims. His methodology of analysis set a platform for the discipline of Foundations of Deduction, which took shape later at the hands of Al-Shafei.

He lived in the era before any Prophetic narration was properly authenticated, so he formulated his school of thought largely on the basis of the Quran and rational reasoning. He is considered a second-generation scholar as he met Anas ibn Malik (RA), the last of the fellows of the Prophet (PBUH) to die.

Abu-Hanifa used *naskh* as a means to reconcile verses in order to arrive at religious rulings. He was born in the literary and scholarly town of Kufa, Iraq, of Persian descent, circa 700, and died there circa 767.

### **Al-Shafei, Muhammad ibn Idris**

The third of the four foremost scholars of Sunni Islam, student of the second one, Malik, and founder of the discipline of Foundations of Deduction which he detailed in his flagship book *Al-Risala* ([Al-Shafei \[94\]](#)). His school of thought is second only in following to the school of thought of Abu-Hanifa. As for his views on abrogation, he rejected the notion that the *hadith* or the *sunna* may abrogate verses of the Quran.

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He had extraordinary memory, sharp intelligence, and a remarkable poetic talent. He demonstrated his belief that religious edicts ought to be changed when strong evidence calls for it by changing his rulings after he moved to Egypt. He was born in Gaza, Palestine, circa 767, and died in Cairo, Egypt, circa 820.

#### **Al-Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Isamil**

The first, and foremost *hadith* scholar to authenticate Prophetic narrations. He was born in Bukhara, Uzbekistan, in 807, of Persian descent. He traveled to most Muslim countries at his time, collecting Prophetic narrations from everyone who had memorized some. That was not enough for him though, as he took the extra mile of verifying the integrity and memory of every narrator in the narration chain of every Prophetic narration he collected, thus establishing a high bar for *hadith* authentication.

He recorded in his flagship book, “Sahih Al-Bukhari” (The Authentic compilation of Al-Bukhari) only the most authentic Prophetic narrations (Al-Bukhari [35]). His book has been the standard reference for authentic Prophetic narrations ever since.

Among his students were three of the prominent narrations scholars: Muslim, Ibn Khuzayma, and Al-Tirmizi. He died in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, in 870.

#### **Al-Asfahani, Abu-Muslim**

Born circa 868 in Ispahan, Iran, and died in Baghdad, Iraq, circa 938. He is the most prominent anti-abrogation scholar among the predecessors. His opinions on the subject drew, and continue to draw, a lot of attention and wrath from pro-abrogation writers as he was the only notable exception to an otherwise apparent consensus about the abrogation doctrine at the time. He wrote an extensive exegesis of the Quran, which was lost, but other scholars such as Al-Razi included many of his views and quotes.

Pro-abrogation scholar Al-Arid [20] wrote about him: “*He was an honorable scholar, literary author, eloquent poet, uniquely genius, great debater, deeply knowledgeable of exegesis and other disciplines, and knew grammar. His peers admitted his intelligence and acumen, quickness and soundness of mind, strength of argument, thoughtfulness, and brilliance.*”

Historians mentioned that Abu-Muslim was a practical scholar, pious, and God-fearing. They have not questioned his commitment to religion or alleged an aberration in his faith. His mentality was mature and multi-faceted.

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He managed to combine the world and the religion, scholastics, legislation, and politics. He was so talented that he translated Farsi poems to Arabic, making them rhyme as well.

In addition to his 14-volume exegesis of the Quran, he also wrote a book about abrogation, which too was unfortunately lost. Many efforts to revive his exegesis were made based on references and quotes by other scholars. A notable such effort was made by Dr. Khidr Banha, who assembled together all that he could find of Al-Asfahani's quotes from different sources and put them in a book ([Al-Asfahani \[21\]](#)).

#### **Al-Jassas, Abu-Bakr**

Born in Rey, near Tehran, Iran, circa 917 and died in Baghdad, Iraq, circa 980. He took over the leadership of Abu-Hanifa's school of thought in Baghdad, Iraq, then in Nisapur, Iran.

According to [Rana \[192\]](#), Al-Jassas was a key figure in defining the Abrogation Doctrine. But [Zeid \[206\]](#) had reservations on that assessment. He believed that the ideas of Al-Jassas were reactionary as he was engaging in debates with non-Muslims of his time who rejected abrogation on principle.

#### **Al-Zahiri, Ali Ibn Hazm**

Abu-Muhammad Ali ibn Ahmad ibn Said ibn Hazm.<sup>27</sup> Much of the *Zahiri* juristic school of thought is based on his writings. He was very critical of blind following and of the juristic dependence on *qiyas* (analogy), and insisted on relying only on the Quran, the authentic *hadith*, and the consensus of the Fellows of the Prophet (PBUH). He pointed at polysyms as a source of mixup and confusion that often led to wrong conclusions and faulty rulings. He was born in Cordova, Andalusian Spain, in 994, and died near there in 1064.

#### **Ibn Al-Hassar, Abul-Hasan Ali ibn Muhammad**

Abu Al-Hasan Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad Al-Khazraji. Born in Sevilla, Spain, and lived in Fes, Morocco, till his death circa 1220 when he was in  
(continued on next page)

<sup>27</sup>Not to be confused with an earlier scholar, Abu-Abdillah Muhammad ibn Hazm Al-Andalusi, who also lived in Andalusian Spain.

Medina. He was particularly interested in exegesis, literature, and poetry. Most of what is known of his writings is through the quotes of subsequent authors. He wrote a book about abrogation, and two articles, one about the divine origin of the Quran and another about abrogation as the foundationists understood it. His views on abrogation were quite strict and, if followed, would eliminate a majority of abrogation claims.

[Al-Suyuti \[100\]](#) reported what Ibn Al-Hassar affirmed, that some verses in the Quran are better than others, a key point in interpreting the abrogation verse 2:106. Ibn Al-Hassar wrote *“And it is amazing that anyone differs about that given the many texts stating the preference.”*

### **Ibn Taymia, Ahmad**

One of the most respected and influential scholars of Islam, so much so that he was given the honorary title of Shaykh Al-Islam (The Elder of Islam). Ibn Taymia is his nickname. His full name is Abu-Alabbas Ahmad ibn Abdul-Halim ibn Abdul-Salam Al-Dimashqi. He was born in Harran, Turkey, in 1263, and then moved to Damascus, Syria, after the Mongols' invasion. He taught the disciplines of *hadith* and jurisprudence in Syria and wrote several prominent books, including a huge encyclopedia of religious edicts ([Ibn Taymia \[172\]](#)).

Some of his opinions upset the authorities and caused him to be imprisoned more than once. One of his most influential rulings about abrogation was his refutation of the abrogation claim of verse 2:240 by 2:234 (widow's residence), which changed the minds of many future scholars about this famous claim.

His influence reached as far as India. Some of those who were influenced by him were the Dahlawi family, of whom was the renowned scholar Waliyullah. Among his students were the prominent scholars Ibn Al-Qayyim and Ibn Kathir. He died in Damascus in 1328.

### **Al-Suyuti, Jalal Al-Deen**

Born in Cairo, Egypt, in 1445 and died there in 1505. He was the first pro-abrogation scholar to massively reduce the number of abrogation claims, from over 200 down to 20. Most authors who wrote about abrogation after him started out with the list of 20 claims he approved.

He was a very prolific author. Many of his books are highly regarded, including his landmark book about the Quran ([Al-Suyuti \[100\]](#)) and a terse exegesis which he co-authored ([Al-Mahalli \[67\]](#)).

**Waliyullah, Ahmad Shah**

Known in Arabic literature as Al-Dahlawi, in reference to Delhi, India, where he was born in 1703. He died in 1762. He is a well-respected scholar who is known for reducing the number of verses claimed abrogated to only five (Waliyullah [203]).

He is credited with returning the Islamic thought in India to its origins after mythical ideas had taken over. He is also credited with opening the door for *Ijtihad* (theological research aimed at reaching educated opinions) beyond the four established schools of thought of early Islam.

**Abduh, Muhammad**

The most prominent Islamic scholar of the Nineteenth Century. He was the *Mufti* (Grand Islamic law adviser) of Egypt. He was known for his tolerance, progressiveness, and intelligence, and was a pioneer of Islamic analysis renewal. His lectures of exegesis were documented by a student of his (Rida [193]). It was a distinctive exegesis in that he attempted to explain the verses rationally on a scientific basis.



He has the distinction, together with Muhammad Al-Khodari Bek, to be the first highly respected modern scholars to refute all the abrogation claims they studied.

He was born in Egypt in 1849 and died there in 1905.

**Ibrahim, Professor Ahmed Bek**

Born in Egypt in 1874 and died there in 1945. He was a Professor of Islamic Law at Cairo University Faculty of Law. He was recognized as one of six selected Islamic scholars of the 14th *hijri* century in the 1997 book by Abdul-Fattah Abu-Ghudda, and also in the "Giants and Pioneers" book by Anwar Hegazi.



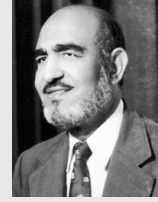
He was a prolific author, with titles on a variety of Islamic subjects, including the discipline of Foundations of Deduction (Ibrahim [178]). He was open-minded with a scholarly approach and a unique mathematical ability, and

(continued on next page)

he wrote some of the most comprehensive references on the Islamic laws of inheritance. He was often praised for his tolerant attitude and his notable sense of humor.

#### **Zeid, Dr. Mostafa**

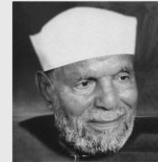
He was born in Kafr Al-Sheikh, Egypt, in 1917. His landmark book on abrogation (Zeid [206]), which we cite often in this book, was his Ph.D. dissertation. In it, he refutes and dismisses scores of abrogation claims, approving only five of them.



He was the head of the Islamic Law School of Dar Al-Uloom Faculty in Cairo University for 16 years, and also worked in Damascus, Beirut, Khartoum, and in Medina, where he died in 1977 and was buried next to the grave of Imam Malik. He authored other books on exegesis, *hadith*, and jurisprudence.

#### **Al-Shaarawi, Muhammad Mutwalli**

Born in Egypt in 1911 and died there in 1998. He was arguably the most prominent popular Islamic scholar of the Twentieth Century. His exegesis (Al-Shaarawi [92]), which he died before completing, raised the bar of scholarship to a new high. His mastery of the Arabic language and his in-depth scrutiny of the Quran produced a phenomenal insight into the holy Book. People who listened to his videos reported moments of epiphany.



Based on what is available of his publications, we found that he only approved three abrogation claims: 4:11-12/2:180, 64:16/3:102 which he acknowledged was about two different issues and 8:66/8:65 which he acknowledged was contingent. So, practically, he approved only one claim. In the other two, he probably meant by *naskh* its comprehensive meaning and not abrogation.

## A.5 Time Line of Scholars

The following is a chronological list of scholars and authors who discussed abrogation, grouped by the era they lived in and sorted by the year of their death, collected from the sources available to us. For some, we point to a book of theirs in the References section. The time line helps to understand their era and environment and to relate each to his contemporaries.

A biography of some of these scholars appears in Appendix [A.4](#).

### First Century A.H. (622-719 A.D.)

- Ibn Masoud, Abdullah (RA) (d. 32 A.H.)<sup>28</sup>
- Alqama ibn Qays (d. 62 A.H.) one of the fellows of Ibn Masoud (RA)
- Ibn Abbas, Abdullah (RA) (d. 68 A.H.)
- Al-Aswad ibn Yazid (d. 75 A.H.), one of the fellows of Ibn Masoud (RA)
- Abul-Aaliya Rafee ibn Mahran Al-Riyahi (d. 90 A.H.)
- Ibn Jubair, Said (d. 95 A.H.), a fellow of Ibn Abbas (RA)
- Ibrahim Al-Nakhi (d. 96 A.H.), one of the fellows of Ibn Masoud (RA)

### Second Century A.H. (719-816 A.D.)

- Abul-Hajjaj Mujahid ibn Jabr (d. 104 A.H.), a fellow of Ibn Abbas (RA)
- Al-Dahhak ibn Muzahim Al-Hilali (d. 102 A.H.)
- Abu-Abdillah Ikrima Al-Barbari (d. 105 A.H.), a fellow of Ibn Abbas (RA) (also his servant)
- Tawoos ibn Kaysan Al-Yamani (d. 106 A.H.), a fellow of Ibn Abbas (RA)
- Ataa ibn Abi-Rabah Al-Makki (d. 114 A.H.), a fellow of Ibn Abbas (RA)
- Al-Sadusi, Qatada ibn Diama [\[84\]](#) (d. 118 A.H.)
- Al-Hasan Al-Basri (d. 121 A.H.)
- Abu-Bakr Muhammad ibn Muslim Ibn Shihaab Al-Zuhri (d. 124 A.H.), a teacher of Imam Malik
- Ismail ibn Abdil-Rahman Al-Suddi (d. 128 A.H.)

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<sup>28</sup>d. denotes year of death. A.H. means “after Hijra”, i.e., the Islamic calendar, which started in July of 623 A.D. and follows a lunar cycle.

- Abdullah ibn Abi-Najeeh (d. 131 A.H.)
- Abul-Nadhar Said ibn Abi-Aruba (d. 133 A.H.)
- Ataa ibn Abi-Muslim ibn Maysara Al-Khurasani (d. 135 A.H.)
- Ibn Aslam, Zaid (d. 136 A.H.)
- Abul-Nadhar Muhammad ibn Al-Saib ibn Bishr Al-Kalbi (d. 146 A.H.)
- Imam Abu-Hanifa Al-Numan ibn Thabit (d. 150 A.H.)
- Abul-Hasan Muqatil ibn Sulaiman ibn Bashir (d. 150 A.H.)
- Ibn Al-Walid ibn Jurayj (d. 150 A.H.)
- Abu-Ali Al-Hussein ibn Waqid Al-Marwazi (d. 159 A.H.)
- Imam Malik ibn Anas (d. 179 A.H.)
- Abdul-Rahman ibn Zeid ibn Aslam (d. 182 A.H.)

### Third Century A.H. (816-913 A.D.)

- Imam Abu-Abdullah Muhammad ibn Idris Al-Shafei [93] (d. 204 A.H.)
- Abul-Nasr Abdul-Wahhab ibn Ataa Al-Ajli Al-Khaffaf (d. 204 A.H.)
- Abu-Muhammad Hajjaj Al-Aawar (d. 206 A.H.)
- Abu-Ubaid Al-Qasim ibn Sallam Al-Hirrawi [171] (d. 224 A.H.)
- Abu-Muhammad Hasan ibn Ali ibn Fudhal Al-Kufi (d. 224 A.H.)
- Muhammad ibn Saad Al-Awfi (d. 230 A.H.), a teacher of Al-Tabari
- Jaafar ibn Mubashshir ibn Ahmad Al-Thaqafi (d. 234 A.H.)
- Abul-Harith Surayj ibn Yunus ibn Ibrahim Al-Marwazi (d. 236 A.H.)
- Imam Abu-Abdillah Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Hanbal [160] (d. 241 A.H.)
- Al-Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Isamil [35] (d. 256 A.H.)
- Abu-Dawoud Sulaiman ibn Al-Ashaath Al-Sajistani [3] (d. 275 A.H.)
- Abu-Isshaq Ibrahim ibn Isshaq Al-Harbi (d. 285 A.H.)
- Abu-Muslim Ibrahim ibn Abdillah ibn Muslim ibn Maaiz Al-Kajji (d. 292 A.H.)

**Fourth Century A.H. (913-1010 A.D.)**

- Al-Hussein ibn Mansour Al-Hallaj (d. 309 A.H.)
- Al-Tabari, Muhammad ibn Jarir [107] (d. 310 A.H.), the elder of exegetes
- Abu-Bakr Abdullah ibn Sulaiman Al-Ashaath Al-Sajistani (d. 316 A.H.), son of Abu-Dawoud
- Abu-Abdillah Al-Zubair ibn Ahmad ibn Sulaiman Al-Zubairi (d. 317 A.H.)
- Abu-Jaafar Ahmad ibn Isshaq ibn Bahlul Al-Tanukhi (d. 318 A.H.)
- Abu-Abdillah Muhammad ibn Hazm Al-Andalusi [19] (d. 320 A.H.)
- Abu-Muslim Muhammad ibn Bahr Al-Asfahani [21] (d. 322 A.H.)
- Ibn Abi-Hatem, Abdul-Rahman ibn Muhammad ibn Idris [142] (d. 327 A.H.), the exegete
- Ibn Al-Anbari, Abu-Bakr Muhammad ibn Al-Qasem ibn Bashshar (d. 328 A.H.), among his students was Al-Daraqutni
- Abul-Hussein Ahmad ibn Jaafar ibn Al-Munadi (d. 336 A.H.)
- Abu-Jaafar Ahmad ibn Muhammad An-Nahhas Al-Misri [71] (d. 338 A.H.)
- Abul-Hasan Ubaidullah ibn Al-Hussein Al-Karkhi (d. 340 A.H.), one of the teachers of Al-Jassas
- Abu-Bakr Muhammad ibn Abdillah Al-Bardaei (d. 350 A.H.)
- Judge Abu-Said Al-Hasan ibn Abdillah Al-Sirafi Al-Nahwi (d. 368 A.H.)
- Al-Jassas, Abu-Bakr [56] (d. 370 A.H.)
- Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Babaweh Al-Qummi (d. 381 A.H.)
- Al-Daraqutni, Abul-Hasan Ali ibn Umar [40] (d. 385 A.H.)

**Fifth Century A.H. (1010-1107 A.D.)**

- Abul-Mutraf Abdul-Rahman ibn Muhammad ibn Isa ibn Futays ibn Asbagh Al-Qurtubi (d. 402 A.H.)
- Judge Abu-Bakr Muhammad ibn Al-Tayyib Al-Baqillani Al-Basri (d. 403 A.H.)

- Abul-Qasem Hibatullah ibn Salama [170] (d. 410 A.H.)
- Abu-Isshaq Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Al-Thaalabi [110], the exegete
- Abu-Mansour Abdul-Qahir ibn Tahir Al-Isfrayini Al-Baghdadi [24] (d. 429 A.H.)
- Abu-Muhammad Makki ibn Abi-Talib Al-Qaysi Al-Qurtubi Al-Maghrabi [184] (d. 437 A.H.)
- Abu-Muhammad Ali ibn Ahmad ibn Said Ibn Hazm Al-Zahiri [121] (d. 456 A.H.)
- Abul-Walid Sulaiman ibn Khalaf Al-Tujaybi Al-Baji (d. 474 A.H.)
- Abul-Maali Abdul-Malik ibn Abdillan ibn Yusuf Al-Juwayni [59] (d. 478 A.H.)

#### Sixth Century A.H. (1107-1204 A.D.)

- Ibn Aqeel, Abul-Wafaa Ali ibn Aqeel Al-Baghdadi Al-Zafari (d. 513 A.H.)
- Abu-Hamed Al-Ghazali [44] (d. 505 A.H.)
- Abu-Muhammad Hussein ibn Masoud Al-Farraa Al-Baghawi [23] (d. 516 A.H.) the exegete
- Muhammad ibn Barakat ibn Hilal Al-Saidi Al-Misri (d. 520 A.H.)
- Abu-Hafs Umar ibn Muhammad Al-Nasafi [72] (d. 537 A.H.)
- Abul-Qasem Mahmoud ibn Umar Al-Zamakhshari [124] (d. 538 A.H.) the exegete
- Abu-Muhammad Abdul-Haqq ibn Atiya Al-Andalusi [154] (d. 541 A.H.) the exegete
- Judge Abu-Bakr ibn Al-Arabi [144] (d. 543 A.H.)
- Abul-Qasem Mahmoud ibn Abil-Hasan Al-Naysapuri Al-Gharnawi (d. circa 550 A.H.)
- Abu-Jaafar Ahmad ibn Abdil-Samad ibn Abdil-Haqq Al-Khazraji [63] (d. 582 A.H.)
- Abu-Bakr Muhammad ibn Musa Al-Hazimi Al-Hamazani [49] (d. 584 A.H.)



- Abul-Faraj Abdul-Rahman ibn Ali ibn Al-Jawzi [147] (d. 597 A.H.)

### **Seventh Century A.H. (1204-1301 A.D.)**

- Fakhrul-Deen Al-Razi [83] (d. 606 A.H.)
- Ibn Al-Hassar, Abul-Hasan Ali ibn Muhammad Al-Khazraji Al-Andalusi Al-Fasi (d. 611 A.H.)
- Saiful-Deen Abul-Hasan Ali ibn Abi-Ali Al-Amidi [18] (d. 631 A.H.),
- Alamul-Deen Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Abdil-Rahman Al-Sakhawi (d. 643 A.H.)
- Tajul-Deen Muhammad ibn Al-Hussein Al-Urmawi [114] (d. 653 A.H.) a student of Al-Razi
- Abu-Abdillah Shamsul-Deen Muhammad ibn Ahmad Al-Mawsili (aka Shula) [199], d. 656 A.H.)
- Abul-Hasan Ali ibn Abdillah Al-Shazuli (d. 656 A.H.)
- Abu-Abdillah Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Abi-Bakr Al-Qurtubi [80] (d. 671 A.H.) the exegete
- Shihabul-Deen Al-Qarafi (d. 684 A.H.)
- Judge Naserul-Deen Abdullah ibn Umar Al-Baydawi [30] (d. 685 A.H.)

### **Eigth Century A.H. (1301-1398 A.D.)**

- Ibn Taymia, Taqiyul-Deen Abul-Abbas Ahmad ibn Abdil-Halim Al-Harrani Al-Dimashqi [175] (d. 728 A.H.)<sup>29</sup>
- Muhammad ibn Al-Mutahhar ibn Yahya ibn Al-Murtadha Al-Mahdi Al-Zeidi (d. 728 A.H.)
- Fakhrul-Deen Al-Bazdawi (d. 730 A.H.)
- Abu-Isshaq Burhanul-Deen Ibrahim ibn Umar Al-Jaabari [53] (d. 732 A.H.)
- Sharaful-Deen Hibatullah ibn Abdil-Rahim ibn Ibrahim Al-Barizi [146] (d. 738 A.H.)
- Yahya ibn Abdillah ibn Abdil-Malik Al-Wasiti (d. 738 A.H.)
- Abul-Hasan Alaaul-Deen Al-Khazen [62] (d. 741 A.H.) the exegete

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<sup>29</sup>Also titled The Elder of Islam.

- Abu-Hayyan Muhammad ibn Yusuf Al-Ghornati [47] (d. 745) the exegete
- Sadrul-Sharia Al-Taftazani (d. 747 A.H.)
- Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad Zanki Al-Asfrayini (d. 747 A.H.)
- Jamalul-Deen Abu-Muhammad Abdul-Rahim ibn Ali Al-Isnawi [52] (d. 772 A.H.)
- Ismail ibn Umar ibn Kathir Al-Dimashqi [163] (d. 774 A.H.) the exegete
- Badrul-Deen Muhammad ibn Abdillah Al-Zarkashi [125] (d. 794 A.H.) the exegete

#### **Ninth Century A.H. (1398-1495 A.D.)**

- Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani [155] (d. 852 A.H.)
- Al-Kamal ibn Al-Humam (d. 861 A.H.)
- Ibn Amir Hajj, Shamsul-Deen Al-Halabi (d. 879 A.H.)
- Abu-Hafs Sirajul-Deen Umar ibn Ali ibn Adel [143] (d. 880 A.H.) the exegete
- Shihabul-Deen Ahmad ibn Ismail ibn Abi-Bakr ibn Buraida Al-Abshiti (d. 883 A.H.)
- Abu-Zeid Abdul-Rahman ibn Muhammad Al-Thaalibi [111] (d. 884 A.H.) the exegete

#### **Tenth Century A.H. (1495-1592 A.D.)**

- Jalalul-Deen Abdul-Rahman ibn Abi-Bakr Al-Suyuti [100] (d. 911 A.H.)
- Abul-Yumn Mujirul-Deen Abdul-Rahman ibn Muhammad Al-Maqdesi [68] (d. 928 A.H.) the exegete and Chief Justice of Jerusalem

#### **Eleventh Century A.H. (1592-1689 A.D.)**

- Marei ibn Yusuf ibn Qadama Al-Karmi [60] (d. 1033 A.H.)

**Twelfth Century A.H. (1689-1786 A.D.)**

- Jamalul-Deen Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Said ibn Masoud ibn Aqeela Al-Makki (d. 1150 A.H.)
- Waliyullah, Ahmad Shah [203] (d. 1176 A.H.)
- Atiyyatullah ibn Atiyya Al-Ajhuri [9] (d. 1190 A.H.)

**Thirteenth Century A.H. (1786-1883 A.D.)**

- Muhammad ibn Ali Al-Shawkani [96] (d. 1250 A.H.) the exegete
- Muhammad ibn Salama ibn Abdil-Khaleq ibn Hasan Al-Jamal Al-Rashidi (d. 1300 A.H.)

**Fourteenth Century A.H. (1883-1980 A.D.)**

- Imam Muhammad Abduh (d. 1323 A.H. 1905 A.D.)<sup>30</sup>
- Muhammad Jamalul-Deen Al-Qasemi [77] (d. 1332 A.H. 1914 A.D.) the exegete
- Abdul-Rahman ibn Muhammad Al-Qurrah Daghi Al-Kurdi (d. 1335 A.H. 1917 A.D.)
- Al-Khodari, Muhammad *Bek* [64] (d. 1345 A.H. 1927 A.D.)
- Rida, Muhammad Rashid [193] (d. 1354 A.H. 1935 A.D.) author of Al-Manar Exegesis
- Ahmed Ibrahim (*Bek*) ibn Ibrahim Surour Al-Husseini [178] (d. 1364 A.H. 1945 A.D.), among his students was Muhammad Abu-Zahra
- Muhammad Abdul-Azim Al-Zurqani [128] (d. 1367 A.H. 1948 A.D.)
- Abdul-Rahman ibn Naser Al-Siedi [91] (d. 1376 A.H. 1957 A.D.)
- Mahmoud Shaltout [198] (d. 1383 A.H. 1963 A.D.)
- Qutb, Sayyed [191] (d. 1386 A.H. 1966 A.D.)
- Muhammad Muhammad Al-Madani [66] (d. 1388 A.H. 1968 A.D.)
- Muhammad Al-Taher ibn Ashour [153] (d. 1393 A.H. 1973 A.D.) the exegete

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<sup>30</sup>We start mentioning the Gregorian date for modern-day scholars.

- Muhammad Abu-Zahra [6] (d. 1394 A.H. 1974 A.D.)
- Ali Muhammad Hasaballah [139] (d. 1398 A.H. 1978 A.D.)
- Dr. Mostafa Zeid [206] (d. 1398 A.H. 1978 A.D.)

### **Fifteenth Century A.H. (Since 1980 A.D.)**

- Dr. Muhammad Al-Bahiyy [25] (d. 1402 A.H. 1982 A.D.)
- Dr. Subhi Al-Saleh [85] (d. 1407 A.H. 1986 A.D.)
- Dr. Muhammad Mahmoud Farghali [136] (d. 1415 A.H. 1994 A.D.)
- Dr. Abdul-Mutaal Al-Jabri [54] (d. 1415 A.H. 1995 A.D.)
- Muhammad Al-Ghazali [46] (d. 1416 A.H. 1996 A.D.)
- Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Shaarawi [92] (d. 1419 A.H. 1998 A.D.)
- Dr. Mannaa Al-Qattan [78] (d. 1420 A.H. 1999 A.D.)
- Muhammad bin Saleh Al-Uthaimeen [177] (d. 1421 A.H. 2001 A.D.)
- Dr. Ahmad Hijazi Al-Saqqa [88] (d. 1426 A.H. 2005 A.D.)
- Nada, Muhammad Mahmoud [190] (d. 1427 A.H. 2006 A.D.)
- Al-Khatib, Abdul-Karim [61] (d. 1429 A.H. 2008 A.D.)
- Al-Arid, Ali Hasan<sup>31</sup> [20]
- Jamal Al-Banna [29] (d. 1434 A.H. 2013 A.D.)
- Dr. Al-Qasabi Mahmoud Zalat (d. 1436 A.H. 2014 A.D.)
- Dr. Mustafa Ibrahim Al-Zalmi [123] (d. 1437 A.H. 2016 A.D.)
- Taha Jaber Al-Alwani [17] (d. 1437 A.H. 2016 A.H.)
- Abu-Usama Shuaib ibn Muharram Al-Arnaoot (d. 1438 A.H. 2016 A.D.)  
verifier of Islamic literature
- Dr. Hussein Nassar (d. 1439 A.H. 2017 A.D.)
- Afana, Jawad Musa [7] (d. 1442 A.H. 2020 A.D.)
- Dr. Shaban Muhammad Ismail [181] (d. 1443 A.H. 2022 A.D.)
- Dr. Yusuf Al-Qaradhawi [75] (d. 1444 A.H. 2022 A.D.)

<sup>31</sup>We found a mention that he died but we could not find any mention of the date of his death.

- Dr. Ali Jumaa [182]
- Muhammad Abdullah ibn Muhammad Al-Amin Al-Shinqeiti [99]
- Al-Ghali, Husam Rushdi [43]
- Ataya, Jamal Salih [132]
- Hamza, Muhammad [138]
- Tahir, Hani [202]
- Dr. Muhammad Salih Ali Mustafa [186]
- Dr. Adnan Ibrahim
- Dr. Ali Mansour Al-Kayali
- Luayy Fatouhi

## A.6 Revelation Order in the Quran

The following is a chronological list of the revelation of Chapters of the Quran, according to best evidence from narrations and studying the life of the Prophet (PBUH) and the historical events that took place during that time. That evidence, however, is not certain in sourcing. As a result, it is not in consensus. The prominent religious authority of Egypt, Al-Azhar, has approved this order and allowed it to be used in Quran books. We include it in this book for its potential value to the readers.

[Daruza \[135\]](#) offers more details on this subject. You may also want to read [Al-Fairuzabadi \[42\]](#), [Al-Zarkashi \[125\]](#) and [Al-Suyuti \[100\]](#).

[Order]	[Chapter]	[#Verses]	[Meccan/Medinite] <sup>1</sup>
1	96 <sup>2</sup>	19	Meccan
2	68	52	Meccan
3	73	20	Meccan
4	74	56	Meccan
5	1	7	Meccan
6	111	5	Meccan
7	81	29	Meccan
8	87	91	Meccan
9	92	21	Meccan
10	89	30	Meccan
11	93	11	Meccan
12	94	8	Meccan
13	103	3	Meccan
14	100	11	Meccan
15	108	3	Meccan
16	102	8	Meccan
17	107	7	Meccan
18	109	6	Meccan
19	105	5	Meccan
20	113	5	Meccan
21	114	6	Meccan
22	112	4	Meccan

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<sup>1</sup> This means that if the Chapter was revealed before Hijra then it is Meccan and if it was revealed after Hijra then it is Medinite. Some have said that some Medinite verses were placed in Meccan Chapters and vice versa, but that has not been validated with a strong evidence ([Abbas \[1\]](#)).

<sup>2</sup>By consensus for the narration by Aisha (RA) about the start of revelation ([Al-Bukhari \[35\]](#)).

[Order]	[Chapter]	[#Verses]	[Meccan/Medinite]
23	53	62	Meccan
24	80	42	Meccan
25	97	5	Meccan
26	91	15	Meccan
27	85	22	Meccan
28	95	8	Meccan
29	106	4	Meccan
30	101	11	Meccan
31	75	40	Meccan
32	104	9	Meccan
33	77	50	Meccan
34	50	45	Meccan
35	90	20	Meccan
36	86	17	Meccan
37	54	55	Meccan
38	38	88	Meccan
39	7	206	Meccan
40	28	72	Meccan
41	36	83	Meccan
42	25	77	Meccan
43	35	45	Meccan
44	19	98	Meccan
45	20	135	Meccan
46	56	96	Meccan
47	26	227	Meccan
48	27	93	Meccan
49	28	88	Meccan
50	17	111	Meccan
51	10	109	Meccan
52	11	128	Meccan
53	12	111	Meccan
54	15	99	Meccan
55	6	156	Meccan
56	73	182	Meccan
57	32	34	Meccan
58	34	54	Meccan
59	39	75	Meccan
60	40	85	Meccan
61	41	54	Meccan
62	42	53	Meccan
63	43	89	Meccan
64	44	59	Meccan
65	45	37	Meccan

[Order]	[Chapter]	[#Verses]	[Meccan/Medinite]
66	46	35	Meccan
67	51	60	Meccan
68	88	62	Meccan
69	18	110	Meccan
70	16	128	Meccan
71	71	28	Meccan
72	14	52	Meccan
73	21	112	Meccan
74	23	118	Meccan
75	32	30	Meccan
76	52	49	Meccan
77	67	30	Meccan
78	69	52	Meccan
79	70	44	Meccan
80	78	40	Meccan
81	79	46	Meccan
82	82	19	Meccan
83	84	25	Meccan
84	30	60	Meccan
85	29	69	Meccan
86	83	36	Meccan
87	2	286	Medinite
88	8	75	Medinite
89	3	200	Medinite
90	33	73	Medinite
91	60	13	Medinite
92	4	176	Medinite
93	99	8	Medinite
94	57	29	Medinite
95	47	38	Medinite
96	13	43	Medinite
97	55	78	Medinite
98	76	31	Medinite
99	65	12	Medinite
100	98	8	Medinite
101	59	24	Medinite
102	24	64	Medinite
103	22	78	Medinite
104	63	11	Medinite
105	58	22	Medinite
106	49	18	Medinite
107	66	12	Medinite
108	64	18	Medinite



[Order]	[Chapter]	[#Verses]	[Meccan/Medinite]
109	61	14	Medinite
110	62	11	Medinite
111	48	29	Medinite
112	5	120	Medinite
113	9	129	Medinite
114	110	3	Medinite

## A.7 Other Types of Abrogation

The subject matter of this book is the Abrogation Doctrine, which is concerned only with verses claimed abrogated within the Quranic script. This type of abrogation is but one part of a wider theological debate about abrogation in general. In this appendix, we will provide a brief exposition of the other types of abrogation so that the wider context is understood. Because these types of abrogation are not part of the Abrogation Doctrine,<sup>32</sup> we will not go into detailed analysis of them.

We have already alluded to the other types of abrogation in different parts of the book. Some of these types address alternative ways a Quranic verse may be claimed to be abrogated, and we will address those in the first section here. In the second section, we will discuss other types where the object of abrogation is not a Quranic verse.

In many books about abrogation, the discussion of whether abrogation has occurred does not make a distinction between the different types. Evidence that supports one type of abrogation is sometimes passed as evidence for the other types as well. Statements that establish that abrogation has occurred, without specifying what type of abrogation, are sometimes taken as proof for the Abrogation Doctrine in particular. We have addressed this problem in detail in §12.2.2.

### A.7.1 Other Types of Abrogation of Quranic Verses

1. The Abrogation Doctrine captures only one mode where a Quranic verse is claimed abrogated, and that is “abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation”. The abrogated verse remains in the Quranic script but its ruling is claimed to be no longer valid. There are two other modes mentioned in the literature, “abrogation of the recitation but not the ruling” and “abrogation of the recitation and the ruling” (Al-Baghdadi [24] and others). These two modes have less agreement about them among the scholars and have a very limited number of examples of actual claims. Al-Salih [85] counts this rarity of examples to be against the advocates of the two modes.

Al-Salih is not alone in rejecting these modes. There are other pro-abrogation scholars (i.e., those who approve of the “abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation” mode) who disagree about the other modes. For example, Zeid [206] rejects “abrogation of the recitation but not the ruling”. Al-Jassas [57] excludes “abrogation of the recitation and the ruling” in his

<sup>32</sup>As we will see, two of these types involve abrogation of verses in the Quranic script but not by other verses, and those types are widely dismissed so we did not count them as part of the Abrogation Doctrine.

writing.

In addition, while the first expression “abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation” was phrased based on what Ibn Abi-Najeeh reported as an interpretation of verse 2:106 by the fellows of Ibn Masoud (see §10.1), there is no such basis for the other two expressions. They seem to have been concocted as complements to the first expression, and older books like [Al-Zuhri \[127\]](#) and [Ibn Sallam \[171\]](#) do not mention these expressions.

- Abrogation of the recitation but not the ruling: This mode of abrogation revolves around a claim based on a *singles* narration attributed to Umar (RA). The narration asserts that there used to be a recited verse in the Quran that says “*the elder and the eldress if they fornicate then stone them entirely*” (الشيخ والشيخة إذا زنيا فارجموهما البتة), with other variations of the same narration adding different words to the purported verse. Supposedly, “elder” (الشيخ) is used metaphorically to denote another Arabic word (النَّيِّب - “non-maiden”) which specifies someone who has consummated a legitimate marriage at some point, regardless of age. [Zeid \[206\]](#), among other pro-abrogation scholars, rejects the assertion that such a verse existed and that Umar (RA) truly said what was attributed to him. Different scholars also raised different questions about this claim of abrogation ([Al-Arid \[20\]](#)). For example,
  - [Al-Nahhas \[71\]](#) and others point out that the Quran is conveyed by many reporting from many (hence it is certain in sourcing). The above narration is uncertain in sourcing as a *singles* narration.
  - [Al-Zarkashi \[125\]](#) and others raise the question of why the verse would use the “elder” metaphor. The question is warranted given that the subject matter is life or death in this case.
  - [Abbas \[1\]](#) and others have raised the issue of how the purported verse lacks the literary quality of Quranic verses.
- Abrogation of the recitation and the ruling: [Muslim \[189\]](#) reported a *singles* narration, attributed to Aisha (RA) by her student Amra that says that the Quran had included a ruling that 10 nursings of a baby would establish nursing maternity, and that this was abrogated by another ruling in the Quran that reduced the count to 5 nursings. Neither of these rulings is in the Quranic script, so the first one would be abrogated in both recitation and ruling since its ruling is also abrogated (the second one would be abrogated in recitation only according to those who believe that its ruling applies). All of this assumes the accuracy of what Amra conveyed.

Another example was given in side note 33, based on a narration with questionable authenticity. In that case, what was abrogated is supposedly an entire chapter in the Quran. However, unlike the narration attributed to Aisha (RA), there is no mention of the subject matter of what was abrogated in that case. There are other, similar narrations, also of questionable authenticity (Ibn Al-Jawzi [147]).

There are also reports of verses that were made to be forgotten rather than abrogated. It is worth noting that from a practical point of view, “made to be forgotten” is similar to “abrogated in both recitation and ruling” since in both cases the verse will neither be recited nor followed. Al-Tabari [107] describes both as ‘abrogated’. Reports of verses that were made to be forgotten are also *singles* narrations, hence uncertain in sourcing.

We reiterate that neither “abrogation of the recitation but not the ruling” nor “abrogation of the recitation and the ruling”, if they occurred, would have an impact on the refutation of the Abrogation Doctrine which is only concerned with “abrogation of the ruling but not the recitation” (namely inoperable verses *within the Quranic script*). It is only because these other modes are discussed in the literature that we mention them here.

2. In discussing the Abrogation Doctrine, we have focused exclusively on the cases where a Quranic verse is claimed to be abrogated by another Quranic verse. In a notable minority of abrogation claims, a Quranic verse is claimed to be abrogated by a ruling that is not in the Quran itself:

- Abrogation by a Prophetic narration: This is a strongly debated issue in the abrogation literature:
  - There are many scholars who reject that a Quranic verse can be abrogated by a Prophetic narration *as a matter of principle*, most notably Al-Shafei [94]. His view has been adopted by many scholars over the centuries.
  - Other scholars reject the notion based on a different principle. All claims in the literature of abrogation of a Quranic verse by a Prophetic narration employ a *singles* narration (thus uncertain in sourcing) as the abrogating text. The rejection is based on the principle that the uncertain cannot abrogate the certain (Al-Juwaini [59]), and all Quranic verses are certain in sourcing.
  - Others reject the notion by simple tallying rather than by invoking a principle. They take all the claims of a Prophetic narration abrogating a Quranic verse and show that there is no conflict that would warrant a claim of abrogation.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup>The most famous such claim is about leaving a will (see Step D in §6.1).

- Related to this category is abrogation by *sunna* (Prophetic traditions) which shares the same reservations as abrogation by a Prophetic narration.
  - Abrogation by unanimity: As we discussed in §10.3, unanimity among scholars, even without a supporting Quranic ruling or Prophetic narration, is considered a source of legislation. This may raise a hypothetical question for some about whether that source of legislation can abrogate a Quranic verse. The same question is sometimes raised about other methods of legislation that are also not supported by a direct Quranic ruling or Prophetic narration. The widely accepted answer to these questions is a definitive no.
3. There are other notions related to the abrogation of a Quranic verse that do not constitute actual abrogation:
- There is a significant body of literature where abrogation (more specifically, the Arabic word *naskh*) is used in situations where no annulment has taken place, but only ‘partial’ abrogation such as exception and elaboration (see §3.3.1). However, the Abrogation Doctrine is only about a Quranic verse being *annulled*. If there is any role that the verse plays in deriving the overall ruling, then it is not abrogated.
  - A point on the philosophical side that we alluded to before is the distinction that many scholars make between whether abrogation is theologically conceivable (جائز عقلاً) versus having actually occurred (واقع سماعاً). Our only concern in this book has been the actual concurrence of abrogation, as the definition of the Abrogation Doctrine indicates.

### A.7.2 Abrogation of Other than Quranic Verses

1. The first type of abrogation that is not about Quranic verses is about Prophetic narrations being abrogated. For instance, there is a narration (see the discussion in §1.3) that quotes the Prophet (PBUH) saying:

*I [Muhammad] had forbidden you from visiting the graves; now visit them.*

which is a clear case of abrogation of a previous Prophetic narration. However, whether Prophetic narrations have been abrogated is not the same subject as Quranic verses being abrogated. There is a debate about what can and cannot abrogate a Prophetic narration, but it is beyond the scope of this book.

2. The second type involves Quranic verses but in the role of abrogating rather than being abrogated themselves.

- A famous example is verse 2:144 which mandates that Muslims face Mecca in their prayers (see the first claim in §6.3). Before that verse was revealed, Muslims faced Jerusalem when they prayed. That was not because of Quranic instruction, but rather by example of what the Prophet (PBUH) did. Therefore, such change did not involve abrogating a Quranic verse, so this type of abrogation is also outside the purview of the Abrogation Doctrine.
- Sometimes, what was abrogated by the Quran is a practice that belonged to a previous Abrahamic religion, where such practice was adopted by early Muslims until the Quran spelled out the Islamic version of that practice. Fasting is an example of that. It used to be practiced on the 10th day of Muharram (*Al-Bukhari* [35]) following a tradition of Moses (PBUH) until the Ramadan fast was instituted by the Quran (see Step D in §4.3).
- Sometimes, what was ‘abrogated’ by the Quran is a pre-Islamic pagan tradition. This is obviously extraneous to the subject matter here since pagan traditions have no legitimacy to begin with, so they don’t need to be abrogated in order to be dismissed.

**3.** The final type is an entire divine message abrogating a previous divine message, e.g., the Quran abrogating the Bible (*Al-Shaarawi* [92]). The occurrence of abrogation among the Abrahamic religions is easy to establish. For instance, Jesus (PBUH) is quoted in the Quran saying:

﴿وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَلَا حِلَّ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
...﴾ [آل عمران : ٥٠]

{3:50} And [I have come] confirming what was before me of the Torah and to make lawful for you some of what was forbidden to you ...

which is a clear case of abrogation of rulings that belong to a previous religion. It is this type that the anti-abrogation interpretation of verse 2:106 and verse 16:101 was based on as we detailed in §9.4.1 and §9.5.

The specific wording of verses 2:105-106 suggests that this is the type of abrogation that these verses are talking about. Here are the two verses again with a key word highlighted,

﴿مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ﴾ مَا

نَسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلِهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ  
قَدِيرٌ ﴿البقرة: ١٠٥-١٠٦﴾

[2:105-106] Neither those who disbelieve from the people of the Scripture nor the polytheists wish that any **good** should be sent down to you [Muslims] from your Lord. But God selects for His mercy whom He wills, and God is the possessor of great bounty. Whatever verse We may abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring **better** than it or similar to it. Did you not know that God is quite capable of everything?

The Arabic word *khair* (خَيْرٌ) signifies both the noun ‘good’ and the comparative adjective ‘better’, so it is the same word used in 2:105 to describe what people of the Scripture don’t want God to send down to Muslims, and in 2:106 to describe what will be brought to replace what God abrogates. This gives credence to the interpretation that 2:106 is about the Quran abrogating previous scripture.

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- We accessed all the referenced books, sometimes via the actual printed copy and sometimes via online copies. The bibliographical specifications and images for online copies are based on the best information we could get.
- Many traditional Arabic books have titles that rhyme, so the ‘poetic license’ may cause the translated English version of these titles to sound unusual.
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Three indexes follow:

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List of the main terms that are used in the book, and the pages where they appear. A boldface page number refers to where the term is defined.

## **Index of Persons**

Where scholars and other main personalities are mentioned in the book. A boldface page number refers to a biography of the person.

## **Index of Verses**

Verses in the Quran that are cited in the body of this book, and where they appear. Verses that are only listed in tables throughout the book are not included. In the electronic copy, the verse number is linked to an external page that has the verse, its recitation, and its near-literal translation.

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