

Preservation of Divine Revelation: An Islamic Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The teachings of Islam are derived primarily from the divine revelation of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. In Islam, divine revelation is immune from any deficiencies and weaknesses. Up to now, there are segments in Muslim society which doubts the perfection of the divine revelation from any manipulation. This is proven with the emergence of anti-Hadith groups which rejected the Sunnah as the source of Islamic teachings. Therefore, the concept of preservation of divine revelation is particularly relevant for further discussion. In doing so, the method of content analysis of classical as well as contemporary references is applied. The findings have affirmed the existence of clear textual evidence affirming the preservation of divine revelation. Apart from that, three principles have also been identified as essential for every Muslim to correctly understand this concept.

Key words: Preservation, Devine Revelation, Islamic Perspective

INTRODUCTION

The preservation of divine revelation refers to the concept of the Qur'an and the Sunnah being the primary source of religion, is protected by Allah from any form of deviations; neither literally, orally nor in their meaning. Both sources are protected since the beginning of revelation until Judgement Day comes. This means Islamic teachings consisting matters

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of *'aqidah* (Islamic Creed) and *shariah* (Islamic Law) are also safe from manipulations. To further elaborate, the discussion focuses on textual arguments of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, as well as the debate of various scholars on this concept. Afterwards keys principles of this concept will be outlined ended by the conclusion.

THE CONCEPT OF PRESERVING THE REVELATION

Regarding this concept, al-Shatibi explained that the religion of Islam is infallible as the Prophet Muhammad is also infallible. The same applies to the *ijma'* or consensus of Muslims in matters of religion. This feature is detected from two aspects, namely:

The first aspect appears textually. In surah *al-Hijr* verse 9, Allah has guaranteed:

"We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)."

Next, in surah *Hud* verse 1:

"(This is) a Book, with verses basic or fundamental (of established meaning), further explained in detail, - from One Who is Wise and Well-acquainted (with all things)."

In the same tone, Allah affirms this again in surah *al-Haj* verse 52:

"Never did we send a messenger or a prophet before you, but when, he framed a desire, Satan threw some (vanity) into his desire: but Allah will cancel anything (vain) that Satan throws in, and Allah will confirm (and establish) His Signs: for Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom."

Al-Shatibi clarified that in above verses, Allah elucidated that He preserved his verses and legislation from being mixed-up with other matters, from neither modifications nor exchanges. While the Sunnah according to him, even though not explicitly mentioned, is inclusive of revelation. The meaning contained in the Sunnah is from Allah. Simultaneously the Qur'an and the Sunnah both mutually reinforce one another (*al-Muwaafaqaat*: Vol. 02, pg. 40).

Apart from that, he further affirmed that the preservation of revelation can be seen on restrictions imposed on devils from eavesdropping revelations from the heavenly sky. This started when Prophet Muhammad began his prophethood. Before that devils are quite free listen to news from the heavens, only to add numerous lies to them. To each word the devils heard, a hundred or more lies will be increased to it. If the devils are prevented from doing the fraud in the heavens, then the same applies on earth he said (*al-Muwaafaqaat*: Vol. 02, pg. 40). Furthermore, the preservation of revelation can be detected through the challenges presented by Allah to Arab poets. They have been challenged to compose anything, even a line to rival the Qur'an, but they are unable to match the Qur'an's literature calibre. As the Qur'an remains

preserved until the end of time, then this means the *shariah* will also be protected from neither interpolations nor exchanges (*al-Muwaafaqaat:Vol. 02, pg. 40*).

The second aspect can be clearly seen from the historical perspective. From the age of Prophet Muhammad until nowadays, Allah has risen from this *ummah*, diligent scholars to defend and preserve His religion. If the Qur'an is being added even with a single letter, the scholars will surely come forward to resist the attempt especially the *qurra'* or scholars of Qur'anic recitation. Besides that Allah has decreed for every discipline of religious sciences, He shall accompany them with scholars to guard their authenticity. In the same way, the Sunnah has been preserved with the rise of *hadith* scholars who painstakingly researched to differentiate the authentic from the weak narrations. . Al-Shatibi further explained that the scholars formulated certain methods to produce knowledge and information to identify the status of a particular *hadith*. The scholars also strived hard to confront innovated groups that attempts to manipulate and corrupt the Sunnah (*al-Muwaafaqaat: Vol. 02, pg. 40-41*) .

The statement above clearly demonstrates the importance of this concept to be understood and appreciated. It clearly reflects that this religion is most perfect and without any need for any addition, subtraction or alteration. Automatically this concept rejected the doctrine of heretic factions that adds and reduces the *'aqidah* and the *shariah* of Islam, according to their own desires. The same applies to splinter groups which rejected the perfectness of Islam in solving all problems of mankind, only to be inclined towards other ideologies such as secularism. Therefore it is essential for every Muslim to fully comprehend and firmly uphold this concept, in order to preserve the purity of this religion from any deviation.

TEXTUAL EVIDENCES OF PRESERVING THE REVELATION

The following are the textual evidences building the concept of preservation of divine revelation:

Evidence from the al-Quran:

a. Allah says in surah *al-Hijr*, verse 9:

"We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)."

According to Ibn Kathir, Allah clarified that it was He who revealed the Qur'an and it is He who shall preserve the book from any modifications and exchanges (*Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim: Vol. 02, pg. 484*) .

b. Allah says in surah *al-Baqarah*, verse 23 and 24:

“And if you are in doubt as to what We have revealed from time to time to Our servant, then produce a Surah like thereunto; and call your witnesses or helpers (if there are any) besides Allah, if your (doubts) are true. But if you cannot –and of a surety you cannot- then fear the Fire whose fuel is men and stones, - which is prepared for those who reject Faith.”

In performing exegesis of the above verse, Ibn Kathir alluded that Allah has challenged the unbelievers to bring forward a *surah* resembling the Qur’anic *surah* if they claim the Qur’an is not revealed from Allah. Allah has also commanded them to seek assistance from just anyone they desire to do so. Alas they are still unsuccessful to fulfil the divine challenge. For the next verse, he explained that Allah’s denial that they are unable to do so in any existing way, is an eternal (*Tafsir al-Qur’an al-‘Azim*: Vol. 01, pg. 62-63). If the Qur’an remains unchallenged by classical Arabic poet famous for their eloquence themselves, then how can the Qur’an as the source of religion can be distorted? Certainly Allah’s challenges to the unbelievers covers not only the literary aspect, but also extended towards the meanings as well as teachings of the Qur’an.

c. Allah says in surah *al-Isra’*, verse 88:

“Say: ‘If the whole of mankind and jinns were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur’an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they backed up each other with help and support.”

Ibn Kathir affirmed that this verse explains the virtue of the glorious Qur’an. Here Allah stated that if all of mankind and *jinns* are to be completely assembled, where they help and support each other in producing a single *surah* similar in majesty to the Qur’an, they will miserably fail to do so (*Tafsir al-Qur’an al-‘Azim*:: Vol. 03, pg. 102).The above statement clearly indicates that the Qur’an will never be distorted by anyone, even by all of men and *jinns* combing forces together. Then this also affirmed that the *‘aqidah* and *shariah* of Islam remain protected from any deviation.

Evidence from al-Sunnah:

a. Al-Bukhari narrated until the chain of narrators reached al-Mughirah Ibn Syu’bah, that Prophet Muhammad said:

“There will not cease a group of my ummah rising until the affairs come but they will still emerge victorious” (Ibn .Hajar, *Fath al-Bariy*: Vol. 13, pg. 306, no. 7311).

According to al-Nawawi, the group described by the Prophet is actually a clear miracle whereby the group has emerged since the day of the Prophet until today and will appear till Judgement Day. The above *hadith* demonstrated that the *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama’ah* (the Followers of Prophetic Tradition and the Companions of the Prophet) will still appear during

every age, all-over the world to defend the religion from perversion. Scholars such as al-Bukhari, Ahmad Ibn .Hanbal, al-Qadi 'Iyad have all agreed that the group is *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah* (*Syarh Sahih Muslim*: Vol. 13, pg. 98-98, no.170).

b. Ibn Abi .Hatim al-Razi narrated until the chain of narrators reached Ibrahim Ibn 'Abd al-Rahman al-'Udhari, that Prophet Muhammad said:

"Knowledge will be brought upon by every just generation of successor. They shall deny the deviations of the extremes, eliminate the counterfeiters and abolish the ta'wil (false interpretation) of the ignorant" (*Kitab al-Jarh Wa al-T'adil*: Vol. 02, pg. 17).

This *hadith* has concisely outlined that the teachings of Islam will be preserved from any harm committed by various heretical sects. In every age, there will be scholars chosen by Allah to defend His religion.

Evidence from al-*Athar* (Narrations of Companions):

a. Ibn Abi .Hatim narrated with chain of narrations from 'Abd al-Rahman, where he said, his father has heard from Ishaq Ibn Musa al-Ansari who said:

"None of this ummah will have their position strengthen like the Ahl al-Hadith (People of Hadith) has been reinforced. They are the Imams (leaders) of Ahl al-Hadith all over the world that criticized hadiths (to study their chain of narration and text) as Allah says in His book: 'And verily it will be reinforced for them their religion that has been chosen for them'. Thus the religion of Islam that Allah has chosen has been strengthen through them. Accordingly it is accepted from them – their word in narrating the Prophetic hadiths as well as hadiths of his companions. [Subsequently-2] should there exist any hadith narrators that practices bid'ah (innovation in religious affairs), then hadiths of the person is being left out although the person might be the truthful of humans. Their word in their narrations is not accepted if they are from a group that follow their desire. Even a single hadith of the Prophet from them will be rejected as they are not upon the path of the true religion chosen by Allah" (*al-Jarh Wa al-T'adil*: Vol. 02, pg. 17).

Likewise, this *athar* outlined that the teachings of Islam based on the Sunnah will always be preserved by the scholars namely the *Ahl al-Hadith* at all time. They will steadfastly resist forgery and fraud against the Prophetic Sunnah done by those who followed the desires of their evil way. Through their diligence, Allah strengthens the position of truth and invigorated His religion throughout the ages.

b. Also from Ibn Abi .Hatim who narrated with chain of narrations from al-Hakam Ibn Bashir, who said:

"I heard 'Amru Ibn Qays said: 'Rightfully the Ahl al-Hadith is similar to dirham currency evaluator. For among the dirham currency is the counterfeit and the damaged, so the hadith" (al-Jarh Wa al-T'adil: Vol. 02, pg. 18).

Therefore the above *athar* outlined that among *hadiths* ascribed to the Prophet as the source of the religion, are the authentic as well as fabricated ones. As the authenticity and weakness of *hadiths* can only be evaluated by *hadith* scholars, thus the religion is preserved from lies and falsehood through their efforts.

c. Ibn Abi Hatim also narrated with the chain of narrations reaching Ibn Sirin, who said:

"Verily hadiths are (sources of) religion, then you shall be cautious from whom you take it" (al-Jarh Wa al-Ta'dil: Vol. 02, pg. 15).

This *athar* witnessed the cautiousness of the *Ahl al-Hadith* in verifying the status of various *hadiths*. Every *hadith* narrator will be scrutinized and their personality deeply analyzed. Even their prayers and moral character are not spared. If a narrator is truthful and just, then *hadiths* from him or her is accepted. Otherwise if he is proven as a liar, then *hadiths* from him will be rejected. Thus one of the *Ahl al-Hadith* has said:

"When hadiths are to be accepted from someone, they will examine his prayers, personal circumstances and characteristics" (al-Jarh Wa al-Ta'dil: Vol. 02, pg. 16).

From all textual evidences presented, then it is evident that the Qur'an and the Sunnah is preserved from any deviation. This also means the religion of Islam is protected from any fraud and falsehood. In order to further understand this concept more precisely, the following will explain the principles forming this concept:

KEY PRINCIPLES OF PRESERVATION OF DIVINE REVELATION

The prime principles of preservation of divine revelation will be elaborated as follows:

Key Principle 1: The Qur'an and The Sunnah are Allah's Revelation

This principle affirmed that as the source for Islamic creed and law, the Qur'an and the Sunnah was revealed from Allah. In the same tone, Allah said in surah al-Najm, verse 3 and 4:

"Nor does he say (aught) of (his own) desire. It is no less than inspiration sent down to him. He was taught by The One Mighty in Power."

In performing exegesis of this verses, Ibn al-Qayyim explained that Allah preserved the speech of His Prophet from the influences of worldly desire and lust. These verses also strongly denied two possibilities. The first is denying the speech of Prophet Muhammad followed his

lust, while the latter is denying that his speech is self-inspired. Therefore the speech of the Prophet is certainly Allah's revelation to him. In this context, as the Prophet's speech includes both the Qur'an as well as the Sunnah, then both of which are revelation revealed to him from Allah (*Badai' al-Tafsir*: Vol. 04, pg. 276).

Again Allah said in surah *al-Nisa'*, verse 113:

"For Allah has sent down to you the Book and wisdom."

Related to the above verse, Ibn al-Qayyim quoted al-Shafi'i who explained, there are those who argued that the Qur'an and the Sunnah are Allah's revelation based on the verse. So does the argument from the Prophetic *hadith*:

"By Allah whose my soul is in His Hands, verily I will judge both of you with the Book of Allah" (*Badai' al-Tafsir*: Vol. 04, pg. 276).

Al-Shafi'i also quoted from Hassan Ibn 'Atiyyah who narrated from al-Awza'i:
"It is Gabriel who brought down the Sunnah to the Prophet as he brought down the Qur'an to him. Gabriel taught the Sunnah to the Prophet as he taught the Qur'an to him." (*Badai' al-Tafsir*: Vol. 04, pg. 276). It is distinctive that al-Awza'i view above differed from the view of other *hadith* scholars. For them, the revelation delivered by Archangel Gabriel to the Prophet was the Qur'an.

Al-Shafi'i explained that the Prophet said:

"Remember that as I am given the Book, I have also been given the equivalent (al-Sunnah) together with the Book."

Here the Book means the Qur'an while *al-Hikmah* refers to the Sunnah (*Badai' al-Tafsir*: Vol. 04, pg. 277-278). Therefore the Qur'an and the Sunnah remains preserved from any alteration or deviation until Judgement Day. The same goes for the teachings of both Holy Text.

In relation to the Qur'an as Allah's revelation, the *Ahl al-Sunnah* affirmed that the Qur'an is the Speech of Allah. The Qur'an is not created as splinter groups such as the *Mu'tazilah* and the *Jahmiyyah* claimed. When faith to the Qur'an as the Speech of Allah existed that it was not created, this will lead to the full acceptance of Allah's revelation, with the highest respect and submission without any dispute. Such faith will venerate the Qur'an to the highest and most noble position, as the ultimate guide of *'aqidah* and *shariah* (*Syrah al-Tahawiyat*: Vol. 01, pg. 185; *al-Asbahaniy, al-Hujjat*: Vol. 01, pg. 227) .

Key Principle 2: Divine Revelation Are Miracles

As the divine revelation of the Qur'an and the Sunnah are miracles performed by Allah and both are given to Prophet Muhammad, then both will be safeguarded and preserved at all time. Ibn Abi al-'Iz explained as Allah's miracle, the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic. The composition of the Qur'an as well as the content of its meaning are unmatched by great Arabic poets of all ages. He explained, that miracle of the Qur'an is not restricted only to its letters and phrases. On the top of that, the Qur'anic miracle extends to its unique composition, style of language and the meaning behind its verses. This is the main reason for the failure of Arabic poet, though deeply skilled in the intricacies of Arabic Language, to compose verses similar to the Qur'an (*Syarh al-Tahawiyyat*: Vol. 01, pg. 205).

He also noted that, among other uniqueness of the Qur'an is the pronouncement of letters at the beginning for most of the *surahs*. It is only unique to the Qur'an where Allah started the *surah* with the pronouncement of letter followed by verses regarding the Qur'an itself. One example is in *surah al-Baqarah* verse 1 to 2, where Allah said:

"Alif, laam, miim. This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah."

Then in *surah 'Ali Imran* verse 1 to 3, Allah said:

"Alif, laam, miim. Allah! There is no god but He, - the Living, the Self-Subsisting, Eternal, It is He who sent down to you (step by step), in truth, the Book, confirming what went before it; and He sent down the Law (of Moses) and the Gospel (of Jesus) before this, as a guide to mankind, and He sent down the criterion (of judgement between right and wrong)".

Allah also said in *surah al-A'raf*, verse 1 and 2:

"Alif, laam, miim, shaad. A Book revealed unto you, - so let your heart be oppressed no more by any difficulty on that account, - that with it you might warn (the erring) and teach the Believers".

The miracle of the Qur'an can be comprehended from two aspects, namely:
Firstly: The beauty and power of language presented.

Secondly: The meaning contained in the Qur'an as presented using its unique style of language.

Meanwhile, al-Asbahani eluded the miracle of the Qur'an in five different aspects (*al-Hujjat*: Vol. 01, pg. 350-351):

1. In *balaghah* or rhetoric, the Qur'an is full of great and various style of *balaghah*.
2. The Qur'an is unchallenged by the greatest of Arabic poets.

3. Most beautiful arrangement of language, with evident meaning and clear objectives.
4. Explains the unseen as well as past and future events.
5. Comprehensible by the illiterate Prophet Muhammad.

Other than five aspects mentioned above, another miracle of the Qur'an is its impact and influence that touches the soul and mind of mankind. There can never be any words of better arrangement than the Qur'an whereby hearts and intellect will taste sweetness reading it. Thus the Qur'an was for the reason of 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab's reversion to Islam. As he was on his way and determined to murder the Prophet, he stopped over the house of his sister. There he heard she was reciting Surah Taha. The Qur'an touched 'Umar's heart so deeply that he decided to embrace Islam instantly (*al-Hujjat*: Vol. 01, pg. 359-360).

Similarly, is the positive effect of the Qur'an to *jinn*s when they heard the Prophet reciting the Qur'an. It is recorded in verses 1 to 2 of surah *al-Jin*, they said:

"Say: 'It has been revealed to me that a company of jinns listened (to the Qur'an). They said, 'We have really heard a wonderful Recital! It gives guidance to the Right, and we have believed therein: we shall not join (in worship) any (gods) with our Lord'" (al-Hujjat: Vol. 01, Vol. 359-360).

In discussing the Qur'an as a miracle, one fundamental question arises which is, why the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic and not in other languages of the world? To answer this question, al-Shafi'i stated that in order to understand the religion of Islam perfectly, mankind is required to understand it within the scope of Arabic language. Without knowing Arabic, it is most unlikely a person is able to fully understand the broad purpose and meaning of the Qur'an. Al-Shafi'i opined that those with excellence proficiency in Arabic will have their misconceptions and scepticism of the Qur'an cleared. On the contrary, the most ignorant of the Arabic language will be doubtful about the Qur'an (*al-Risaalat*: pg. 50).

If the Qur'an was revealed in other languages, then its content will not be understood truthfully and accurately. This is the reason, for the strong and uncompromising denial that the Qur'an is not of Arabic language. Verily the content of the whole Qur'an is and will always be in Arabic. Al-Shafi'i affirmed this view based on surah *al-Nahl* verse 103, where Allah said:

"We know indeed that they say, 'It is a man that teaches him'. The tongue of him they wickedly point to is notably foreign, while this is Arabic, pure and clear".

And also based on surah *Fussilat* verse 44, where Allah said:

"Had We sent this as a Qur'an (in a language) other than Arabic, they would have said: 'Why are not its verses explained in detail? What! (a Book) not in Arabic and (a Messenger) an Arab?'" (al-Risaalat: pg. 47).

Thus al-Shafi'i opined that the most advantageous of people are the ones who fully understood the language of their prophets. According to him, it is not proper for those Arabic speakers to imitate the religion of non-Arabic speakers. Otherwise those who do not know Arabic must be a follower of the religion to those who know the language. In this regard, the Qur'an explained in the verses below:

1. In surah *al-Shura* verse 7:

"Thus have We sent by inspiration to you an Arabic Qur'an: that you may warn the Mother of Cities (Makkah) and all around her – and warn (them) of the Day of Assembly, of which there is no doubt: (when) some will be in the Garden, and some in the blazing Fire".

2. In surah *al-Shu'ara'* verse 192 to 194:

"Verily this is a Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds. With it came down the Spirit of Faith and Truth (Angel Gabriel) – to your heart and mind, that you may admonish" (al-Risaalat: pg. 46).

Therefore al-Shafi'i clarified further that a Muslim must strive to his or her best, to learn the Arabic language until he is able to witness the *Shahadah* or Declaration of Islamic Faith, recite the Qur'an, chant *dhikr* or remembrance of Allah and perform other Islamic acts of worship. If the Muslim individual can optimize his or her command of Arabic as the language of the last Prophet and the language of the final testament, then it is better for him. With Arabic proficiency, one can learn in depth the various acts of worship. In addition, the Arabic speakers can elevate their social status by being leaders in the execution of religious affairs, instead of just being mere followers (*al-Risaalat: pg. 48-49*).

From the arguments al-Shafi'i presented above, it is evident that Arabic has a very special and distinctive position in Islam as it is the language of the Qur'an and Sunnah. Even the Qur'anic Arabic itself is a great miracle, as it is the language of revelation taught by the Prophet to all mankind belonging to numerous languages, skin colours and even climate backgrounds. Allah said in surah *Saba'* verse 28:

"We have not sent you but as a universal (Messenger) to men, giving them glad tidings, and warning them (against sin), but most men understand not".

Indeed to arrive at the true and accurate understanding of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, one must understand both sources within the scope of Arabic language.

Key Principle 3: Infallibility of Prophethood

The third key principle of this concept is all prophets of Allah are *ma'sum* or infallible. Abu Hanifah explained that all prophets are protected by Allah from committing neither major nor minor sins. They are also free from *Kufr* or disbelief, as well as shameful deeds. However they are not free from the past mistakes and errors that they committed before ascending prophethood (*Syarh al-Fiq.h al-Akbar*: pg. 56-57) .

In the context of infallibility of prophets, Ibn Taymiyyah affirmed that all scholars opined that the prophets are free from any errors or mistakes in conveying the messages of Allah's revelation. Therefore it has been made mandatory for mankind to embrace the teachings of Allah of which they conveyed. In this regard, Allah said in surah *al-Baqarah* verse 136:

"Say you: "We believe in Allah, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) prophets from their Lord: we make no difference between one and another of them: and we bow to Allah (in Islam)".

By default, this also means that other individuals other than prophets are not infallible. Thus the *fuqaha'* or Islamic jurist holds that anyone who reviled the prophets are to be put to death. On the contrary, anyone who insults humans is not subjected to the death penalty. Infallibility is the foundation that fulfils the meanings, objectives as well as messages of prophethood (*Majmu' Fatawa*: Vol. 10, ms. 289).

Other than being preserved from errors in conveying Allah's teachings, prophets are protected from possessing any form of dishonesty (*Syarh al-Fiqh al-Akbar*: ms. 57). Besides that they are also preserved from neither hiding any religious teachings, nor from treachery towards revelation which they received from Allah (*al-Rasul Wa al-Risaalaat*: pg. 97.)

From the Qur'an and the Sunnah, they are numerous texts which affirmed the infallibility of Prophet Muhammad. He is protected from any errors, lies, mistakes and treachery in conveying both the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Here al-Shafi'i argued with some texts that strongly affirmed Prophet Muhammad's infallibility. One is surah *al-Shura* verse 52:

"And thus have We, by Our command, sent inspiration to you: you knew not (before) what was Revelation, and what was Faith; but we have made the (Qur'an) a Light, wherewith We guide such of Our servants as We will; and verily you do guide (men) to the straight Way".

Al-Shafi'i also narrated until the chain of narrators reached al-Muttalib Ibn Hantab, that Prophet Muhammad said:

"I never left out a single item that Allah has commanded me with, except I have enjoined you to it. And I have never left out a single item that Allah has forbid me from, except I have restricted it among you" (*al-Risaalaat*: pg. 86-87, no. 289).

The affirmation of al-Shafi'i above demonstrated that Prophet Muhammad has diligently conveyed the whole teaching of Islam that Allah has revealed to him. He never betrayed the prophetic message that has been entrusted to him. In order to prove that the Prophet has completely delivered all the teachings of Islam, Allah said in surah *al-Ma'idah* verse 3:

"This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion".

In relation to this explanation with the concept being discussed, when Prophet Muhammad is infallible from neither errors, mistakes nor evil nature in conveying the message of Islam; then Islamic teachings has been preserved from any corruption. Hence this shows that Islam is the true religion of Allah with no contradictions in Islam's highest sources - the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Ibn Taymiyyah explained that as Prophet Muhammad is infallible, any contradictions in the teachings that originated from him never occur, except in the category of *nasakh* (the abrogating) and *mansukh* (the abrogated) (*Majmu' Fatawa*: Vol. 04, pg. 168).

Also essential to be clarified here is, although the Prophet is infallible, he still commits some normal mistakes as other humans did. However the humane errors and mistakes that he did were not left unattended with any rectification. Here Ibn Taymiyyah quoted the majority of scholars who opined that the Prophets are totally infallible from major sins but not the case for minor sins. This the opinion held by most scholars of *tafsir* (Qur'anic Exegesis), scholars of *hadith*, jurists and has been a creed of the *al-Salaf al-Salih* (Pious Predecessors) (*Majmu' Fatawa*: Vol. 04, pg. 319).

There are many religious text that speaks about this condition, namely:

1. In surah *al-Tahrim* verse 1, Allah said:

"O Prophet! Why hold you to be forbidden that which Allah has made lawful to you? You seek to pleasure your consorts. But Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful".

According to Ibn Kathir, the most authentic view on the reason for this verse's revelation is Allah rectified His Prophet in forbidding himself from consuming honey as mentioned by al-Bukhari (*Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim*: Vol. 04, pg. 388).

2. Al-Bukhari also narrated many *hadiths* that the Prophet sometimes forgot as other humans forgot. One example is the hadith by Abu Hurayrah:

“Verily the Prophet of Allah finishes his prayers after two sets. So Dhu al-Yadayn enquired: ‘Did you shorten your prayers or have you forgotten?’. The Prophet asked: ‘Is it true Dhu al-Yadayn?’. The companions answered: ‘Yes...’ (Fath al-Bariy : Vol. 03, pg. 98, no. 1228).

Among the wisdom of the occurrence of such situation is to prove that Islamic teachings are feasible for ordinary humans to practice in their daily lives. The unintentional errors also demonstrated that even the Prophet can sometimes be negligent and committed mistakes, as to err is humane. It must be emphasized here that errors as well as omissions that occurred in the life of Prophet Muhammad and other Prophets of Allah does not warrants an excuse for someone to insult and belittle them indiscriminately. Rather one must take due heed and contemplate on the lessons learned from what had happened, because there is definitely a great wisdom behind it.

Therefore in the context of this discussion, it is clearly outlined that the teachings of Islam is preserved from deviation with the infallibility of prophethood. Without the infallibility; errors, mistakes as well as evil natures can impair and contaminate the conveyance of Allah’s revelation. That is why, in the context of the *ummah* of Prophet Muhammad, it is a must to believe that only the Prophet himself is infallible while any other humans will never be free from errors and mistakes.

CONCLUSION

From the discussion of this concept, it can be concluded that the Qur’an and the Sunnah are two highest sources of Islam that has been preserved from any distortion. Both will remain protected from any deviation at all time. This also means that the *‘aqidah* (Islamic Creed) and *shariah* (Islamic Law) is also well preserved from neither errors nor irregularities.

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