

## The Place of Archaeological Studies and Historical Geography in Contemporary Interpretations

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### Abstract

Since Allah sometimes speaks of the location of historical stories in the verses of the Qur'an, understanding some of these verses requires historical archaeological and geographical studies. The advancement of science in the new age and the existence of spiritual crises due to the distance from religion require interpreters to interpret with a scientific perspective. Social and cultural developments and the expansion of the field of science due to the relationship between the Islamic world and Western civilization have created some innovative factors that have had a profound effect on the content and style of interpretation. This is why contemporary Islamic commentators, in accordance with the specific characteristics of this era, have optimized the knowledge related to the Qur'an in order to convey the messages of the Qur'an to the people with a new face. Based on this, the present study has examined archaeological and historical geographical studies in the interpretation of the Qur'an and has researched in six contemporary interpretations. Historical geography in cases such as the Holy Land, the Land of the Aḥqāf, the Land of Gog and Magog, the Cave of the Companions of the Cave, Mount Judi, Majma' al-Bahrayn and Adna al-Ard (i.e. Nearby Land) have shown the spatial dimensions of the lands where the events took place. And from this study, it was concluded that the Qur'anic stories, mentioning specific geographical places, are real and historical stories, and the ancient relics of these stories can be seen on earth today.

**Keywords:** Qur'an, Contemporary Interpretations, Archaeological Studies, Historical Geography, Stories of Prophets.

## 1-Introduction

The advancement of sciences in the new age and the existence of spiritual crises due to the distance from religion, require interpreters to interpret with a scientific perspective. Social and cultural developments and the expansion of the field of sciences due to the relationship between the Islamic world and Western civilization, have created innovative factors that have had a profound effect on the content and style of interpretation. This is why contemporary Islamic commentators, in accordance with the specific characteristics of this era, have optimized the knowledge related to the Qur'an in order to convey the messages of the Qur'an to the people with a new face. One of the most important advantages of contemporary interpretations is presenting the contents of the Qur'an in accordance with modern needs in a new way and answering doubts. That is why we turned to contemporary interpretations.

The Qur'an pays attention to the spatial features of the stories and has mentioned them in three forms: clear, semi-clear and vague. The reasons for the relative or general ambiguity of geographical factors in Qur'anic stories are: the unknown field of geography for the primary audience, the need of the audience of the next millennium to discover new aspects of scientific miracle, expressive miracle in the brevity industry and referring the audience to Ahl al-Bayt (AS). By clarifying these ambiguities in the spatial characteristics of Qur'anic stories, some interpretive issues are discovered. In addition, the discovery of the archeology and geography of the places of the Qur'anic stories opens a new horizon for man. Among other things, the hypothesis that the Qur'anic stories are symbolic is distorted and in contrast, the theory of the authenticity of the Qur'anic stories is proved. (Tabataba'i Amin, 1393, pp. 168-172)

Archeology is the knowledge of the cultures of the past human eras based on the study of ancient objects and works and other than that. Kroeber considers archeology to be a history based on unwritten documents; and Paul Martin in his book *Contemporary Archeology* considers archeology as the science of reconstructing human history from the past to the present, in which he seeks the origin of extinct cultures and civilizations. (Biazar Shirazi, 1380, p. 1) The importance of using the science of "archeology" in the interpretation of the Qur'an is due to the fact that in the past less attention was paid to archeology, unfortunately many commentators turned to the myths and legends of previous books and the *Isra'iliyyat*, and historians such as Ṭabarī, Mas'udi, Ya'qubi and Wāqidī wrote some books on the history of nations and kings. Such *Isra'iliyyat* have been and are severely criticized by ancient scholars such as Ibn Khaldūn and some commentators. (Biazar Shirazi, 1380, p. 4)

Given these points, in this article we are faced with the question of how much contemporary commentators have used "archaeological" studies in interpreting verses. In the following, the descriptive-analytical method will answer this question.

2- Introducing contemporary interpretations related to archeology topics and historical geography

Some commentaries have topics of archeology and historical geography. For example, al-Mīzān uses some scientific topics and due to his knowledge of geography, in his commentary, topics of historical geography and archeology can be seen. Also, Tafsir Nemooneh in the field of geography in the relevant verses with simple prose describes the phenomena and mentions places. Al-Furqān also describes natural phenomena scientifically and in determining historical sites, he believes that details should not be mentioned. Hujjat al-Tafāsīr deals more with the "historical geography" of the verses and sometimes with the "natural geography". Tafsīr 'Āmulī mentions the opinions of the commentators and, if necessary, mentions its own opinion. Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr also deals with natural and historical geography.

3- Archaeology and Historical Geography of the Holy Land in the Interpretations of the Qur'an

In the Qur'an, the Holy Land has been mentioned by the names of Jerusalem, Damascus, Palestine, and parts of Jordan, the Levant, Jabal Musa and the surrounding lands. This land is called Elijah, Canaan, Jerusalem, al-Quds. (Tabataba'i Amin, 1393, p. 166)

In verse 21 of Surah al-Mā'idah, God commands the people of Moses to enter the Holy Land.

Some commentators refer to it as the land of Jerusalem, some as the Levant, and some as Jordan or Palestine or Jabal Musa. (Balāghī, 1386, vol. 2, p. 139) Some refer to it as the distance between the Nile of Egypt and the Euphrates. ('Āmulī, 1360, v. 3, p. 254) Some have considered it to be the place where Abraham was buried, which is between the White Sea and the Jordan River and the Dead Sea. And it leads to Hama in the north and Gaza and Hebron in the south. (Ibn Āshūr, nd, vol. 5, p. 77) It is stated in Tafsīr al-Mīzān that in the Qur'an there is no word that interprets the holy word and explains to us why it is a holy land and what is possible to be used in this chapter are verses (1 Isrā') and (137 A'rāf). Both verses are about al-Aqsa Mosque, which has been introduced the blessed land and it is because God has placed a lot of blessings in that land and it means the establishment of religion. (Tabataba'i, 1417, vol. 5, p. 288) Makarem Shirazi writes: Some consider it as the Land of Jerusalem and some as the Levant and some as the Jordan or Palestine or the Jabal Musa, but it is not unlikely that the Holy Land refers to the whole region of Levant which is compatible with all these possibilities, because this region is evidenced by the history as the cradle of the prophets of God and the land of the emergence of great religions and for this reason the name of the holy land has been chosen for it. (Makarem Shirazi, 1374, vol. 4, p. 337) Tafsīr al-Furqān also considers it as holy Quds. (Sadeghi Tehrani, 1365, vol. 8, p. 265)

The climate of Palestine and the surrounding areas is Mediterranean, which can be deduced from verses 18-20 of Surah al-Mu'minūn. "And We sent down water from the sky As much as sufficient and We settled it On the earth within the due vessels

[The seas, the streams and the rivers] and Indeed We are Able to drain it off quite Easily; and by water We produced for you Gardens of palm-groves and vine-yards And in the gardens fruits of all kinds Grow for you to eat; and below the Sinai Mount springs an Olive tree which produces a fruit that is Both oil and relish for the eaters. " (Tabataba'i Amin, 1393, p. 189)

Some have called it Levant and Canaan. (Balāghī, 1386, vol. 3, p. 163) Some have referred to the beginning of the olive tree on earth in this region. ('Āmulī, 1360, vol. 6, p. 252; Ibn 'Āshūr, nd, vol. 18, p. 29) Some have considered the place full of blessings based on "a blessed environment" and have mentioned Levant and Palestine as examples of it, and of course some others have mentioned Egypt as an example of it ('Āmulī, 1360, vol. 5, p. 71). Al-Taḥrīr and al-Mīzān know the meaning of "a blessed environment" as the lands of Palestine (Ibn 'Āshūr, nd, vol. 11, p. 174; Tabataba'i 1417, v. 15, p. 23); but Allameh Tabataba'i rejects the idea that he means the land of both Levant and Palestine, and believes that even if the Israelites returned to Egypt after the drowning of Pharaoh, that land was not their place of residence and the place, where they didn't live permanently, is not called a blessed environment. (Tabataba'i, 1417, vol. 10, p. 120). The interpretation of al-Furqān is the same as that of al-Mīzān and al-Taḥrīr. (Sadeghi Tehrani, 1365, vol. 20, p. 231) Tafṣīr Nemooneh also considers the holy land to be south of the Sinai Desert, which has fertile olive trees (Makarem Shirazi, 1374, vol. 14, pp. 220-221)

### 3-1-Historical and geographical location of the Holy Land

In the 5,000 years that have passed since the city of Jerusalem was built, it has been in the hands of the Canaanites who came from the Arabian Peninsula for 1,500 years, then in the hands of the Israelites for four centuries, then in the hands of the Persians for several centuries, and in the hands of Greeks and Parthians for two centuries. And it has been under Roman rule for four centuries. True peace and security began when Muslim forces turned to Jerusalem after the conquest of Levant in the fifteenth year of AH. This land is the origin of divine prophets and it is a holy land. Al-Aqsa Mosque is one of the oldest Islamic mosques and the the first Qiblah of Muslims. Palestine is a small fertile land in the east of the Mediterranean Sea, which connects three continents of Asia, Europe and Africa like a bridge to each other and it is connected to Lebanon in the north, Egypt in the south, Jordan and Syria in the east and the Mediterranean in the west. Its area is 25,000 square kilometers. It has hot summers and mild and rainy winters. The Jordan River, which shares a border with Palestine, Syria and Jordan, is in the northern part of the country. It has a population of more than six million, made up of immigrant Jews and Palestinian Arabs. The majority of the Palestinian population is Muslim and speak Arabic. Its capital is Jerusalem, which is a place of pilgrimage for Muslims, Christians and Jews around the world. Most of the inhabitants of this land work in agriculture, animal husbandry and labor. One-third of Palestine is arable land, and its products include cotton, beets, olives, and various fruits. There are various mines in Palestine. (Tabataba'i Amin, 1393, pp. 168-172)

#### 4- Archaeology and Historical Geography of the Land of 'Ād People (Aḥqāf, Iram) in the interpretations of the Qur'an

##### 4-1- Iram in the interpretations of the Qur'an

In Ḥujjat al-Tafāsīr, it has been stated that 'Ād had two sons: (1- Shadid 2- Shadad) these two people claimed the kingdom. After that, the king died and the kingship was decided for the Shadad, and those who claimed the kingship within their own domain accepted his kingdom, and against the promised divine paradise he built a paradise on earth and in his kingdom proudly, and he established it in one of the deserts of Aden and called it "Iram". When it was over and he was moving his capital there, when the caravan was only about a day and a half away, that is, about twelve miles away, God sent a shout to them and destroyed them (Balāghī, 1386, vol. 7, p. 228)

'Āmulī writes: Some have said: The Qahtani, who were the Semites living in Babylon, went to the land of 'Ād, and because the 'Ād group was destroyed due to the disobedience of their prophet, they took their place. And it is the custom of the Arabs to attribute everything old to 'Ād and say that it is 'Āddi namely normal, that is, it has remained from the time of 'Ād. ('Āmulī, 1360, vol. 8, p. 564)

In Tafāsīr al-Taḥrīr, Iram is the name of the ancestor of the people of 'Ād i.e. Iram ibn Sam ibn Noah; 'Ād is also the same 'Ād mentioned in verse 50 of surah Najm: "And the One Who destroyed the former 'Ād people." (Ibn 'Āshūr, nd, v. 30, p. 281) Al-Furqān's view is the same as al-Taḥrīr (Sadeghi Tehrani, 1365, vol. 30, p. 309)

Whether "Iram" is the name of "person" or "tribe", or is it a place or a city? There is a difference of opinion among the commentators: 1- "Iram" is the name of a city for the people of 'Ād, a blessed city with high palaces and columns and at the time of the revelation of this verse no trace of them has been left and their buildings were completely destroyed. 2- The meaning of Iram is the same as the people of 'Ād, and if He called the people of 'Ād as Iram, it was because the word "Iram" was the name of the grandfather of this people, so they also called the people itself as Iram, just as a tribe of Meccans people who are called Quraysh and it means the Quraysh, so the meaning of the next verse is as follows: The people of Iram, who were strong and heroic people, and no one had been created like them in any land that were as big and strong as them. This meaning is not consistent with the word of verse. As a result, most commentators have interpreted Iram as a city that has not been created before. (Tabataba'i, 1417, vol. 20, p. 280) The opinion of Tafāsīr Nemooneh is that Iram is the name of a city due to its appropriateness with the next verse (Makarem Shirazi, 1374, vol. 26, p. 451)

##### 4-2- Aḥqāf in the interpretations of the Qur'an

Balāghī says that the place of Aḥqāf has been considered between Yemen and Oman to Hadhramaut and Shihr. (Balāghī, 1386, vol. 6, p. 144) 'Āmulī quoted from Ṭabarī that it is possibly a mountain in Levant or a desert between Oman and Hadhramaut or the land of Shihr which is between Oman and Aden ('Āmulī, 1360, vol. 7, p. 530) Ibn 'Āshūr also believes that Aḥqāf has been the home of the people

of 'Ād and across the sea between Oman and Aden and at the end of it is the land of Hadhramaut (Ibn 'Āshūr, nd, vol. 26, p. 39)

In al-Mizān, Allameh Tabataba'i expresses three views on the Aḥqāf: 1- It was in the desert between Oman and Mehra 2- It is a sand dune between Oman and Hadhramaut 3- The sands of the sea of the village Shajarah, and Shajarah is a place in the land of Yemen. Allameh believes that it is a place in the south of the Arabian Peninsula (Tabataba'i, 1417, vol. 18, p. 210)

The opinions about the location of Aḥqāf in Tafsīr Nemooneh are: 1- In the heart of the Arabian Peninsula between "Najd", "Ihsa", "Hadhramaut" and "Oman" 2- In the southern part of the island around Yemen, or on the shores of the Arabian Sea 3- Region in the land of Iraq, in the regions of Chaldea and Babylon 4- It is the name of a mountain in the Levant, their opinion is preferable. Some say that this region was in the south of the Arabian Peninsula and near the land of Yemen. (Makarem Shirazi, 1374, vol. 21, p. 351)

The author of Tafsīr al-Furqān, citing the fact that a specific place has not been explicitly mentioned in the verse, says that generally Aḥqāf includes the valleys on which Iram dhāt al-'Imād (i.e. the Iram with lofty pillars) has been built and it mentions only the name of Baalbek castle that has been remained until today. (Sadeghi Tehrani, 1365, vol. 27, pp. 51-52)

Given the issues mentioned, one question may be asked: how can this apparent contradiction be resolved if the Aḥqāf means sandy lands, with verses that refer to lush lands with many blessings for the people? Geological and archaeological studies show that the deserts of the Arabian Peninsula were green in previous periods and have become deserts due to climate changes. As a result, the Aḥqāf are areas that later became sandy lands. And once these sandy lands were green and fertile lands. (Khatami, 1390, p. 68)

Today, it is believed that the people of 'Ād were located in the north of the Arabian Peninsula - and not in the south - and that it may had covered a long distance from Ḥismā in Sinai Salmā in the region of the Shimmar tribe. The most solid signs and supports of this opinion and approach are:

- 1- That if we examine the valleys and places of the northern Hejaz, we will see that now one of them is called "Wadi Iram". Archaeological excavations have also uncovered a site in southern Jordan called Iram.
- 2- Accompanying the name of the people of 'Ād with the name of the people of Thamūd, who, according to the Qur'an, had carved a house out of stone and rock in their valley: "The Thamūd (people), who cut out (huge) rocks in the valley?" And this valley, as some commentators have said, seems to be "Wadi al-Qurā". That is, one of the valleys of the Ḥismā mountain range, one of the mountains of which was called "Iram" - as it is called "Ramm" today - and is the northern border of the Hejaz and has a lot of water. In addition, Yāqūt mentions a mountain called "Ḥabash Iram" - which was located next to "Ajā", one of the two mountains in Tai. The top of the mountain was soft and smooth. And the camels grazed in it, and on its

heights, there were houses of 'Ād and Iram, with faces and statues carved out of stone.

- 3- Existence of the names of other places where inscriptions, statues and inscriptions have been found. And in Arabic books, they are considered as the place of people of 'Ād.
- 4- The Herzfeld excavations on Mount Rome, 25 miles east of Aqaba - as well as Saviniak's excavations and Galiden's excavations - reveal that this is the same "Iram", whose name has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and was destroyed before Islam. And when Islam appeared, there was nothing left of it except the water spring where the merchants and caravans of "Levant, Egypt and Hejaz" landed next to it. (Biomi Mehran, Translator: Rastgoo, 1383, p. 207)
- 5- Archaeology and Historical Geography of the land of Gog and Magog in the interpretations of the Qur'an

Gog and Magog is the name of the invading people mentioned in the Qur'an and according to historians were a large nation living in North Asia. In the Qur'an, the names Gog and Magog are used in two verses:

1-Verse 94 of surah Kahf: "The native inhabitants of the area Came to him and said:" O, Zul-Qarnayn! This Gog and Magog people are doing Mischief and corruption throughout the land; if we pay the expenses will you set up a barrier between us and them?"

2-Verse 96 of surah Anbiyā': "Until when the Gog and Magog people Are let loose [from the dam that Dhu al-Qarnayn made ]and pour down from The height of the loftiest mountains. "

The commentators' views on the land of Gog and Magog are as follows:

In the interpretation of Ḥujjat al-Tafāsīr, the land of the people of Gog and Magog is the middle of the highway between Syria and Egypt (Balāghī, 1386, vol. 4, p. 134.) Tafāsīr 'Āmulī has described Gog and Magog, but does not say anything about their land. In Tafāsīr al-Taḥrīr, it is said that Magog means the Mongol people, whose name was their ancestor's name, and they also called him "Sacythus" and "Jitah". And the Gog are the people of the Tatars. (Ibn 'Āshūr, nd, vol. 15, pp. 132-133) Gog and Magog are nations that inhabited the northern part of Asia, and their cities stretched from Tibet and China to the Arctic Ocean and extended from the west to the land of Turkestan. This has been quoted from Fakihatul Kholafa and Tahzīb al-Akhlāq by In Maskuyah and Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Safā. The Gog and Magog are the same Mongol tribe that has long inhabited Northeast Asia, and this great nation sometimes invaded China, sometimes invading Armenia and the north of Iran through the Caucasus, and they sometimes attacked Europe and beyond and they were known as the "Sit". And a group of them invaded Rome and this time the Romanian government was overthrown and the Greeks call them "Si Tahin" and this name has been mentioned in the inscription of Darius in Istakhr in Fars. (Hosseini Tehrani, 1361, pp. 76-78)

In Tafāsīr al-Mīzān, various narrations have been mentioned to describe Gog and Magog: 1- They were the descendants of Japheth ibn Noah, a Turk, and they were

corrupting the land. 2- They were not human at all. 3- They were the people of "Walud", meaning that none of their men and women died unless they had a thousand children, and therefore their number was higher than the number of other human beings. 4- This people in terms of physical strength and courage were so great that they did not have mercy on any animal, predator or human, and if they see one of them, they would eat them. And whenever they came to a river, they drank of it and dried it. 5. The Gog were one people and the Magog were another ethnic group, and each of them was four hundred thousand nations and families, and for this reason no one knew their number except God. 6- There were three tribes, one tribe was like Arz, which is a tall tree. The other tribe was the same length and width and had four crops on each side, and the third tribe, which was stronger than the two tribes, each had two earlobes, one of which was a mattress and the other was a quilt. One was their summer clothes and the other was their winter clothes. They had a rigid body. The fleece of their bodies has covered their bodies. 7- The height of each of them was one span or two spans or three spans. 8- Those who were fought by the army of Dhu al-Qarnayn had faces like dogs. (Tabataba'i, 1417, vol. 13, pp. 272-273)

According to Allameh Tabataba'i, all the sayings of the Torah show that Magog or Gog and Magog were large groups that lived in the farthest part of North Asia and were warriors and looters (Tabataba'i, 1417, c. 13, p. 380)

In Tafsi'r Nemooneh, It is understood from the verses of the Qur'an that these two names belonged to two savage bloodthirsty tribes, who disturbed the people around their residence. In the Torah, in the book of Ezekiel, chapters thirty-eight and chapter thirty-nine, and in the book of John, the twentieth chapter, they are referred to as "Goog" and "Magoog", which means Gog and Magog. Some believe that these two words are Hebrew, but they were originally translated from Greek into Hebrew. And in Greek they were pronounced "gag" and "magag", which is similarly transmitted in other European words. In the past, the northeastern part of the earth was large in Mongolia, the people of this region were rapidly giving birth, and after rising, they flowed east or south, and gradually settled there. For example, in the fourth century AD, under the rule of Attila, they destroyed the civilization of the Roman Empire. Also in the twelfth century AD, under the leadership of Genghis Khan, they invaded Islamic and Arab countries and destroyed many cities, including Baghdad. In the time of Cyrus, an invasion took place from their side, which was around five hundred years BC, but on this date, due to the emergence of a united government of Media and Persia, the situation changed and West Asia was relieved of the attacks of these tribes. Therefore, it is very likely that the Gog and Magog were the same savage tribes that the people of the Caucasus asked Cyrus to stop them when Cyrus traveled to that area, and he also attempted to build the famous Dhu al-Qarnayn Dam. (Makarem Shirazi, 1374, C 12, pp. 551-552)

6-Archaeology and Historical Geography of the Cave of the Seven Sleepers in the interpretations of the Qur'an

In Surah al-Kahf, verses 9-26, the story of Seven Sleepers or the Companions of the Cave is discussed in detail. But we will suffice with a summary of it: According



to the verses of the Qur'an, the Companions of the Cave were those gentlemen who believed in God and lived in the time of an oppressive ruler, and by chance were ministers and elders of the king, and lived in prosperity and comfort. But they did not seek a prosperous life, and because of the truth of faith in them, they rose up against oppression, even though they were forced to give up their apparent happiness. God also strengthened their hearts and increased their guidance and ordered them to take refuge in the cave to save their lives. They fell into a deep sleep in the cave, but if you saw them, you thought they were awake because they were asleep with their eyes open and their bodies turned left and right to stay safe, even their dog at the mouth of the cave was somehow as if he was guarding. He was asleep. When they woke up, they thought they were asleep for a day or half. So one of them was sent to the city to prepare food. It turned out that they had been asleep for many years because everything had been changed. There is disagreement about the number of these gentlemen. One says: 4 people with their dogs, another says 6 people with their dogs, or 8 people with their dogs; only God knows the real number of them. Their sleep duration is also said to be 309 years.

"Kahf" is a meaningful word that reminds the return to the most primitive type of human life, an environment without light, whose dark and cold nights are reminiscent of the pain of deprived people, it has neither the splendor of the material world, nor the soft bed and prosperous life (Makarem Shirazi, 1374, vol. 12, p. 365) "Kahf" means a cave that is in the mountains, and the difference between it and "cave", in terms of word, is that Kahf is wider and bigger than the cave and the cave is the same Kahf. (Tabataba'i, 1417, vol. 13, p. 245)

In the Qur'an, in verse 17 of surah Kahf, some points have been mentioned about the characteristics of the cave. But the exact location has not been determined.

Contemporary interpretations have given such views about the cave of the Companions of the Cave or Seven Sleepers. Some commentators, such as Balāghī and 'Āmulī, have not said anything about the location of the cave of the Companions of the Cave. According to Ibn 'Āshūr, the cave is located near the city of "Ephesus". (Ibn 'Āshūr, nd, vol. 15, p. 21) In Tafsīr al-Mīzān, Ephesus is also mentioned, but it is rejected. No trace of a mosque or a monastery or a church or any other temple can be seen above it. This cave is more famous to Christians than anywhere else, and its name has been mentioned in many Muslim narratives. And this cave, despite its important reputation, does not match in any way with the characteristics mentioned in the Holy Qur'an about that cave. First, because God Almighty says in which direction it is located from north and south, east and west, when the sun rises, it shines into it from the right side of the cave, and when it sets, from the left side of the cave. And the necessity of this word is that the door of the cave is to the south, and the cave of Ephesus is to the northeast. Secondly, because the phrase "They said to those who have prevailed over them, Let us make a mosque for them", it seems that the people of the city built a mosque on top of that cave. And in the cave of Ephesus, there is no trace of a monastery or anything like that. And the closest religious building to that land is a church, which is located about three kilometers from the cave, and there is no way to connect it to the cave.

2- Cave of "Rajīb", which is located eight kilometers from the city of Oman, the capital of Hashemite Jordan, near Rajīb. It is a cave in the southern part of a rocky mountain, it is open on both sides, i.e. on the east and west sides, where the sun shines, it is located on the south side, and inside the cave there is a small arch with an area of 2/5 by 3 meters in a platform with an area of approximately 3 by 3 and in this cave there are several tombs in the form of ancient Roman tombs and their number is apparently eight or seven. On the wall of this cave, there are maps and lines in the ancient Greek script and in the Thamūdian script, which cannot be read well because it has been disappeared. Of course, on the wall, you can also see a picture of a dog adorned with red paint and other ornaments.

And on top of the cave are the relics of the "Byzantine" monastery, which is one of the other treasures and relics that have been discovered there. And it turns out that the construction of this monastery was built during the reign of "Justinus I", i.e. around 418-427. And the Muslims placed it in that mosque after the conquest. Because we see that this monastery has an altar, a minaret and an ablution room, and in the front area and space of this cave, there are the remains of another mosque, which the Muslims apparently built in the beginning of Islam and have been restored once, although it is clear that this mosque was built on the ruins of an old Roman church, and this cave, despite the efforts of the people and the care they paid for its preservation, and the artifacts in it, show that it was an abandoned and forgotten cave and it has been destroyed over time until Hashemite Jordan's Archaeological Survey recently excavated it and reappeared it under the soil after centuries of secrecy in works remained from there. They extracted some evidences that indicate that this cave is the same cave of the companions of the cave whose story is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. The same meaning has been mentioned in a number of Muslim narrations as mentioned. The cave of the Companions of the Cave is located in Jordan. And Yāqūt has brought them in his Mu'jam al-Buldān. And Raqim is also a name near the city of Oman, where the palace of Yazid ibn Abd al-Malik was. The truth is that the characteristics of the cave of the companions of the cave are better suited to this cave than other caves.

3- It is a cave which is located on Mount Qasioun and this mountain is near the city of Salehiyah in Damascus, to which the companions of the cave are also attributed.

4- It is a cave in Batra, one of the cities of Palestine, to which the companions of the cave are also attributed.

5-It is a cave that is said to have been discovered on the Scandinavian Peninsula in northern Europe and there they came across seven healthy bodies that were in the Roman delegation, presumably to be the same companions of the cave.

6-Near the city of Nakhchivan, one of the cities of the Caucasus, there is a cave where the inhabitants of the area have suggested that it may be the cave of the Companions of the Cave, and people go on pilgrimage there.

Comments about the location of the cave in Tafsīr Nemooneh are as follows: 1- The cave is located near the city of "Ephesus", the ruins of this city can now be seen near "Izmir" in "Turkey", and a cave can now be seen next to the village "Ayasuluk" in "Yenirdag" mountain, which is not far from "Ephesus". The mouth

of the cave is to the northeast, which confirms its authenticity, because the setting of the sun at sunrise on the right side of the cave and at sunset on the left, means that the mouth of the cave is to the north or slightly inclined to the northeast (Makarem Shirazi, 1374, vol. 12, p. 400)

"Ephesus" or "Ephesas" one of the cities of Asia Minor (current Turkey which was part of ancient Eastern Rome) and was located near the Caster River about 40 miles southeast of Izmir, which was considered the capital of King Aloni. "Ephesus" is also world famous for the famous temple and "Temple of Artemis", which was one of the Seven Wonders of the World. (Makarem Shirazi, 1374, vol. 12, p. 405)

2- It is located near the capital of "Jordan", i.e. the city of "Oman", near a village called "Rajīb". At the top of this cave we can see the remains of a monastery, which according to some evidences belongs to the fifth century AD, which after the Muslim conquest it has been turned into a mosque and has an altar and minaret. (Makarem Shirazi, 1374, vol. 12, P. 401) The view of Tafsīr al-Furqān is like Tafsīr Nemooneh. (Sadeghi Tehrani, 1365, vol. 18, p. 38)

7- Archeology and natural geography of Mount Judi in the interpretations of the Qur'an

Mount Judi is a mountain that, according to Muslims, Christians and Jews, is the landing place of Noah's ark after the flood. The word Judi is used once in verse 44 of Surah Hūd. "And the Word of Command was uttered:" O, earth swallow up your Water, and O, sky withhold [your rain]!" And the water was diminished and Allah's decree was fulfilled. And it [The ship] rested on the Judy Mount and it was stated:" Away with The wrongdoers!"

Some commentators have introduced the location of Mount Judi in Mosul. (Balāghī, 1386, vol. 3, p. 182; Āmulī, 1360, vol. 5, p. 106) In al-Taḥrīr and al-Tanwīr, there is a mountain between Iraq and Armenia and today it is called Ararat. (Ibn Āshūr, nd, vol. 11, p. 265)

Allameh Tabataba'i first has defined the word Judi. The word "Judi" means mountain in the absolute sense, and the rocky and hard earth, but some have said that the word does not refer to all the mountains in the world, but the name of a certain mountain in the land of Mosul, and this mountain is located in a mountain range, whose end leads to the land of "Armenia", which is known as the "Ararat" mountain range (Tabataba'i, 1417, vol. 10, p. 230).

Allameh quotes from the Torah that the ship was stationed on the mountains of Ararat on the seventeenth day of the seventh month. The author of the book "Marāsid al-Ittilā'" says that the word "Judi" - with an accent on i - is the name of a mountain overlooking the island of Ibn Umar, and this island has been located in the east of the Tigris of the lands of Mosul. (Tabataba'i, 1417, vol. 10, p. 254)

8- Archaeology and Natural Geography of Majma' al-Baḥrayn in the interpretations of the Qur'an

Majma' al-Baḥrayn (i.e. the junction of the two seas) is where two seas meet and is the name of the place where Musa and Khidr met. It is located at the end of Andalusia, Majma' al-Baḥrayn is mentioned in the ancient divine word and is three miles wide and 25 miles long, in which tides appear. Two tides occur every day

and night because the Black Sea rises at sunrise and falls on Majma' al-Baḥrayn and from there enters the Roman Sea. The Roman Sea is located on the east side of Andalusia and its water color is green, so the Black Sea falls into the Green Sea until sunset and vice versa when the sun returns namely the green sea falls into the black sea until sunset, the black sea rises again and falls into the green sea until midnight, and vice versa until sunrise. And this routine exists sequentially.

This name is used in the story of Moses and Khidr in verse 60 of Surah al-Kahf: "Behold, Moses said to his attendant," I will not give up until I reach the junction of the two seas or (until) I spend years and years in travel."

There are different opinions about the location of Majma' al-Baḥrayn: the Seas of Fars and Roam -Africa - Tangier - in Nowshīravān Dam, these places are mentioned in the Ḥujjat al-Tafāsīr. (Balāghī, 1386, vol. 4, p. 124)

In Tafāsīr 'Āmulī, these cases have also been added: the purpose is the place of connection of salt and fresh water. The meaning of the two waters is the two seas of knowledge who are Moses and Khidr. Mahmoud Hejazi: They are the two black and white seas, and they have also been called Jordan and Clysmā. ('Āmulī, 1360, v. 6, p. 6)

According to Ibn 'Āshūr, Majma' al-Baḥrayn is a place in the land of Palestine and, to be more precise, the place where the Jordan River enters Sea of Galilee, it is a great river which is called Baḥr al-Jalīl by the Israelis. Moses got there after a day and night of walking so it is not far from the residence of Moses and the Israelites. (Ibn 'Āshūr, nd, vol. 15, p. 101)

Allameh Tabataba'i has given this opinion: the end of the Roman (Mediterranean) Sea is from the east, and the end of the Persian Gulf is from the west, which is why Majma' al-Baḥrayn refers to that part of the earth which is located at one end at the eastern end of the Mediterranean and at the other end at the western end of the Persian Gulf, and in a sense it has been called the meeting place of the two seas (Tabataba'i, 1417, v. 13, p. 339)

The author of Tafāsīr al-Furqān's opinion is that he means the two seas of external knowledge of Musa and the inner knowledge of Khidr, or the two seas of outward Risālat and inward Wilāyat. (Sadeghi Tehrani, 1365, vol. 18, p. 140)

9- Archeology and historical geography of Rūm and Adna al-Arḍ in the interpretations of the Qur'an

The term "Adna al-Arḍ" (i.e. a land nearby) is used in the Qur'an in verse 3 of Surah al-Rūm: "On a land nearby; but they will after this defeat become triumphant; it will be soon."

Tafāsīr 'Āmulī has not mentioned the place of Adna al-Arḍ. Ibn 'Āshūr has considered Adna al-Arḍ as the closest land from Rūm to Hejaz and Arab lands. (Ibn 'Āshūr, nd, vol. 21, p. 9) The opinion of the author of Tafāsīr al-Furqān is the same as the opinion of Ibn 'Āshūr. (Sadeghi Tehrani, 1365, vol. 23. P. 114)

According to the author of Tafāsīr Nemooneh, the interpretations about the place of Adna al-Arḍ are as follows: 1- Near you, the people of Mecca, in the north of the Arabian Peninsula, in the Levant, in an area between "Basra" and "Izra'at", so the meaning of "Rūm" is Eastern Rome, not Western Rome.

2. Some commentators, such as the late Sheikh Tūsī, have suggested in their explanation that they meant a point of proximity to the land of the Iranians. That is, it was located in a place that was the closest point between Iran and Rūm.

3- The meaning of this land is Roman land, that is, they were defeated on their closest borders with Iran. And this points to the importance and depth of this defeat, because defeat in distant points and unlikely borders is not so important, it is important that a country is defeated in the closest borders to the enemy, which is stronger and more powerful than anywhere else (Makarem Shirazi, 1374, vol. 16, pp. 359-361)

9-1- New theory in "Adna al-Ard"

In contemporary interpretations, "Adna al-Ard" is considered to mean the nearest land, while we know that the other meaning of this phrase can be the lowest land that the commentators did not mention it. But according to the science of geography, the Qur'an means a land on the west bank of the Jordan River around the Dead Sea. This has been proven by observations with satellites and comparing the heights of different regions of the earth. From a geographical point of view, fractures of the earth's crust creates valleys and seas, so Peter Beaumont says: "Undoubtedly the most important natural feature of Palestine is its settlement valley, which stretches across the country from the Lebanese border to the Gulf of Aqaba. The width of this valley varies from 3 to 25 km. Its lowest point is located in the Dead Sea pit about 790 meters below sea level. The water level is variable and almost 390 meters below sea level."

"The largest and most interesting region of fracture on earth is in East Africa," said contemporary Muslim geographers. East Africa has several parallel ridges in the north-south direction from the mouth of the Zambez River in Mozambique (southeast Africa) to the Red Sea (northeast Africa). East Africa fractures continue north to the Red Sea. The Red Sea itself is a fractured hole between two ridges on either side east of the mountains of Yemen and Aden. These mountains extend to Saudi Arabia and to the north to the Sinai Peninsula. In the west, the same elevations are found in Abyssinia and Somalia. Near the Gulf of Aqaba, a series of broken lines is noticed to the north. The Sinai Peninsula is located in the form of a Horst between two fracture holes, namely the Gulf of Aqaba and the Gulf of Suez. After the Gulf of Aqaba, the building of fracture extends to Palestine and Lebanon. Between the mountains of Lebanon and beyond, the Dead Sea hole and the Jordan Valley are as a fractured hole. Therefore, the water level of the Dead Sea is 394 meters lower than the water level of the Mediterranean Sea on the occasion of this subsidence." (Tabataba'i Amin, 1393, pp. 45-46)

## Conclusion

From the study of archeology and historical geography of specific places mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, it was concluded that Qur'anic stories mentioning real geographical places are real and historical stories and the archeological works of these stories can be seen on earth today. In other words, Qur'anic stories are not symbolic and allegorical.

The Holy Land mentioned in the Qur'an, according to the majority of votes, is present-day Palestine.

People of 'Ād are the people whose life story is mentioned only in the Qur'an and the names mentioned for their land are Aḥqāf and Iram. Although commentators have not been definitive about the exact location of the Aḥqāf and the Iram, it is most likely to be close to the Arabian Peninsula.

There is also ambiguity about the people of Gog and Magog and their land, who exactly are the examples of this people and where did they live? According to studies and research, most likely, their place of residence was a region of North Asia.

The companions of the cave took refuge in a cave to escape the tyranny of the oppressive king of their time. The Qur'an mentions the direction of sunlight on the cave, but its exact name and location are not mentioned. Commentators have given various opinions in this regard, two of which are closer to the truth. 1- A cave near the city of Ephesus, one of the cities of Asia Minor 2- A cave near the city of Oman.

Mount Judi is the seat of Noah's ark and has been mentioned in the Qur'an by the same name. After researching and summarizing the opinions in this field, we came to the conclusion that Mount Judi has been located in Mosul (Iraq).

In the Holy Qur'an, Majma' al-Bahrayn (meaning the meeting place of the two seas) has been mentioned as the meeting place of Moses and Khidr. Although its exact location is not clear, it is probably located not far from the abode of Moses and the Israelites.

The Holy Qur'an says: The Iran-Rome war took place in "Adna al-Ard" (meaning the deepest or closest point of the earth). History says that this war took place in a land on the west bank of the Jordan River around the Dead Sea. Geographers have also said that the Dead Sea is the hollowest or lowest point on earth. From this research, a new dimension of the scientific miracle of the Qur'an is discovered, which the geographical scientific miracle is.

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## دراسة الآثار والجغرافيا التاريخية في تفاسير القرآن المعاصرة

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### الملخص

ان الله يتحدث أحياناً عن مكان القمص التاريخية في آيات القرآن، فإن فهم بعض هذه الآيات يتطلب دراسة الآثار والجغرافية التاريخية. تقدم العلم في العصر الجديد ووجود أزمت فكرية بسبب البعد عن الدين، يتطلب تفسيراً بمنظور علمي. أدت التطورات الاجتماعية والثقافية وتوسع مجال العلوم نتيجة العلاقة بين العالم الإسلامي والحضارة الغربية إلى خلق بعض العوامل المبتكرة التي كان لها تأثير عميق على محتوى وأسلوب التفسير. بناءً على ذلك، درس البحث الحالي الدراسات الجغرافية الأثرية والتاريخية في تفاسير القرآن وبحث في ستة مصادر تفسيرية معاصرة. وركز على الجغرافيا التاريخية في حالات مثل الأرض المقدسة، وأرض الاحقاف ، وأرض يأجوج ومأجوج ، وكهف اصحاب الكهف ، وجبل جودي ، ومجمع البحرين. و بحث عن الأبعاد المكانية للأراضي التي وقعت فيها الأحداث. ومن خلال هذه الدراسة استنتج الباحث أن القمص القرآنية التي تذكر أماكن جغرافية محددة هي قصص واقعية وحقائق تاريخية ، ويمكن رؤية الآثار التاريخية لهذه القمص على الأرض اليوم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القرآن الكريم، المصادر التفسيرية المعاصرة ، الدراسات الأثرية ، الجغرافيا التاريخية ، قصص الأنبياء .