

### ***Walī*: A Note on Interpretation of the Term**

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Originally, in several glossaries following interpretations are given to the “*valayat*” and “*walī*” terms: In Zhavkhary’s *As-Sakhiykh* following explanation is connected with this term:

*Walī* – contrast to the enemy. Therefore, the friendly attitude of one person towards another is called “*tawalla*”.

The word “*walī*” is a rain after a spring rain. This rain is called “*walī*” because it follows spring rainfall (arrival of one event right after the first and proximity of one to another is important here).

*Walī* means relationship (*as-sakhr*) by life<sup>1</sup>. Besides, a person who took the responsibility for an infirm is called “*walī*”<sup>2</sup>

At-Takhonavy gives the following explanation concerning to this term: “the word “*walī*” in the rhythm *fail* of *ismi-fail* and adopted from Arabic “somebody took something on the responsibility”.

A root of this word is derived from “*al-valiyu*”, designating proximity. For this reason, the sentence *داری تلی دارها* is translated as “my house is closer to his house”. In the sentence the word “*walī*” and following from it sympathy, love and a hand of the help designate the friend who never threw you and was always ready to help in difficult situations and therefore called “*walī*”. The person who directs affairs, disposes of all and taken the responsibility with people is called “*walī*”.

It has been adduced following remark in At-Takhonavy’s *Sharkhu-t-tavaly*: a word “*walī*” on dictionaries and common value shares on five types: the governor who is worthy to the order and the having the order in the business and *mutasarrif*, going into one action and managing it. Exactly because a phrase *walī* of the child and the woman has come from it.

- The assistant giving help, the friend, the loving person.
- Released and being released.
- Neighbor, close.
- Cousin and sister<sup>3</sup>

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*Zabidy* states the following explanation about “*walī*”: “the word *walī* has the following meanings: *Walī* – beloved, a friend. This meaning of this word, being contrast of the enemy, is taken from the phrase “*Walahu* – fell in love with him” and is a verb. Helping, an assistant”. In The Arabs, when the person helps to another is used, “*Walaha*”<sup>4</sup>.

As *ibn Manzur* has emphasized in his *Lisan-al-Arab*: “among names of Allah there is also a name “*walī*”, designating an assistant. It means “taken on the responsibility of business of all worlds and created and leading them”. Really, *Walī* – one of names of Supreme Allah. It means that He is an owner of the Universe”. After that *Ibn Manzoor* passes to proceeding of arguments with various examples of the term “*walī*” concerning Allah's slaves:

*Valiyyu-l-etim* – the person who took on the responsibility all affairs of the orphan and meeting all his needs.

*Valiyyu-l-mar'a* - according to Islamic law (*Shari'a*) a woman needs a *wali* that is a custodian, to get married, as the marriage contract is signed by her *wali* and the bridegroom. Normally the father or the paternal grandfather of the bride is her *wali*. In this case the father or paternal grandfather is *wali mujbir*, if it is her first marriage. In this case, the bride's silence is considered consent<sup>5</sup>.

Fakhruddin ar-Razi states the following explanation, concerning interpretation of the term: “the word *walī* is used as the opponent's contradiction”.

According to Asim Efendi in “Translation of the Encyclopedia” the word *walī* is a noun in the rhythm of “الولى”. It means the rain going after a rain. The friend, the interlocutor of the poor, poor person is called as *walī*. It – as the beloved, the friend, the interlocutor and the assistant is called “هووليا”. This word from the point of view of creation and a metaphor, places, the relations, religions, friendship, devotion, the help and belief is used as nearness<sup>6</sup>.

Tabari, commenting on Qur’anic verses with the terms of *walī*, expresses them as the assistant, a back, a surface, maintenance, protection, approval, obvious, the conclusion of the contract, the friend, the supporter, the adherent (*ansor*).<sup>7</sup>

Interpretation of the term “*walī*” from the point of view of the *istilah* (terminology). Fakhruddin ar-Razi scrutinizing this word from the point of view of the *istilakh*, states the following: “*Walī* means the person who took on the responsibility, under the guardianship of public interests”. Therefore, Supreme Allah in the Qur’an tells “And why shouldn't Allah punish them while they hinder (men) of from Al-Masjid Al-Haram, and they aren't its guardians? None can be its guardians except *al-muttaqun*, but most of them

know not (8:34)". *Walī* – the person taking useful acts on the responsibility. In this verse it becomes obvious that Supreme Allah considers Himself as a friend of *mu'minun* (the believer) and therefore took on the responsibility of their act. In this regard 257 verse of *Baqarah* harmonizes with the above-mentioned: "Allah is the *Walī* (Protector or Guardian) of those who believe. He brings them out from darkness into light. But as for those who disbelieve, their *auliyâ* (supporters and helpers) are *tâghût* (false deities and false leaders), they bring them out from light into darkness. Those are the dwellers of the Fire, and they will abide therein forever"<sup>8</sup>.

According to jurists, the term "*walī*" in the sphere of jurisprudence means *valayat vaiz*, i.e. the person trying to carry out someone's idea to another<sup>9</sup>. The following is told about it to "*Zhami-Ur-rumuz*": "in the glossaries *walī* means *malik* (governor). In terminology of jurists it is the worthy successor"<sup>10</sup>.

In Sufi terminology and people of consent, *walī* of people who is rather knowing Allah and all his qualities, continuing worship, constraining himself from all sins and crimes, lust and carnal inclinations and turned away from all sins<sup>11</sup>.

### ***Walī* in the Holy Qur'an and its meanings**

The term "*walayat*" which is a cognate word of *walī* occurs in the Qur'an only in two places<sup>12</sup>. But derivative of "*walī*" in singular meets 24 times, and multiple "*awliya*" in total meets in 86 verses.

#### 1) *Walī* is used as a friend:

Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Ibrahim (Abraham) are those who followed him, and this Prophet (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) and those who have believed (Muslims). And Allah is the *Walī* (Protector and Helper) of the believers» (3:68).

“Allah has full knowledge of your enemies, and Allah is Sufficient as a *Walī* (Protector), and Allah is Sufficient as a Helper (4:45)”.

“Those who believe fight in the Cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve, fight in the cause of *Tâghût* (Satan). So fight you against the friends of *Shaitan* (Satan). Ever feeble indeed is the plot of *Shaitan* (Satan) (4:76)”.

“Verily, your *Walī* (Protector or Helper) is none other than Allah, His Messenger, and the believers, - those who perform *As-Salat* (*Iqamat-as-Salat*), and give *Zakat*, and they are *Raki'un*

(those who bow down or submit themselves with obedience to Allah in prayer) (5:55)”.

“O you who believe! Take not as *Auliyā* (protectors and helpers) those who take your religion as a mockery and fun from among those who received the Scripture (Jews and Christians) before you, and nor from among the disbelievers; and fear Allah if you indeed are true believers (5:57)”.

Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) “Shall I take as a *Walī* (Helper, Protector, Lord or God) any other than Allah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth? And it is He Who feeds but is not fed. Say: “Verily, I am commanded to be the first of those who submit themselves to Allah (as Muslims). And be not you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) of the *Mushrikun* [polytheists, pagans, idolaters and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah]. (6:14).

O children of Adam! Let not *Shaitan* (Satan) deceive you, as he got your parents [Adam and Hawwa (Eve)] out of Paradise, stripping them of their raiment, to show them their private parts. Verily, he and *Qabiluhu* (his soldiers from the jinn or his tribe) see you from where you cannot see them. Verily, We made the *shayatin* (devils) *auliyā* (protectors and helpers) for those who believe not (7:27).

No doubt! Verily, the *auliyā* of Allah [i.e. those who believe in the Oneness of Allah and fear Allah much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which he has forbidden), and love Allah much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained)], no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve (10:62).

We have been your friends in the life of this world and are (so) in the Hereafter. Therein you shall have (all) that your inner-selves desire, and therein you shall have (all) for which you ask (41:31).

The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e. Allah orders the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those treat them badly) then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend (41:34).

Or have they taken (for worship) *auliyâ* (guardians, supporters, helpers, protectors, lords, gods) besides Him? But Allah – He Alone is the *walî* (Lord, God, Protector). And it is He Who gives life to the dead, and He is Able to do all things (42:9).

And He it is Who sends down the rain after they have despaired, and spreads His Mercy. And He is the *walî* (*Helper, Supporter, Protector, Lord*), Worthy of all Praise (42:28 See also 18:26, 17:111).

2) *Walî* is used in the sense of assistant/supporter:

Know you not that it is Allah to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth? And besides Allah you have neither any *walî* (*protector or guardian*) nor any helper (2:107).

When two parties from among you were about to lose heart, but Allah was their *walî* (supporter and protector). And in Allah should the believers put their trust (3:122).

Those who take disbelievers for *auliyâ* (protectors or helpers or friends) instead of believers, do they seek honor, power and glory with them? Verily, then to Allah belongs all honor, power and glory (4:139).

Verily, they can avail you nothing against Allah (if He wants to punish you). Verily, the *zalimun* (polytheists, wrong-doers) are *auliyâ* (protectors, helpers) of one another, but Allah is the *walî* (helper, protector) of the *muttaqun* (45:19).

In this ayah the term *walî* is used in meaning of the keeper, the helping friend.

Besides, *walî* is used in the Holy Qur'an in the sense of correct way, *murshid* (the spiritual head), the patron, *shafî*, the keeper, *Hamid*:

Never will the Jews nor the Christians be pleased with you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) till you follow their religion. Say: "Verily, the Guidance of Allah (i.e. Islamic Monotheism) that is the (only) Guidance. And if you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) were to follow their (Jews and Christians) desires after what you have received of Knowledge (i.e. the Qur'an), then you would have against Allah neither any *walî* (protector or guardian) nor any helper (2:120)". And thus have We sent it (the Qur'an) down to be a judgment of authority in Arabic. Were you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) to follow their (vain) desires after the knowledge which has come to you, then you will not have any *walî* (protector) or *waq* (defender) against Allah (13:37).

These verses narrate Allah as *walī* and this term represents the assistant and the keeper. In this case The Qur'an claims that each *walī* has to have an absolute assistant and it is considered inappropriate and illogical to speak about friendship unaided. So if Allah admits as *walī*<sup>13</sup>, the person too can be recognized as *walī*<sup>14</sup>.

3) *Walī* means *hakeem* (*walī*, the head) the adherent:

Say "Allah knows best how long they stayed. With Him is (the knowledge of) the Unseen of the heavens and the earth. How clearly He sees, and hears (everything)! They have no *walī* (Helper, Disposer of affairs, Protector) other than Him, and He makes none to share in His Decision and His Rule." (18:26).

"O you who believe! Take not My enemies and your enemies (i.e. disbelievers and polytheists) as friends, showing affection towards them, while they have disbelieved in what has come to you of the truth (i.e. Islamic Monotheism, this Qur'an, and Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (60:1).

4) *Walī* means custodian/owner and observer:

And what is wrong with you that you fight not in the Cause of Allah, and for those weak, ill-treated and oppressed among men, women, and children, whose cry is "Our Lord! Rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors; and raise us from You one who will protect, and raise for us from You one who will help" (4:75). "Verily, my *walī* (protector, supporter, and helper) is Allah Who has revealed the Book (the Qur'an), and He protects (supports and helps) the righteous" (7:196). "And why should not Allah punish them while they hinder (men) from *al-masjid al-haram*, and they are not its guardians? None can be its guardians except *al-muttaqun*, but most of them know not" (8:34)

Coming from one root and used in *walī* meaning and *effendi* who are meant the released slave, the word "*maula*" and its plural "*mauala*" are mentioned in 21 ayat of the Koran. Only, as it was told Ragib al-Isfak hani that the word *walī* in The Quran is used, as the general properties inherent in Allah and Allah's slave, coming from the root of "*maula*" used only concerning Allah<sup>15</sup>.

That is because Allah is the *maula* (lord, master, helper, protector, etc.) of those who believe, and the disbelievers have no *Maula* (lord, master,

helper, protector, etc.). According to this ayat a devout can be waliyullah, and Allah, in turn can be wali of a devout but "maula" is the quality belonging only to Allah. But at attentive studying of sources it is possible to see that the leader of this or that sort, in particular if he has profound religious knowledge and high authority among the population, "maula" is used in figurative concerning this person, and to this epithet added "na", means ours ("Maulana" - means our leader).

Proceeding from the above-mentioned analysis, it is possible to come to the following conclusions:

- First of all, the term "*walī*" is multiple-valued and it is a homonym;
- In translation of the Qur'an into the Uzbek language which is carried out by Abdulaziz Mansur, the term "*walī*" is translated precisely, on the meanings;
- The meaning enclosed in the term "*walī*" can be expressed, proceeding from the general meaning of an ayat in which this word referred;
- Though the word "*walī*" is mentioned among names of Allah when we hear this word, before us clearly appears the shape of reasonable persons who were examples in observance of Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

**References and Notes**

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- <sup>2</sup>Jawhari, Ismail ibn Hammad, "VLY" Madd, VI/2529; Asim Effendi, *Qāmus translation*, Jamal Effendi Press, Istanbul, 1905, "VLY" Madd. IV/1223; Roğīb al-Isfahani, Abul Qosim al-Husain ibn Muhammad, *Mufrodatu fi ġoribul Qur'an* (Thk, Muhammad Said Javlani) Beirut, date is not known
- <sup>3</sup>At-Tahanavi, a.g.e. "VLY" Madd, II/1528
- <sup>4</sup>Zabidi, As-Said Muhammad Murtazo. *Tacu'l Arus*. Egypt, date is not known, "VLY" Madd, X/398-399
- <sup>5</sup>See: Ibn Manzur Abu'l Fazil Muhammad ibn Mukrim, *Lisanul-Arab*, Beirut, 1967 "VLY" Madd, XV/407
- <sup>6</sup>Asim Effendi, *Qāmus translation*, "VLY" Madd, IV/1223
- <sup>7</sup>Tabari, Muhammad ibn Jarir. *Jami-ul-bayan fi Tavilil Qur'an*. I. Edit. Beirut, 1992. III/23-III/227
- <sup>8</sup>Fahrudin ar-Razi, a.g.e. V/430  
This and following ayats of Qur'an have been taken from Abdul-Aziz Mansur's translation. See: Abdul-Aziz Mansur's translation of Qur'an's meanings. –Tashkent, "Tashkent Islamic University" Publishing House, 2004.
- <sup>9</sup>Bilmen, Umar Nasuhu. *Istilahatu'l Fikhiya Qōmus*. Ist. 1981, II/45
- <sup>10</sup>At-Tahanavi, a.g.e. II/1528
- <sup>11</sup>Taftazani, Sa'duddin Mas'ud Ibn Umar Ibn Abdullah. *Sharhul-Maqosid*, I. Edit. Beirut, 1989, V/72.
- <sup>12</sup>See: 8/Anfal, 72:18/Qahf, 44.
- <sup>13</sup>See: 2/Baqaro, 120; 4/Nisa, 45/Shuro, 32, 46 and others.
- <sup>14</sup>See: Öztürk, Yashar Nuri, *Main meanings of Qur'an*, II Edit. Istanbul, 1993, p.613
- <sup>15</sup>Roğīb al-Isfahani, *Mufradat*, 534