

Expression Forms of the Present Tense in the Qur'ani-Karim

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Abstract. It is known that, in Arabic, a word is divided into three parts: noun, verb and particle (harf). A noun refers to a thing and is not related to time. A verb expresses an event, which is why it relates to time. A particle is a word that has no meaning but is used with a noun or a verb.

Verbs express events that happen at a particular time. At the same time, it should be noted that although medieval Arabic linguists paid great attention to the subject of the verb and its inflexion (i'rab), they did not deeply investigate the tenses and time limits of the verb. If we compare the tense forms in Arabic with those in other languages, we will face particular difficulties finding the exact equivalent. The lack of Arab research on this topic is reflected in the verbs madhi (past tense) and mudhare (present tense).

Since our topic is related to the present tense, we will try to examine the forms of expression, or more precisely, how the present tense is expressed either in the Arabic literary language or in the Holy Quran.

In general, verb tenses indicate their grammatical characteristics. We know that in terms of time, verbs are divided into past, present and future tenses.

The present tense has a broad meaning. The present tense of the verb expresses the events that are happening at the moment of speaking. In the literary Arabic language, the present tense is expressed mainly through the mudhare verb فعل المضارع from a morphological point of view. In addition, in the holy book Qur'ani-Karim, the present tense is expressed differently. If we pay attention to the verses in the Qur'an, we will see that the tense meanings of verbs are determined not only by their morphological structure but also by the context in which they are included.

It should also be noted that the expression of any time in the Holy Qur'an in different ways is mainly intended to convince humanity of the authenticity of this message sent by God. It primarily refers to evangelising Heaven, Hell, Judgment Day and other issues.

Keywords: Holy Quran; verb tenses; mudhare verb; madhi verb; ismul-fa'il.

INTRODUCTION

As in most other languages, the verb in Arabic is one of the leading research topics of medieval and modern grammarians. Medieval Arabic grammarians and modern grammarians have a different view of the verb. Medieval grammarians considered the verb the subject of action and a decisive factor. Modern linguists consider the verb an essential language material in sentence

construction and state that it consists of events that occur at different times [7, p. 15].

Grammarians have given different definitions to the verb: الفعل هو كل كلمة تدل على حدوث شيء في زمن خاص (A verb is a word that indicates that something happened at a particular time) [6, p. 132], الفعل ما دلّ على معنى في نفسه مقترن بأحد الأزمنة الثلاثة (The verb expresses the meaning belonging to one of the three tenses) [2, p. 44], الفعل ما دل على

حدث و زمن (The verb expresses the event and time) [4, p. 104]. We also see from the definitions that one of the most essential features of a verb is its time expression.

Although the tense division of the verb is divided into three parts, medieval grammarians disagreed about the names of those divisions. Basra grammarians divided the verb into madhi (past), mudhare (present) and imperative, and Kufa grammarians divided the verb into madhi, mudhare and daim (durative) verbs. As we have seen, although they agree on the division of madhi and mudhare, the tense forms of imperative and daim verbs have been the subject of their debate.

Ibrahim As-Samarrai stated that the forms of فعل and يفعل are not enough to express the limits of time accurately. From this, we can conclude that the verb in Arabic does not reveal the tense in terms of form. The tense is mainly derived from the structure of the sentence. Verbs are supported by additions to express more precise and clear time within the sentence [7, p. 24].

We can point to the Holy Qur'an as the clearest example of determining the tense according to the context of the sentence, not by verb forms. In addition to containing instructive ideas in the holy book, various methods were used to express these ideas best, to make the ideas he wanted to convey even more effective. Here, the fact that any tense form of the verb can express different tenses also reflects that purpose.

As mentioned above, the present tense is expressed in different ways in the Holy Quran. Let's consider those methods in paragraphs:

The present tense is mainly expressed by فعل المضارع (mudhare verb). The mudhare verb expresses events indicating the present or future tense and is formed with one of the letters "muzaraat". These letters include the letters "alif", "Hamza", "nun", "ya" and "ta" [1, p. 22]. For example: أَقْرَأُ، نَسْمَعُ، نَسْكُنُ، يَعِيشُ

In the Holy Quran, we can show quite a few verses about expressing the present tense with mudhare verbs. Let's look at some of them:

وَالنَّجْمُ وَالشَّجَرُ يَسْجُدَانِ (الرحمان: ٦)

"The stars and the trees bow down in submission" (Ar-Rahman: 6).

يَا زَكَرِيَّا إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ اسْمُهُ يَحْيَىٰ لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ سَمِيًّا (مريم: ٧)

"The angels announced, "O Zachariah! Indeed, We give you the good news of the birth of a son, whose name will be John - a name We have not given to anyone before" (Maryam: 7).

وَيَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَإِذَا مَا مِتُّ لَسَوْفَ أُحْرَجُ حَيًّا (مريم: ٦٦)

Yet some people ask mockingly, "After I die, will I really be raised to life again?" (Maryam: 66).

فَمَا تَنْفَعُهُمْ شَفَاعَةُ الشَّافِعِينَ (المدثر: ٤٨)

So the please of intercessors will be of no benefit to them. (Al-Muddaththir: 48)

The present tense can also be expressed with اسم "الفاعل"-ismul-fa'il (active participle). Ibnul-Hajib, in his work "الكافية في علم النحو و الشافية في علم التصريف و" mentions that the ismul-fa'il is formed from the verb, and the verb is a word that shows the doer (subject) and is primarily a non-constant adjective [2, p. 40]. Al-Farra, one of the grammarians of Kufa, and his followers called the ismul-fa'il "daim verb", but this issue was not touched upon in books on grammar [3, p. 206].

Ismul-fa'il is formed from verbs with three root consonants based on the form فَاعِلٌ, for example, ضَارِبٌ [10, p. 49]. It has both noun and verb properties. Accepting an article, using definiteness indefiniteness, and declension are its features similar to a noun.

In addition, ismul-fa'il is similar to the mudhare verb. The lexical meaning of المضارع is "resembling". According to Arabic linguists, this verb form is identical to a noun or ismul-fa'il form. The ismul-fa'il form indicates a verb that started during or shortly before and continues after the conversation. The mudhare form also expresses the same meaning. With the present-future form of the verb المضارع, the speaker informs about the beginning of the execution of the verb at the time of speaking or in the near past tense that is not separated from the time of speaking. However, this form does not show the verb's ending [8, p. 20].

In the Quran, we can find verses in which the ismul-fa'il expresses the past, present and future tense. Let us consider some of the verses that he expressed in the present tense:

قُلْ هَلْ تَرَبَّصُونَ بِنَا إِلَّا إِحْدَى الْحُسَيْنَيْنِ وَ نَحْنُ نَتَرَبَّصُ بِكُمْ أَنْ يُصِيبَكُمْ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابٍ مِّنْ عِنْدِهِ أَوْ بِأَيْدِينَا فَتَرَبَّصُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ مُتَرَبَّصُونَ (التوبة: ٥٢)

"Say, "Are you awaiting anything to befall us except one of the two best things: victory or martyrdom? But We are awaiting Allah to afflict

you with torment either from Him or at our hands. So keep waiting! We, too, are waiting with you" (At-Tawbah: 52).

فَمَا لَهُمْ عَنِ التَّذْكَرَةِ مُعْرِضِينَ (المدثر: ٤٩)

"Now, what is the matter with them that they are turning away from the reminder" (Al-Muddaththir: 49).

One of the forms of expression of the present tense in the Qur'an is its expression with the *madhi* (past tense) verb. *Madhi* verbs can express the present and future time in terms of the position of use in the sentence. The past tense verb *madhi* indicates the present tense when it emphasises the announcement or acknowledgement of action [5, p. 120]. We can show the following verses as an example:

...قَالَتْ امْرَأَتُ الْعَزِيزِ الْأَنْ حَصَّصَ الْحَقُّ... (يوسف: ٥١)

... Then the Chief Minister's wife admitted, "Now the truth has come to light... (Yusuf: 51).

وَإِذْ أُوحِيَتْ إِلَى الْحَوَارِيِّينَ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِي وَبِرَسُولِي قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ (المائدة: ١١١)

"And how I inspired the disciples, "Believe in Me and My messenger!" They declared, "We believe and bear witness that we fully submit to Allah" (Al-Ma'idah: 111).

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

"Now Allah has lightened your burden, for He knows that there is weakness in you. So if there are a hundred steadfast among you, they will overcome two hundred. And if there be one thousand, they will overcome two thousand, by Allah's Will. And Allah is with the steadfast" (Al-Anfal: 66).

Although the verbs *خَفَّفَ*, *حَصَّصَ* in the verses mentioned above are in the past tense, they express the present tense according to the context of the verses. Also, the adverb *الآن* used in the verses indicates the present tense.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Other verbs expressed by *madhi* verbs in the present tense are *madh* (praise), *zamm* (blame), *ta'ajjub* (exclamation), and *ugud* (agreement). These verbs express events that are happening in the present time. There is also an opinion that although the present tense expression is clearly visible in the verbs "Uqud", the verbs "madh,

zamm, *ta'ajjub*" do not have a tense expression. However, they are also accepted as verbs, and a feature of the verb is to express the time of the event. For example, in the expression *نِعْمَ الرَّجُلُ عَلِيٌّ* (What a good man Ali is), the fact that Ali is an excellent sound man is expressed in the present tense, not in the past and future tense [9, p.72-73]. The verb *نِعْمَ* is also used in many verses in the Qur'an:

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

(آل عمران: ١٧٣)

"Those who were warned, "Your enemies have mobilised their forces against you, so fear them", the warning only made them grow stronger in faith, and they replied, "Allah alone is sufficient as an aid for us, and He is the best Protector" (Ali 'Imran: 173).

أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِنْ سُنْدُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُتَّكِنِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ نِعْمَ الثَّوَابُ وَحَسُنَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا (الكهف: ٣١)

They will have the Gardens of Eternity, with rivers flowing under their feet. There, they will be adorned with bracelets of gold, wear green garments of fine silk and rich brocade, and reclining on canopied couches. What a marvellous reward! And what a fabulous place to rest! (Al-Kahf: 31).

As we mentioned, the present tense is also expressed by the verbs "zamm" (blame). The most widespread of the verbs expressing blame is the verb *يُنَسِّ*. There are many verses related to this verb in the Qur'an. Let's mention some of them:

قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَعْتٌ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ وَتُحْشَرُونَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ (آل عمران: ١٢)

O Prophet! Tell the disbelievers, "Soon you will be overpowered and driven to Hell—what an evil place to rest!" (Ali 'Imran: 12).

أُولَئِكَ يَنْهَاهُمُ الرَّبَّائِبُونَ وَالْأَحْبَابُ عَنْ قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِثْمَ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّخْتِ أَلَيْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ (المائدة: ٦٣)

"Why do their rabbis and scholars not forbid them from saying what is sinful and consuming what is unlawful? Evil indeed is their inaction!" (Al-Ma'idah: 63).

In literary Arabic, *ta'ajjub* (exclamation) is expressed by the verbs *أَفْعَلُ بِهِ* and *مَا أَفْعَلُ*. Although "مَا أَفْعَلُ" is based on the past tense of the verb, it expresses the present tense, for example,

ما أَشَدَّ الْمَطَرِ (How good Hussein is), ما أَحْسَنَ حُسَيْنًا (How heavy is the rain).

Let's mention some of the verses related to the expression of exclamation in the Holy Quran in the form of "ما أفعل":

قِيلَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا أَكْفَرَهُ (عبس: ١٧)

"Condemned are disbelieving humans! How ungrateful they are to Allah!" ('Abasa: 17)

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَرَوْا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَالْعَذَابَ بِالْمَغْفِرَةِ فَمَا أَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ (البقرة: ١٧٥)

"They are the ones who trade guidance for misguidance and forgiveness for punishment. How persistent are they in pursuit of the Fire!" (Al-Baqarah: 175).

Exclamation can also be expressed by the verb with the form "أفعل به" based on the imperative form of "جامد" (jamid) past tense verb. In the 38th verse of Surah Maryam (أَسْمِعْ بِهِمْ وَأَبْصُرْ يَوْمَ يَأْتُوتُنَّا لَكِنِ الظَّالِمُونَ الْيَوْمَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ) (How clearly will they hear and see on the Day they will come to Us! But today the wrongdoers are clearly astray) we find this type of verb. Although we say that one cannot be surprised by future events, the verse's exclamation occurred by relating the future to the present because it is not suitable to be amazed by an event that is not happening now. The exclamation in this verse expresses the present tense [9, p. 77].

One of the methods of expressing the present tense with the past tense in the Qur'an is to express an oath together with the particle "إذا". We can see this in the following verses:

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَىٰ (الضحى: ٢)

"And the night when it falls still!" (Ad-Duhaa: 2).

وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَاهَا (الشمس: ٢)

"And the moon as it follows it" (Ash-Shams: 2).

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا (الشمس: ٤)

"And the night as it conceals it!" (Ash-Shams: 4).

CONCLUSIONS

As mentioned above, since the exact meaning of verb tenses in Arabic is not defined, different methods are used to express any tense. It is possible to express present and future tenses along with past tense with madhi verbs, past and future tense along with present tense with mudhare verbs, and past and future tenses with amr verbs.

When discussing the characteristics of verb tenses in the Qur'an, first of all, it is necessary to approach the issue from the perspective of the Qur'an's unique style. So, like other peculiarities of the Arabic language, the meanings expressed by the verb tenses in this divine book sometimes have an unusual feature: they express shades of time we are not used to it [5, p. 128].

The fact that the present tense can be expressed differently in the Holy Qur'an shows that the verb tense forms can express a more contextual meaning, moving away from their usage meanings.

Here, we have considered the expression of the present tense in the Holy Qur'an with mudhare verbs, ismul-fa'il, and madhi verbs. In the Qur'an, the present tense is expressed not only by the mudhare verb but also by other methods due to its eloquence.

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