

Navigating Arabic Text

AN INTRODUCTION TO ARABIC SYNTAX

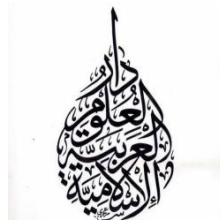
Part Two

MT Karaan

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First edition 2019



DĀR AL-‘ULŪM AL-‘ARABIYYAH AL-ISLĀMIYYAH

Strand • Western Cape • South Africa

www.duai.org.za • admin@duai.org.za

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الحمد لله، وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد، وعلى آله وصحبه وبارك وسلم، وبعد:

Part Two of *Navigating Arabic Text* continues along the pedagogy of Part One. It is a minimalist pedagogy that believes in equipping the beginner with only as much of syntax theory as he requires to get started. Overloading novices with arcane rules of grammar which they might never come across in their entire careers simply doesn't make sense.

Students may (or may not) go on to study higher works of grammar at a later stage. What is important is not how much *naḥw* they study, but how well they have understood the manner in which *naḥw* lives within the fabric of living language. The successful student of this discipline is not he who has memorised all the rules, but one whose mastery of its core has given him a virtually intuitive appreciation for the way the language works. This is what the teacher should seek to impart.

As important as it is to apply the rules of syntax in the various texts under study, the aim should be to avoid becoming mechanical. With a subject like *naḥw* this is a very real possibility. The mechanical mode is unavoidable at the outset, but if the student never gets out of it, it is disastrous. One effective way of breaking the mechanical mode is by having students *listen* to grammatically correct Arabic being spoken.

Of the three modes of learning a language—reading an existing text, producing one's own text, and hearing the language being spoken—the last one is probably

the most natural way of learning. It is also the most effective in creating spontaneity in the language. Unfortunately, in most of our institutions it is also the most neglected. Teachers should try to supplement their teaching with exercises in all three, but especially the mode of hearing.

Unlike many other textbooks, this book does not come with ready-made exercises. Such exercises are useful, no doubt; but they often create a stereotyped environment in which the teacher reads out the lesson and then assigns the prepared exercise. Language is a living thing that wants to be taught with vitality. The absence of exercises is a challenge to teachers to produce their own creative exercises, thereby saving lessons from sinking into stereotype.

I ask Allah to accept and bless this effort.

MT KARAAN

Strand, Cape Town

South Africa

SECTION ONE

Anomalous signs of *i'rāb*

I'rāb, as you would have learnt up to this stage, is a word describing the end-case of most nouns in the Arabic language. There are three distinct forms of *i'rāb*: *marfūʿ*, *manṣūb* and *majrūr*. And then there are a number of factors that give rise to the specific *i'rāb* that a noun takes. These causes give rise to *i'rāb* in a fairly standard and predictable way:

- The causes of *rafʿ* will produce a *ḍammah* at the end of an *ism*;
- the causes of *naṣb* will produce a *fathah* at the end of an *ism*;
- and the causes of *jarr* will produce a *kasrah* at the end of an *ism*.

CAUSES OF <i>I'RĀB</i>	SIGN
Causes of <i>rafʿ</i>	◌ُ —
Causes of <i>naṣb</i>	◌َ —
Causes of <i>jarr</i>	◌ِ —

The forms that the *i'rāb* takes here are fairly standard: *ḍammah* for *rafʿ*, *fathah* for *naṣb*, and *kasrah* for *jarr*. But are these the only forms in which the three cases of *i'rāb* are represented? Can *rafʿ* only ever be represented by a *ḍammah*, *naṣb* by a *fathah*, and *jarr* by a *kasrah*?

While these three vowel signs are probably the most common signifiers of *i'rāb*, the Arabic language presents us with a number of alternative signifiers of *i'rāb*. In other words, *rafʿ* may at times be represented by something other than a *ḍammah*, *naṣb* by something other than a *fathah*, and *jarr* by a sign other than a *kasrah*. We refer to these alternative signs of *i'rāb* as **anomalous signs of *i'rāb***. A thing is described as *anomalous* when it departs from an established norm.

LESSON 1

Muthannā, Jam' mudhakkar sālim & Jam' mu'annath sālim

All in all we are going to be dealing with seven cases of anomalous signs of *i'rāb*: three of them in the present lesson, and each of the remaining four in a separate lesson thereafter.

Our present lesson focuses upon the following three cases with anomalous signs of *i'rāb*:

- the *muthannā* (dual)
- the *jam' mudhakkar sālim* (unbroken masculine plural)
- the *jam' mu'annath sālim* (unbroken feminine plural)

1. The *muthannā*

You would remember from Lesson 3 of Part One of this book that English simply divides nouns into *singular* and *plural* in respect of number, whereas Arabic has a distinct format for describing the *dual* case, where there are two of a thing. You would also recall that this distinct format is achieved through the adding of the suffix *-āni* or *-ayni* at the end of the word.

مُثَنَّى		مفرد
رَجُلَيْنِ	رَجُلَانِ	رَجُلٌ
كِتَابَيْنِ	كِتَابَانِ	كِتَابٌ
قَلَمَيْنِ	قَلَمَانِ	قَلَمٌ
مَسْجِدَيْنِ	مَسْجِدَانِ	مَسْجِدٌ
طَالِبَيْنِ	طَالِبَانِ	طَالِبٌ

You can clearly see two forms of the suffix in the shaded area. The question is: why two forms? The answer lies in the concept of *i'rāb*. Like most other nouns, the *muthannā* too, needs to adapt in order to accommodate *i'rāb*. But while most other

nouns inflect in three different forms (*ḍammah* for *rafʿ*, *fatḥah* for *naṣb*, and *kasrah* for *jarr*) the *muthannā* displays less adaptability. Instead of three distinct formats, it has only two. And instead of the vowel signs of *ḍammah*, *fatḥah* and *kasrah* it uses the letters *alif* and *yā* to signify its *iʿrāb*.

That still doesn't solve another problem: we have three *iʿrāb* cases, but only two sets of *iʿrāb* signs. The solution lies in sharing. *Rafʿ* will get its own sign, but *naṣb* and *jarr* will have to share a sign between them. Accordingly, we may adapt our earlier table as follows:

مُثنًى			مفرد
جر	نصب	رفع	
رَجُلَيْنِ	رَجُلَانِ	رَجُلَانِ	رَجُلٌ
كِتَابَيْنِ	كِتَابَانِ	كِتَابَانِ	كِتَابٌ
قَلَمَيْنِ	قَلَمَانِ	قَلَمَانِ	قَلَمٌ
مَسْجِدَيْنِ	مَسْجِدَانِ	مَسْجِدَانِ	مَسْجِدٌ
طَالِبَيْنِ	طَالِبَانِ	طَالِبَانِ	طَالِبٌ

2. The *jamʿ mudhakkar sālim*

The *jamʿ mudhakkar sālim* is formed through the addition of the suffix *-ūna* or *-īna* at the end of the *ism*.

جمع مذكر سالم		مفرد
مُسْلِمَيْنِ	مُسْلِمُونَ	مُسْلِمٌ
مُؤْمِنَيْنِ	مُؤْمِنُونَ	مُؤْمِنٌ
طَالِبَيْنِ	طَالِبُونَ	طَالِبٌ

As in the case of the *muthannā*, we see that *iʿrāb* here is represented by a letter (*wāw* or *yā*) instead of the vowel signs *ḍammah*, *fatḥah* and *kasrah*. And we once

again encounter the problem of two signs for three cases of *i'rāb*. The solution, again, is to make *naṣb* and *jarr* share the same sign.

Adapted to accommodate *i'rāb*, the table for the *jam' mudhakkar sālim* will now look like this:

جمع مذكر سالم			مفرد
جر	نصب	رفع	
	مُسْلِمِينَ	مُسْلِمُونَ	مُسْلِمٌ
	مُؤْمِنِينَ	مُؤْمِنُونَ	مُؤْمِنٌ
	طَالِبِينَ	طَالِبُونَ	طَالِبٌ

3. The *jam' mu'annath sālim*

Normal *i'rāb* is indicated by vowel signs. In the previous two cases an anomaly arose: instead of using vowel signs—*fathah*, *ḍammah* and *kasrah*—we used letters such as *alif*, *wāw* and *yā*. With the *jam' mu'annath sālim* we return to vowel signs as the signifiers of *i'rāb*.

جمع مؤنث سالم		مفرد
مُسْلِمَاتٍ	مُسْلِمَاتٌ	مُسْلِمَةٌ
مُؤْمِنَاتٍ	مُؤْمِنَاتٌ	مُؤْمِنَةٌ
طَالِبَاتٍ	طَالِبَاتٌ	طَالِبَةٌ

You can see that the only variation that occurs in the shaded area is in the *ḥarakah* of the last letter. It changes from a *ḍammah/ḍammatayn* to a *kasrah/kasratayn*. In terms of the type of sign used to indicate *i'rāb*, it is therefore not very much of an anomaly.

However, like the *muthannā* and *jam' mudhakkār sālim* it suffers from the problem of two signs for three *i'rāb* cases. The problem is solved in the same way: let two cases share one sign.

When we adapt the table to indicate *i'rāb*, this is what we produce:

جمع مؤنث سالم			مفرد
جر	نصب	رفع	
مُسَلِّمَاتٍ	مُسَلِّمَاتٍ	مُسَلِّمَاتٍ	مُسَلِّمَةٌ
مُؤْمِنَاتٍ	مُؤْمِنَاتٍ	مُؤْمِنَاتٍ	مُؤْمِنَةٌ
طَالِبَاتٍ	طَالِبَاتٍ	طَالِبَاتٍ	طَالِبَةٌ

LESSON 2

The *Ism Maqṣūr*

An *ism* may theoretically end in just about any letter of the alphabet.

كِتَابٌ ، بَيْتٌ ، قَلَمٌ ، نَبِيٌّ ، رَجُلٌ ، عَدُوٌّ

It may also end in an elongation of the *ḥarakah* of the last letter.

قَاضِيٌ ، أَبُوٌ ، دُنْيَاٌ ، تَقْوَىٌ ، فَتَوَىٌ

The last three examples of the elongated forms have one thing in common. In all of them we have an elongation of the *fathah*, through the addition of either an *alif* or a *yā*. The type of *ism* at the end of which a *fathah* is elongated in this manner, with an *alif* or *yā*, is called an *ism maqṣūr*.¹

Now that you know what the *ism maqṣūr* is—a noun whose final *fathah* is extended by adding an *alif* or *yā*—, we may turn to the question of its *iʿrāb*. We already know that it is not going to have a regular type of *iʿrāb* because we are discussing anomalous signs of *iʿrāb*. So in which way will the *ism maqṣūr* be anomalous?

In the preceding lesson we saw a limited amount of inflection where two cases had to share the same *iʿrāb*. The *ism maqṣūr* is even more limited. Not two, but all three cases have to share the same sign of *iʿrāb*. And that sign is the very same *fathah* elongated by an *alif* or *yā*.

Consider the following examples:

¹ The word *maqṣūr* means “shortened”. A terminal *alif* can be elongated in two ways: through the addition of an *alif* plus a *hamzah*, as in **سَمَاءٌ** , or an *alif* without a *hamzah*. The *hamzah* after the *alif* produces an extended elongation (long *madd*), while the *alif* without

جر	نصب	رفع	
نَظَرْتُ فِي فِتْوَى	رَأَيْتُ فِتْوَى	هَذِهِ فِتْوَى	فِتْوَى
أَعْرَضَ عَنِ الدُّنْيَا	لَا تُحِبُّوا الدُّنْيَا	الدُّنْيَا مَلْعُونَةٌ	دُنْيَا
أُنْزِلَتِ التَّوْرَةُ عَلَى مُوسَى	كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى	جَاءَ مُوسَى	مُوسَى

Each of the three words in these examples is given in different contexts. In the first column the word has to be *marfūʿ*; in the second *manṣūb*; and in the third *majrūr*. However, what you notice is that, despite the change in grammatical context, the end-case of the word remains static and unchanged.

You wouldn't be blamed for thinking here of the *mabnī* type of word: words that are impervious to *iʿrāb* and remain the same under all circumstances. The resemblance between the *ism maqṣūr* and the *mabnī* word is strong indeed. But there is a very slight technical difference.

The *mabnī* word does not accept *iʿrāb* at all, while the *ism maqṣūr* does accept *iʿrāb*. The sign of its *iʿrāb*, however, is the same for all three cases: the same elongated *fathah*.

LESSON 3

The *Ism Manqūṣ*

While the *ism maqṣur* had a *fatḥah* elongated by an *alif* or *yā* at the end, the *ism manqūṣ* has at its end a *kasrah* elongated by a *yā*. The following words are thus examples of the *ism manqūṣ*:

قَاضِي ، رَاوِي ، مَاضِي ، مُحْيِي ، مُغْنِي ، مَرَاقِي ، مَوَالِي

Each of these words can be clearly seen to have at its end a *yā* elongating the *kasrah* before it. Now, what is it about its *iʿrāb* that calls for it to be treated as an anomaly? Before we get there, let us first discuss the three distinct scenarios in which an *ism manqūṣ* can find itself.

An *ism manqūṣ* may be either—

- *nakirah* (indefinite) and not *muḍāf* (the possessed in a possessive construction);
- or *maʿrifah* (definite) by the definite article *al-*;
- or *muḍāf*.

Let's use the word *qāḍī* to demonstrate these three situations:

هَذَا الرَّجُلُ قَاضٍ	قَاضٍ	نكرة:
هَذَا الرَّجُلُ هُوَ الْقَاضِي	الْقَاضِي	معرفة بالـ:
هَذَا الرَّجُلُ قَاضِي الْبَلَدِ	قَاضِي الْبَلَدِ	مضاف:

Although we have three situations, the last two will display their *iʿrāb* in the same form. For this reason we will have only two tables below. The first table, which we will name A, gives the word in its plain *nakirah* form. The second, labelled B, will give the *iʿrāb* form for both the *maʿrifah* and *muḍāf* cases.

And in order to highlight the anomaly in the *i'rāb* of the *ism manqūṣ* (i.e. its departure from normal *i'rāb*) we will compare it against a word with standard *i'rāb* (in the first line, somewhat greyed out).

B			A		
مجرور	منصوب	مرفوع	مجرور	منصوب	مرفوع
العَالِمِ	العَالِمِ	العَالِمِ	عَالِمِ	عَالِمًا	عَالِمٌ
القَاضِي	القَاضِي	القَاضِي	قَاضٍ	قَاضِيًا	قَاضٍ

عَالِمِ الْبَلَدِ	عَالِمِ الْبَلَدِ	عَالِمِ الْبَلَدِ
قَاضِي الْبَلَدِ	قَاضِي الْبَلَدِ	قَاضِي الْبَلَدِ

From this table we may now deduce the following rules for the *i'rāb* of the *ism manqūṣ*:

- The *ism manqūṣ* displays normal *i'rāb* for the *manṣūb* case.
- Departure from normal *i'rāb* occurs when the word is *marfūʿ* or *majrūr*.
- For both *marfūʿ* and *majrūr*, in Situation A, the *ism manqūṣ*
 - loses its *yāʿ*
 - and gets a *kasrah* in *tanwīn*, (i.e. *kasratayn*) on the last letter.
- For both *marfūʿ* and *majrūr*, in Situation B, the *ism manqūṣ*
 - retains its *yāʿ*
 - but the *yāʿ* remains *sākinah* and gets no *harakah*.

LESSON 4

The *Asmā' Khamsah*

There are five nouns in the Arabic language which display their *i'rāb* in a way unique to them. On account of this unique style of *i'rāb* they are grouped together in a set called *al-Asmā' al-Khamsah*, or the Five Nouns.

These five nouns are:

أَبٌ ، أَخٌ ، فَمٌ ، حَمٌ ، ذُوٌ

Their meanings are given in the following table:

father	أَبٌ
brother	أَخٌ
mouth	فَمٌ
father-in-law/ brother-in-law	حَمٌ
the one of... possessor of...	ذُوٌ

These five nouns can appear in a range of settings. Out of all the various situations that they may find themselves in there is only one that is of interest to us, since the peculiarity of *i'rāb* that these five nouns display only reveals itself in that particular situation. That situation is when they happen to stand as ***mudāf* in an *iḍāfah* construction.**

Now, let's take the first of the five by way of example, and see how it presents itself in terms of *i'rāb* change:

مَرَرْتُ بِأَبِي مُحَمَّدٍ

رَأَيْتُ أَبَا مُحَمَّدٍ

جَاءَ أَبُو مُحَمَّدٍ

Take the second one and see what happens:

جَاءَ أَخُوكَ رَأَيْتُ أَخَاكَ مَرَرْتُ بِأَخِيكَ

With the word *fam*, meaning mouth, one has a choice: you may either retain the *mīm*, in which case its *i'rāb* will be very normal and not like the rest of the *asmā' khamsah*; or you may replace the *mīm* with the *wāw*, in which case it will display the same peculiarity as the above two.

هَذَا فُؤُوكَ افْتَحَ فَاكَ اجْعَلْ يَدَكَ عَلَى فَيْبِكَ

The word *dhū* displays exactly the same phenomenon: a *wāw* after a *ḍammah* when it is *marfū'*, an *alif* after a *fathah* when it is *manṣūb*, and a *yā'* after a *kasrah* when it is *majrūr*.

هَلْ بَدَأَ ذُو الْحِجَّةِ؟ نَسْتَعِظُ ذَا الْحِجَّةِ يَحُجُّ النَّاسُ فِي ذِي الْحِجَّةِ

The peculiarity of the *asmā' khamsah* is thus that—

- in the case of *raf'* they display *i'rāb* through a *wāw* after a *ḍammah*, instead of the normal *ḍammah* on the last letter;
- in the case of *naṣb* they display *i'rāb* through an *alif* after a *fathah*, instead of the normal *fathah* on the last letter;
- in the case of *jarr* they display *i'rāb* through a *yā'* after a *kasrah*, instead of the normal *kasrah* on the last letter.

LESSON 5

The *Ghayr Munṣarif*

The last of the anomalous cases of *i'rāb* is called the *ghayr munṣarif*, or alternatively, the *mamnū' minā ṣ-ṣarf*. What does this term mean?

Literally it means that the noun does not allow *ṣarf*, or is prevented from *ṣarf*. This creates another question: what is meant by *ṣarf* in this context? You would not be blamed for thinking of *ṣarf* as morphology, the discipline that teaches how to conjugate words from basic root letters. However, that is not the *ṣarf* of which we speak in this lesson.

When we speak of *ṣarf* in this context we refer to two characteristics of the *ism*. Those two characteristics are—

- the fact that it can have a *tanwīn* at the end;
- and the fact that its last *ḥarakah* can be a *kasrah*.

An *ism* that admits both *tanwīn* and *hamzah* will be *munṣarif*, whereas the one that is prevented from *tanwīn* and *kasrah* on its last letter is *ghayr munṣarif* or *mamnū' minā ṣ-ṣarf*. This table might help to clarify the concept.

جر	نصب	رفع		
كِتَابٍ	كِتَابًا	كِتَابٌ	كِتَاب	منصرف
أَفْضَلُ	أَفْضَلُ	أَفْضَلُ	أَفْضَل	غير منصرف
قَلَمٍ	قَلَمًا	قَلَمٌ	قَلَم	منصرف
إِبْرَاهِيمَ	إِبْرَاهِيمَ	إِبْرَاهِيمُ	إِبْرَاهِيم	غير منصرف
خَالِدٍ	خَالِدًا	خَالِدٌ	خَالِد	منصرف
عُمَرَ	عُمَرَ	عُمَرُ	عمر	غير منصرف
مَسْجِدٍ	مَسْجِدًا	مَسْجِدٌ	مسجد	منصرف
مَسَاجِدَ	مَسَاجِدَ	مَسَاجِدُ	مساجد	غير منصرف

By comparing the regular (*munṣarif*) words to the *ghayr munṣarif* ones, you may easily conclude that—

- regular words receive *tanwīn* at the end, while *ghayr munṣarif* words don't;
- and regular words receive *kasrah* for *jarr*, while *ghayr munṣarif* words make do with a *fathḥah* instead of a *kasrah*.

Where the rules of *ghayr munṣarif* apply

Having now learnt what a *ghayr munṣarif* word is, it is just natural to begin wondering what causes it to become *ghayr munṣarif*. But before going any further, there is one point that must be made. For the purposes of making this point, consider the words below.

	مضاف	معرّف باللام	
أَفْضَلُ	أَفْضَلُ النَّاسِ	الْأَفْضَلُ	أفضل
مَسَاجِدُ	مَسَاجِدُ الْبَلَدِ	الْمَسَاجِدُ	مساجد

What this table sets out for us is that a word may be in one of three situations:

- it either has *alif-lām* at the beginning (which we call *mu'arraḥ bi l-lām*, or made definite through *lām*);
- or it stands as the *muḍāf* (possessed) which is the first word in an *iḍāfah* construction;
- or neither of the above.

The rules of *ghayr munṣarif* which we are about to discuss only apply to the third situation. This is why it appears shaded in the table.

Causes of being *ghayr munṣarif*

For a word to be *ghayr munṣarif* it needs to contain within itself sufficient cause of being *ghayr munṣarif*. Sometimes one single cause will suffice, but in most cases a

combination of two causes is needed for it to become *ghayr munṣarif*. This gives us two categories of *ghayr munṣarif*:

- single-cause *ghayr munṣarif*,
- and double-cause *ghayr munṣarif*.

1. Single-cause *ghayr munṣarif*

In Part One you would have learnt about the broken plural. One particular form that the broken plural takes is called *muntaha l-jumūʿ*, or the ultimate plural. What is this ultimate plural? It is a form of plural best understood through first looking at some examples:

مفرد	جمع
مَسْجِد	مَسَاجِد
مِصْبَاح	مِصَابِيح
حَامِل	حَوَامِل
قُنْبَلَة	قَنَابِل
أَفْضَل	أَفَاضِل
أَنْبُوءَة	أَنْبَاءِيب
مَسْأَلَة	مَسَائِل

As you read through the plurals in the *jamʿ* column you will start noticing a pattern forming. All of them have something in common. They all begin with a short syllable with a *fathah*, followed by a long syllable whose *fathah* is elongated by an *alif*. The remaining syllable presents some variation: it may be either long, as in *maṣābīḥ* and *anābīb*, or short, as in *masāʿil* and *qanābil*.

This is the *muntaha l-jumūʿ*, or ultimate plural: a form of broken plural that consists of three syllables (excluding the letter of *iʿrāb*): a short syllable with a

fathah, followed by a long syllable in which the *fathah* is lengthened by an *alif*, followed by a syllable with either a short *kasrah*, or a *kasrah* lengthened by *yā*.

Now that you know what *mntaha l-jumū* is, you are ready to learn that as long as the *mntaha l-jumū*—

- does not have *alif-lām* before it,
- or is not a *muḍāf*,

it will be *ghayr munṣarif*, refusing both *tanwīn* and *kasrah*. The single cause for it being *ghayr munṣarif* is the fact that it is *mntaha l-jumū*.

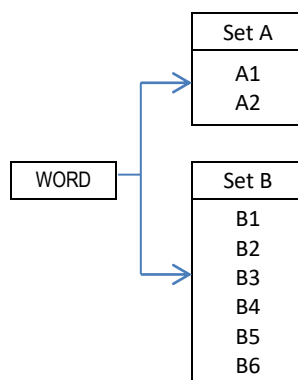
فِي بَلَدِنَا مَسَاجِدُ كَثِيرَةٌ ، تَعَلَّمْنَا مَسَائِلَ مِنْ كِتَابِ الصَّلَاةِ ، تَفْتَحُ الْأَقْفَالُ بِمَفَاتِيحِ

2. Double-cause *ghayr munṣarif*

With double-cause *ghayr munṣarif* things become a bit more intricate. What we are going to have here is two sets of causes. Let's call them Set A and Set B.

Set A is the more important set, and the causes which are found in it (which are going to be two only) are our **primary causes**. The causes in Set B will only come into consideration after the primary cause has already been found. We will therefore refer to the causes in Set B as **secondary causes**.

For a word to be *ghayr munṣarif* it will require one primary cause from Set A, combined to one secondary cause from Set B.



Set A: Primary causes

There are only two primary causes:

- being an *‘alam*, or a proper noun;
- being a *ṣifah*, or a descriptive noun.

Cause A1: Being an *‘alam*

An *‘alam* is a proper noun. We know proper nouns as those capitalised words which are the personal names of persons. Go back to look at the table in which we compared regular nouns to the *ghayr munṣarif* noun. Look at two of them in particular: *Ibrāhīm* and *‘Umar*. What do they have in common? They are both personal names.

When a noun happens to be an *‘alam* it holds the potential of becoming *ghayr munṣarif*. Of course, for that to actually happen it would still need a secondary cause from Set B.

For our immediate purposes, however, it is enough to know that the first major cause of being *ghayr munṣarif* is that the word is an *‘alam*, a proper noun.

Cause A2: Being a *ṣifah*

The second major cause of being *ghayr munṣarif* is that the word is a *ṣifah* or a descriptive noun. In the table earlier you would have come across the word *aḡḡal*, meaning *the best* or *most virtuous*. You can see that the word describes something about someone. It compares him to others and makes the point that he is better than them.

As a cause for being *ghayr munṣarif*, the *ṣifah* is a bit of a wide category. It includes colours in both masculine and feminine forms, such as

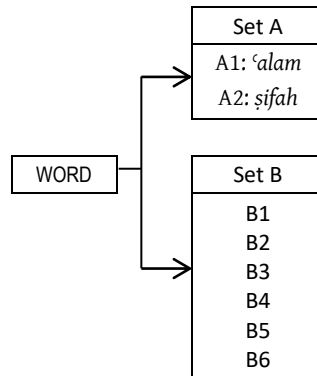
	مؤنث	مذكر
white	بَيَضَاء	أَبْيَض

black	سَوْدَاءَ	أَسْوَدَ
red	حَمْرَاءَ	أَحْمَرَ

and descriptions of the human state, such as

hungry	جَوْعَانَ
angry	غَضَبَانَ
lazy	كَسْلَانَ

We have now completed the two major causes of being *ghayr munṣarif*. We may therefore update the sketch of the two sets of causes by filling in the names of the major causes as follows:



Set B: Secondary causes

There are six secondary causes. To begin with we may list them:

- *ʿujmah*, or being of foreign (non-Arab) origin
- *taʿnīth*, or being feminine
- *wazn al-fiʿl*, or having the same format (or scale) as a verb
- *ʿadl*, or being on the scale of *fuʿal*, eg. *ʿUmar*
- *tarkīb mazjī*, or being composed of two separate words moulded into one

- *alif-nūn zā'idatān*, or having an extra *alif-nūn* at the end

Cause B1: *ʿUjmah*

The Arabic language contains a number of proper nouns whose origins lie in languages other than Arabic. The names of some of the Prophets are prominent examples: Ibrāhīm, Ismāʿīl, Yūsuf, Dāwūd, etc. All these originate from languages other than Arabic.

Since they are proper nouns (*aʿlām*) in the first place, and contain the element of foreign origin (*ʿujmah*) in the second place, they are *ghayr munṣarif*. As such they can get neither *kasrah* nor *tanwīn*. They will thus take *iʿrāb* as follows:

جر	نصب	رفع
إِبْرَاهِيمَ	إِبْرَاهِيمَ	إِبْرَاهِيمُ
هَارُونَ	هَارُونَ	هَارُونُ
يُوسُفَ	يُوسُفَ	يُوسُفُ

Cause B2: *Taʾnīth*

Nouns in Arabic are either masculine (*mudhakkar*) or feminine (*muʿannath*); there is no neuter gender. That much we have learnt in Part One of this book. What we will now add to that prior knowledge is that when a noun happens to be an *ʿalam*, or proper noun, and in addition it is also *muʿannath*, then such a noun will be *ghayr munṣarif* in terms of its *iʿrāb*.

The femininity of an *ʿalam* of this sort can come in a number of ways. We could either see the ubiquitous *tāʾ marbūṭah* at its end. Alternatively we could have no obvious sign of femininity but we still know that it refers to a female. There could even be the opposite case: where we have a *tāʾ marbūṭah* at the end but we know it to be masculine. All of these would be *ghayr munṣarif*.

Thus, none of the *aʿlām* in the following examples could ever receive either *kasrah* or *tanwīn*.

فاطمة ، خديجة - زينب ، مريم - حمزة ، طلحة

Each of them will look as follows in the various *i'rāb* cases:

رفع	نصب	جر
فاطمةٌ	فاطمةَ	فاطمةَ
خديجةٌ	خديجةَ	خديجةَ
زينبٌ	زينبَ	زينبَ
مريمٌ	مريمَ	مريمَ
حمزةٌ	حمزةَ	حمزةَ
طلحةٌ	طلحةَ	طلحةَ

Cause B3: *Wazn al-fi'l*

Your study of *ṣarf* would have already made you aware that words derived from root letters tend to assume certain set forms. Each of these set forms is called a *wazn*, or a scale. And then you also know, of course, that the scales for nouns are different from those of verbs.

However, we do come across those rare instances where the scales for certain nouns are almost identical to those of certain verbs. This phenomenon is called *wazn al-fi'l*. To have a better understanding of what is meant by it and how it works, consider how the nouns in the table below resemble the verbs next to which they stand.

اسم	فعل	اسم	فعل
يَثْرِبُ	يَضْرِبُ	أَحْمَدُ	أَفْعَلُ (أَفْعَلُ يُفْعَلُ)
تَغْلِبُ	تَغْلِبُ	أَسْلَمُ	
يَعِيشُ	يَعِيشُ	أَرْشَدُ	

Yathrib is the pre-Islamic name of *Madīnah Munawwarah*. *Banū Taghlib* is the name of an Arab tribe named after its ancestor *Taghlib ibn Wā'il*. And *Ya'īsh* is a name given to boys.

When the *wazn al-fi'l* phenomenon occurs in a noun which also happens to be an *ʿalam* or proper noun, it results in yet another case of *ghayr munṣarif*. Consequently we find the above words displaying *i'rāb* as shown below.

رفع	نصب	جر
أَحْمَدُ	أَحْمَدَ	أَحْمَدَ
أَسْلَمُ	أَسْلَمَ	أَسْلَمَ
أَرْشَدُ	أَرْشَدَ	أَرْشَدَ
يُثْرَبُ	يُثْرَبَ	يُثْرَبَ
تَغْلِبُ	تَغْلِبَ	تَغْلِبَ
يُعِيشُ	يُعِيشَ	يُعِيشَ

Cause B4: *ʿAdl*

ʿAdl can be a bit of a complicated concept to grasp. For the sake of simplification we will simply say that it occurs when a noun comes on the scale of *fuʿal*, such as the name *ʿUmar*. Let's look at some examples, and then how they would appear in the various cases of *i'rāb*.

عُمَرُ ، زُفَرُ ، مُضَرٌ ، زُحَلٌ ، قُثَمٌ ، هُبَلٌ

ʿUmar, *Zufar* and *Qutham* are personal names. *Muḍar* is the name of an Arab tribe. *Zuḥal* is the Arabic name for *Saturn*, and *Hubal* is the name of a god worshipped in the *Jāhiliyyah*.

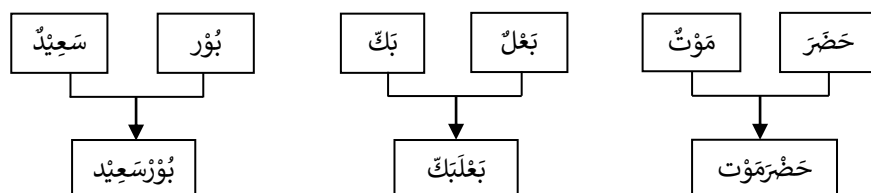
رفع	نصب	جر
عُمَرُ	عُمَرَ	عُمَرَ
زُفَرُ	زُفَرَ	زُفَرَ

مُضَرَّ	مُضَرَّ	مُضَرَّ
زُحَلَّ	زُحَلَّ	زُحَلَّ
قُثِمَ	قُثِمَ	قُثِمَ
هُبِّلَ	هُبِّلَ	هُبِّلَ

Cause B5: *Tarkīb mazjī*

The phenomenon of moulding a single word out of two separate words is by no means particular to the Arabic language. In English we have what they call a *portmanteau*, an example of which is *Microsoft*. This word was made up of two words: *microcomputer* and *software*.

The formation of a portmanteau in the Arabic language is referred to as *tarkīb mazjī*. *Tarkīb* means to assemble, while *mazj* means to blend. Thus, *tarkīb mazjī* would denote the act of assembling a single word through the blending of two separate words into one. The manner in which this is done is demonstrated in the examples that follow.



The verb *ḥaḍara* and the noun *mawt* were combined into *Ḥaḍramawt*, which is the name that is applied to South Yemen. Several stories are told that seek to explain the combination. One is that ‘Āmir ibn Qaḥṭān, who was the first to settle in the area after the prophet Hūd, was a fierce warrior whose presence on the battlefield meant death to many. It became common then to say إِذَا حَضَرَ عَامِرٌ حَضَرَ الْمَوْتُ, or *Where ‘Āmir is present, death is present*. The passage of time saw this contracted into only حَضَرَ الْمَوْتُ which eventually became a nickname for ‘Āmir himself, now

adapted into the single word حَضْرَمَوْتُ . When ‘Āmir ibn Qaḥṭān eventually settled in this particular region, the whole region came to be named after him.

Ba‘l is an ancient Phoenician god whose name is sometimes spelled in English as *Baal*. *Bakk* is adapted from the Phoenician word for *place* or *city*. *Ba‘labakk* (or Baalbek as the name of the Lebanese city is spelled in English) thus means *City of Baal*.

The English word *port* was adapted to *būr*, and then attached to the name of the Egyptian ruler, the Khedive Sa‘īd (died 1863) to produce the name of the city founded under his rule at the northern entrance to the Suez Canal in 1859: *Būr*sa‘īd, or in English, Port Said.

These three words—*Haḍramawt*, *Ba‘labakk* and *Būr*sa‘īd—can clearly be seen to be *a‘lām*: they are all the names of places. They and others of their type—in which the primary factor of being a proper noun is combined with the secondary factor of being assembled out of separate words—display *i‘rāb* in the following manner.

جر	نصب	رفع
حَضْرَمَوْتُ	حَضْرَمَوْتُ	حَضْرَمَوْتُ
بَعْلَبَكْ	بَعْلَبَكْ	بَعْلَبَكْ
بُورِ سَعِيدَ	بُورِ سَعِيدَ	بُورِ سَعِيدَ

Cause B6: *Alif-nūn zā‘idatān*

Before going to discuss the extra *alif-nūn*, there is an important observation to be made. In all of the five previous causes, you might have noticed that they only combined with *‘alam* as primary cause. This last secondary cause is the only one to be shared between both *‘alam* and *ṣifah*.

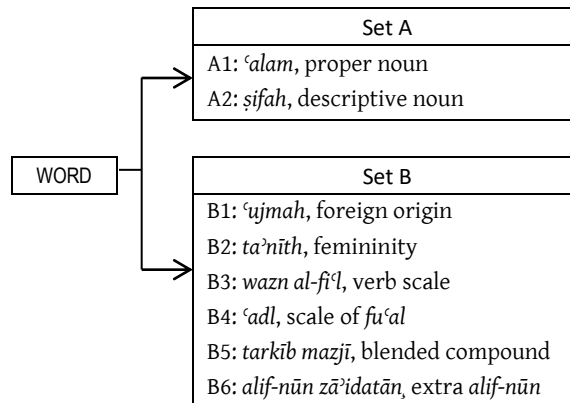
With that out of way, there are two questions to be asked: What is this *alif-nūn* device? And why is it described as being *zā‘id*, or extra? The answer to the first

question is obvious: it is the letters *alif* and *nūn* that appear at the end of a noun, be that noun an *‘alam* or a *ṣifah*. What is it that makes it extra, though?

From your study you would recall the concept of root letters. Arabic words tend to originate out of 3-letter (or sometimes 4-letter or 5-letter) combinations. Now, when all of the root letters have already taken their position in a particular noun, and the *alif-nūn* device gets affixed to it only thereafter, then such an *alif-nūn* suffix is considered as being extra. In this table we separate root-letter *alif-nūn* (أصلي) from extra *alif-nūn* (زائد).

اسم	مادة	أصلي	زائد
عُثْمَان	ع ث م		•
حَسَّان	ح س ن	•	
عَدْنَان	ع د ن		•
سَلَمَان	س ل م		•
يَقْطَان	ي ق ظ		•
زَيَّان	ز ي ن	•	
جَوْعَان	ج و ع		•

With this we have now come to just about the end of our lesson on the *ghayr munṣarif*. It is time therefore for an update. Let’s take the diagram on dual-cause *ghayr munṣarif* and bring it up to date with what we have learnt since we last dealt with it.



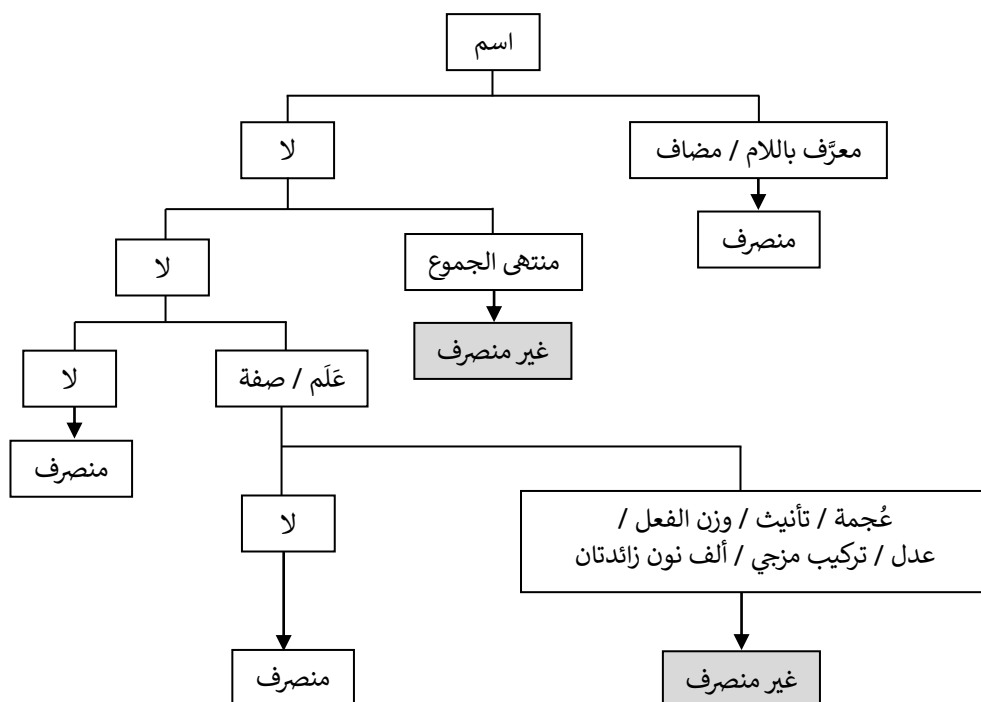
Finally, before concluding this lesson (with which Section One of this book will also come to an end) let us spell out the steps to be taken when one encounters a word in text that might, or might not, be *ghayr munṣarif*.

Determining whether a word which you come across in text is *munṣarif* or *ghayr munṣarif* can be a bit daunting at first. But there is a simple series of questions which you should ask yourself to make this determination. By repeating this process over and over, the decision making process will eventually become natural and virtually effortless. But it all presupposes a thorough understanding of the concepts involved.

The questions you should ask yourself are these four:

- **Is this noun (a) *mu‘arraff bi l-lām*, (b) *muḍāf*, or (c) neither?** If your answer is (a) or (b), the noun is *munṣarif*. If (c), go to the following question.
- **Does this noun come on the scale of the ultimate plural?** If yes, it is *ghayr munṣarif*. If not, go to the next question.
- **Is this noun an *‘alam* or a *ṣifah*?** If neither, it is *munṣarif*. If either, it is potentially *ghayr munṣarif*, so go to the next question.
- **Does this noun contain any of the 6 secondary causes?** If none, it is *munṣarif*. If yes, it is *ghayr munṣarif*.

We may now set these four questions in a diagram.



SECTION TWO

Anomalous causes of *i'rāb*

The previous section dealt with situations where the causes of *i'rāb* were normal, but the signs that displayed *i'rāb* represented a departure from the norm. In the present section we will deal with cases where the causes themselves act in an irregular fashion.

From our previous experience we have become accustomed to stability and predictability in *i'rāb*. The *fā'il* is always *marfū'*. There is never a situation when the *maf'ūl bihī* is anything but *manṣub*. Both *mubtada'* and *khavar* stick relentlessly to being *marfū'*. And no surprises with the *muḍāf ilayh* either: it is always a stable and predictable *majrūr*.

In this section we will study three cases where one single cause of *i'rāb* produces different *i'rābs* in different situations. So Cause A, for example, would in Situation 1 produce *raf'*, while in Situation 2 it produces *naṣb*.

To such “unstable” causes of *i'rāb* we will refer collectively as *anomalous causes*. The anomalous causes of *i'rāb* that we will study are three:

➤ **The *munādā*, or vocative.**

This is the word after the vocative particle *يَا* in the expression, *يَا زَيْدُ*.

➤ **The *mustathnā*, or exception.**

This is the word following the particle of exception *إِلَّا*.

➤ **The *ma'dūd*, or the counted noun.**

This is the noun that follows the numeral, an example of which would be the word *أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كُوْكَبًا* in *كُوْكَبًا*.

LESSON 6

The *Munādā*

Most languages would have a manner of drawing the attention of the person one wishes to speak to by calling out to him. In today's English we might say, "Hey John," whereas in old archaic English the form would have been, "O John." Often we simply shout the person's name without any *hey* or *O*.

Arabic is no exception. The most common way of calling upon someone (the technical term for which is *nidā'*, by the way) is to use the word *يَا* before his name: *يَا يَحْيَى*. But there are other ways of achieving the purposes of *nidā'* as well. Instead of *يَا* you might use *أَيُّهَا*—although this usage is rare. You might even leave *يَا* out altogether and proceed (in terms of grammar) as if you had actually used it. And when the word happens to be *mu'arraḥ bi l-lām* you cannot use *يَا* at all. In its place you will use *أَيُّهَا*.

However, in this lesson it is not the vocative particle, or *ḥarf al-nidā'* (the word *يَا* and its substitutes) which is going to be the focus of our attention, but rather the word that follows it. The *ḥarf al-nidā'* exerts an effect upon the *i'rāb* of the word that follows it (which we call the *munādā*, or vocative). It is our purpose here to investigate that effect.

Three situations

From the introduction to this section we already know that the causes of *i'rāb* we are about to study do not impart *i'rāb* in a uniform, stable way. The *ḥarf al-nidā'* does not impart one standard *i'rāb* case to its *munādā*. Sometimes it causes the *munādā* to become *manṣūb*, and sometimes it completely departs from the realm of *i'rāb* and turns the *munādā* into a *mabnī* or uninflected noun² that carries a single *ḍammah* without *tanwīn*!

² You might remember learning in Lesson 6 of Part One of this book that nouns may be either *mu'rab*, which receives *i'rāb*, or *mabnī*, which is impervious to *i'rāb*.

So when does it do what? Grammarians have identified three distinct situations in which the *munādā* may find itself. The *munādā* may be—

- a single word, eg. يَا مُحَمَّدُ
- a *muḍāf*, eg. يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ
- or a quasi-*muḍāf* (i.e. a word resembling the *muḍāf* without actually being a *muḍāf*) eg. يَا مُبَلِّغًا كِتَابَ اللَّهِ

This third situation requires some explanation. In an actual *iḍāfah* construction the *muḍāf* and the *muḍāf ilayh* are very closely connected. The closeness of their connection can be seen from the manner in which the *muḍāf* sheds its *tanwīn* to attach itself to the *muḍāf ilayh*, and the corresponding manner in which the *muḍāf ilayh* clings to *jarr* so as to reflect its exclusive attachment to the *muḍāf*. With a single-word *munādā* you see no such attachments.

There are cases, however, when the *munādā* might appear to be a single word, but it is loosely attached to the phrase that follows it. This attachment is not as close and restrictive as the *iḍāfah* construction, but it is an attachment nonetheless.

On account of the resemblance with the *muḍāf*, it is called *mushabbah bi l-muḍaf*, which means “similar to the *muḍāf*”. For our purposes we will use the term *quasi-muḍāf*.

An example might serve well to elucidate the loose attachment we speak of between the quasi-*muḍāf* and its attached phrase.

يَا مُبَلِّغًا كِتَابَ اللَّهِ

This sentence means, *O you who convey the Book of Allah*. In it you see the word مُبَلِّغًا shaded while the phrase after it has been underlined. Let us now investigate the relationship between these two. We will do so in a series of questions and answers.

- **First question:** Do they form a *muḍāf–muḍāf ilayh* construction?

No.

- **Second question:** Why not?

Because مُبَلِّغًا still has its *tanwīn*, and كِتَاب is *manṣub*. Had this been *idāfah* مُبَلِّغًا would have dropped its *tanwīn* and كِتَاب would have been *majrūr*.

- **Third question:** So what is the relationship between مُبَلِّغًا and كِتَاب?

If مُبَلِّغًا is the person who is conveying, then كِتَاب is the object which is being conveyed. Therefore, كِتَاب is the *maf'ūl bihī* of the *fi'l* that lies contained within مُبَلِّغًا.³

- **Fourth question:** Is this *maf'ūl bihī* relationship the only one that can exist between the quasi-*muḍāf* and its connected phrase?

No. It could be a *maf'ūl bihī* such as in the example above and in the following examples:

يا عارِفًا نَفْسَهُ ، يا سَامِعًا قَوَّيْ ، يا طَالِبًا عِلْمَ الدِّينِ ، يا رَاكِبًا سَيَارَةَ أُجْرَةٍ؛

At times the connected phrase might be a *ẓarf* that indicates the place where the quasi-*muḍāf* finds itself:

يا طَالِعًا فَوْقَ الْجَبَلِ ، يا مُسْتَغْفِرًا عِنْدَ السَّحَرِ ، يا مُسْتَقِظًا ظَهْرًا ، يا طَائِفًا حَوْلَ الْكُعْبَةِ

Sometimes the connected phrase might be just a *muta'alliq* (consisting of *ḥarf al-jarr* + *majrūr*):

يا نَائِمًا فِي الْمَسْجِدِ ، يا كَاتِبًا فِي الْكُرَّاسَةِ ، يا نَاطِرًا إِلَى الْبَحْرِ ، يا جَالِسًا عَلَى الْكَرْسِيِّ

³ You will learn more about the phenomenon of an *ism* containing a *fi'l* in Lesson 9.

⁴ A رَاكِب is a rider, and a سَيَارَةُ أُجْرَةٍ is a taxi.

I'rab of the *munādā*

Now that we have covered the three situations, let us move on to the *i'rab* applicable to each one.

At this point, just a quick note of correction: it wouldn't be 100% correct to speak of *i'rab* for each situation, since the *munādā* of the first situation (where the *munādā* is a single word) happens to be *mabnī*, and *binā* as we know is a case of non-*i'rab* as opposed to *i'rab*. Even so, whether *mabnī* or *mu'rab*, the student still needs to know what *ḥarakah* to assign to the last letter of the *munādā*.

So now, back to the three situations:

- **In Situation 1**, where the *munādā* is a single word, its last letter will be ***mabnī* upon a single *ḍammah***, without *tanwīn*. Thus—

يا محمدُ ، يا رسولُ ، يا أستاذُ ، يا شيخُ ، يا طالبُ ، يا مالكُ

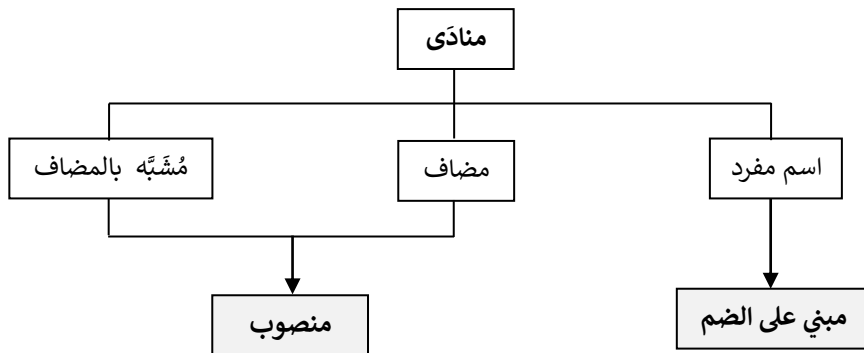
- **In Situation 2**, where the *munādā* is *muḍāf*, it will be ***manṣūb***. The fact that it is deprived of *tanwīn* is due to its being *muḍāf*. Thus—

يا رسولَ اللهِ ، يا عبدَ الرحمنِ ، يا إمامَ المسجدِ ، يا عبدَ اللهِ ، يا حُفَاطَ القرآنِ

- **In Situation 3**, where the *munādā* is *mushabbah bi l-muḍāf*, or quasi-*muḍāf*, it will be ***manṣūb* with *tanwīn***. Thus—

يا راجيًّا رَحْمَةَ اللهِ ، يا مُطِيعًا وَالِدَيْهِ ، يا مُسَافِرًا إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ ، يا راجِعًا يَوْمَ السَّبْتِ ، يا مُجْتَهِدًا فِي طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ

The diagram below sums up what we have learnt about the *munādā*.



LESSON 7

The *Mustathnā*

At the most basic level the *mustathnā* is Zayd in the sentence where you say, *Everyone came, except Zayd*. He is the exception to the statement which the sentence makes. In Arabic we use the word **إِلَّا** to make an exception.

Our concern, however, is not as much with the word used for exception, as it is with the effect which that word has on the *i'rāb* of the word which follows it. That word is the *mustathnā*, or the exception. It is the Zayd of our sentence above.

So what is the *i'rāb* of the *mustathnā*? In a nutshell: it is sometimes *marfū'* and sometimes *manṣūb*. The rest of this lesson will teach you when to make it *marfū'* and when to make it *manṣūb*.

To get to the bottom of that we will first have to cover some basic concepts. Essentially, two concepts:

- **First**, the idea that a sentence may be either *complete*, or *incomplete*.
- **Second**, the statement which the sentence makes may be either *positive*, or *negative*.

But none of this will make full sense until we see them represented in actual examples. So, let's look at a few examples. In the table below we will use the following Arabic terminology:

- A complete positive sentence: **جَمَلَةٌ تَامَّةٌ مُوجِبَةٌ**
- A complete negative sentence: **جَمَلَةٌ تَامَّةٌ نَافِيَةٌ**
- An incomplete sentence:⁵ **جَمَلَةٌ نَاقِصَةٌ**

With terminology now in place, we move on to the examples.

⁵ The incomplete sentence only comes as negative. There is no incomplete positive sentence.

جمله		
ناقصة	تامة	
	نافية	موجبة
C	B	A
مَا جَاءَ...	مَا جَاءَ أَحَدٌ.	جَاءَ الْقَوْمُ.
مَا عَصَى...	مَا عَصَتْ الْمَلَائِكَةُ.	سَجَدَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ.
لَنْ يَنْجَحَ...	لَنْ يَنْجَحَ الطُّلَّابُ.	سَيَنْجَحُ الطُّلَّابُ.
مَا صَرَيْتُ...	مَا صَرَيْتُ أَحَدًا.	صَرَيْتُ جَمِيعَ الطُّلَّابِ.
لَمْ يُحْفَظْ...	لَمْ يُحْفَظِ الْإِنْجِيلُ.	حُفِظَ جَمِيعُ الْكُتُبِ.

The complete sentences require no explanation. What you can see with the incomplete sentence is that there is still something missing in it, for which reason we placed an ellipsis (three dots) after each of them.

Up to now no exception has been made from any of these sentences. The moment *إلا* enters the sentence, it comes to have three parts:

- **The *mustathnā minhu*:** This is simply the statement as it stood before *إلا* entered. The exception is made from the purview of this statement.
- **The *ḥarf al-istithnā*:** This is the word *إلا* itself. We call it the *particle of exception*.
- **The *mustathnā*:** This is the exception itself which is excluded from the statement before it.

Our focus is the *mustathnā*. More specifically, the *īrāb* of the *mustathnā*. Let it be stated as a rule here that what happens to the *īrāb* of the *mustathnā* is wholly dependent on the condition of the *mustathnā minhu*. So what is it that we need to know about the condition of the *mustathnā minhu*? You need to know that the *mustathnā minhu* can be in one of three states. It can be—

- a complete and positive sentence, or *جمله تامة موجبة*, which is A in the table above;

- a complete and negative sentence, or *جملة تامّة نافية* , which is B in the table above;
- or an incomplete sentence, or *جملة ناقصة* , which is C in the table above.

For each situation you will follow a different rule:

- **Situation A:** The *mustathnā* will be *manṣūb*.
- **Situation B:** You have two choices here:
 - You can make it *manṣub*,
 - or you can make it a *badal*⁶ of what comes before it in the sentence.
- **Situation C:** Look at the *mustathnā minhu* and see what implications it holds for the *i'rāb* of the *mustathnā*. An easy way of determining this is to assume that لا is not there.

The *i'rāb* for Situation A and the first choice for Situation B are fairly simple and straightforward. It allows us to do the following:

تامة	
نافية	موجبة
B1	A
مَا جَاءَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا زَيْدًا.	جَاءَ الْقَوْمُ إِلَّا زَيْدًا.
مَا عَصَتْ الْمَلَائِكَةُ إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ.	سَجَدَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ.
لَنْ يَنْجَحَ الطُّلَابُ إِلَّا الْمُجْتَهِدُ.	سَيَنْجَحُ الطُّلَابُ إِلَّا الْكَسَلَانُ.
مَا ضَرَبْتُ أَحَدًا إِلَّا الشَّرِيرَ.	ضَرَبْتُ جَمِيعَ الطُّلَابِ إِلَّا الْمُتَأَدِّبَ.
لَمْ تُحَفَظِ الْكُتُبُ إِلَّا الْقُرْآنُ.	حُرِفَتِ الْكُتُبُ إِلَّا الْقُرْآنُ.

The other two are somewhat vague, though. The best way to remove that vagueness is to apply the rule to the examples and note the outcome. So let us do

⁶ You would recall the *badal*, or substitute, as one of the *tawābi'*, or followers, from the last lesson of Part One.

exactly that. We are going to apply the second choice of *badal* to the examples in B (making it B2).

The *mustathnā minhu* in each of the five examples contains a noun that already has its own *i'rāb*. Those words are أَحَدٌ , الملائكةُ , الطلابُ , and الكتبُ . The second choice you have in B allows you to simply give the *mustathnā* that same *i'rāb*. Apply this simple rule and you get the following:

B2	
مَا جَاءَ أَحَدًا إِلَّا زَيْدٌ.	مَا جَاءَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا زَيْدٌ.
مَا عَصَتْ الْمَلَائِكَةُ إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ.	مَا عَصَى إِبْلِيسٌ إِلَّا الْمَلَائِكَةُ.
لَنْ يَنْجَحَ الطُّلَابُ إِلَّا الْمُجْتَهِدُ.	لَنْ يَنْجَحَ الْمُجْتَهِدُ إِلَّا الطُّلَابُ.
مَا صَرَبْتُ أَحَدًا إِلَّا الشَّرِيرَ.	مَا صَرَبْتُ الشَّرِيرَ إِلَّا أَحَدًا.
لَمْ تُحَفَظِ الْكُتُبُ إِلَّا الْقُرْآنُ.	لَمْ يُحَفَظْ الْقُرْآنُ إِلَّا الْكُتُبُ.

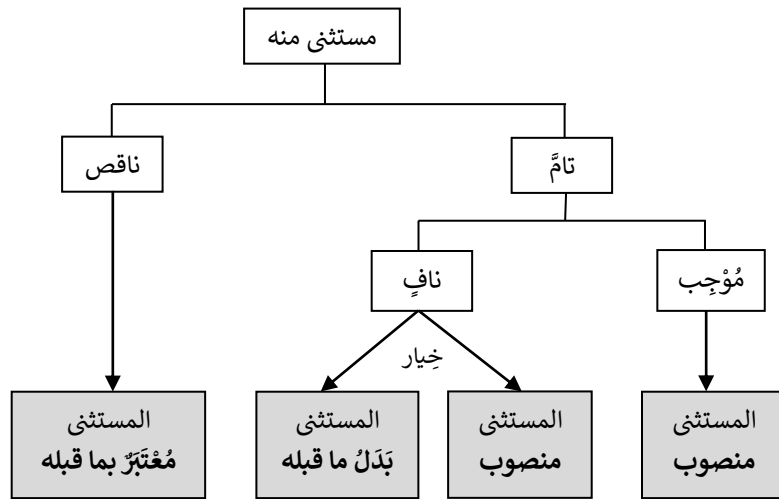
The rule for Situation C states that we must look to the *mustathnā minhu* and see what implications its structure holds for the *i'rāb* of the *mustathnā*. This much is admittedly still very vague, so we gave a rule of thumb: simply remove the *إلا* in your mind's eye, and remove the negating particle as well. Let the *mustathnā minhu* now directly influence the *i'rāb* of the *mustathnā*. Let's see what happens when we do this.

C	
جَاءَ ... زَيْدٌ	مَا جَاءَ إِلَّا زَيْدٌ
عَصَى ... إِبْلِيسُ	مَا عَصَى إِلَّا إِبْلِيسُ
يَنْجَحُ ... الْمُجْتَهِدُ	لَنْ يَنْجَحَ إِلَّا الْمُجْتَهِدُ
صَرَبْتُ ... الشَّرِيرَ	مَا صَرَبْتُ إِلَّا الشَّرِيرَ
يُحَفَظُ ... الْقُرْآنُ	لَمْ يُحَفَظْ إِلَّا الْقُرْآنُ

The greyed out column to the left shows how this rule works.

- If there was no إلا then زيد would have been the *fā'il* of جاء .
- If there was no إلا then إبليس would have been the *fā'il* of عصى .
- If there was no إلا then المجتهد would have been the *fā'il* of ينجح .
- If there was no إلا then الشرير would have been the *maḥlūl bihī* of ضربت .
- If there was no إلا then القرآن would have been the *nā'ib al-fā'il* of يحفظ .

We may now place what we have learnt about the *ī'rāb* of the *mustathnā* into a diagram.



LESSON 8

The *Ma'dūd*

When we count things we typically have two words: the number, and the object that is counted. In the *Seven Dwarfs*, for example, *Seven* is your number, and *Dwarfs* is what you count by that number. In Arabic, the number is the *ʿadad* while the counted object is the *ma'dūd*.

You might already have deduced that for a noun to be *ma'dūd* has some bearing upon its *i'rāb*. And from the fact that we are discussing it in the section on anomalous causes of *i'rāb* you would also be able to formulate some idea about inconsistency in the manner that the *ma'dūd* takes *i'rāb*.

It is not only the *i'rāb* of the *ma'dūd* that is affected when the *ʿadad* and *ma'dūd* combine, but even its number. So this adds another dimension of complexity.⁷ What we would need to do is find a way to reduce this complexity into something simple and amenable.

Numbers are by their very nature infinite. You could theoretically go on counting forever. But for *i'rāb* purposes you need not be alarmed by the prospect of infinity. All you need to know is three sets of numbers:

- **Set A:** 3 to 10⁸
- **Set B:** 11 to 99
- **Set C:** the hundreds (100, 200, 300...) and the thousands (1000, 2000, 3000...)

⁷ As you will soon learn in the addendum to this lesson, even gender is affected when *ʿadad* and *ma'dūd* combine.

⁸ Numbers 1 and 2 do not feature here. That is because they operate like *mawṣūf* and *ṣifah* rather than *ʿadad* and *ma'dūd*. To understand the difference, consider these examples: I would say *كِتَابٌ وَاحِدٌ*, but *ثَلَاثَةُ كُتُبٍ*. In the first case the word *كِتَابٌ* comes first because it is the *mawṣūf*, while the word *وَاحِدٌ* as the *ṣifah* has to agree with it in *i'rāb*. But with *ثَلَاثَةُ كُتُبٍ* there is a clear difference, both in terms of sequence of number and counted noun, and in terms of *i'rāb*. In a nutshell, the rules of *ʿadad*—*ma'dūd* begin to operate only from 3 onwards.

For every number in each set, the *ma'dūd* will assume a certain form in terms of number (i.e. singular or plural) and take a certain *i'rāb*.

	'ADAD	MA'DŪD
Set A	3—10	<i>jam' & majrūr</i>
Set B	11—99	<i>mufrad & maṣṣūb</i>
Set C	100s & 1000s	<i>mufrad and majrūr</i>

That much is the rule, and one would be well advised to commit it to memory. But how does it translate into practice? The only way to begin turning theory into practice is by seeing a number of examples.

C	B	A
...٣٠٠، ٢٠٠، ١٠٠ ...٣٠٠٠، ٢٠٠٠، ١٠٠٠	٩٩ — ١١	١٠ — ٣
مفرد ومجرور	مفرد ومنصوب	جمع ومجرور
مِائَةٌ عَامٍ	أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا	ثَلَاثَةُ كُتُبٍ
خَمْسُمِائَةِ سَنَةٍ	تِسْعٌ وَتِسْعُونَ نَجْعَةً	سِتَّةَ أَيَّامٍ
أَلْفُ رَنْدٍ	ثَمَانِينَ رَنْدًا	خَمْسَةُ رَنْدَاتٍ
مِائَتَا دِرْهَمٍ	عِشْرُونَ دِينَارًا	سَبْعَةُ دَرَاهِمٍ
مِائَةُ أَلْفٍ رِيَالٍ	ثَلَاثَةٌ وَسَبْعُونَ دِينَارًا	عَشْرَةُ دَنَانِيرٍ

ADDENDUM

Gender in the *‘adad* and *ma‘dūd*

Having covered the aspects of number and *i‘rāb* in the *‘ma‘dūd*, we now come to what must be one of the most perplexing aspects of Arabic grammar: gender relations between the *‘adad* and *ma‘dūd*. Whatever complexity we might have encountered in the foregoing part of this lesson pales into insignificance when compared to the switching and juggling that happens here. But although it may appear confusing, insurmountable it is certainly not.

How does this complexity come about? Well, in a simple *‘adad—ma‘dūd* construction you would typically have two words to begin with. Then comes the exasperating phenomenon of *consonance vs dissonance*. In some cases the *‘adad* will agree with its *ma‘dūd* in gender (hence, consonance, or *tawāfuq*), while in other cases they will disagree, with the *‘adad* taking one gender and the *ma‘dūd* the other (hence, dissonance, or *takhāluf*).

Then, as soon as you cross the number 10, your *‘adad* splits into two separate words (أحد عشر، خمسة عشر), so now you have three. And with it the complexity goes one step higher. For some numbers both parts of the *‘adad* are in *tawāfuq* with the *ma‘dūd*, while for others the first part goes into *takhāluf* while the second part remains upon *tawāfuq*. So how is one supposed to make sense of this confusion?

Well, it starts from first identifying the sane numbers, the sober ones that exhibit no such inconsistency. Once we have them behind us, we will begin to gather the apparently fickle ones into groups that all exhibit the same tendency. And once we know precisely how many groups there are (and surprisingly, there are only four) and how they work, our work is done.

The sober numbers

The sober numbers are 1, 2, 11, 12, the tens between 20 and 90 (20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90), the 100s and the 1000s.

(1) 1 and 2

As pointed out in a footnote earlier, the numbers 1 and 2 combine with their counted noun in exactly the same manner as a *mawṣūf* and its *ṣifah*. One of the important rules of the *mawṣūf*–*ṣifah* combination is that they must agree in gender. Accordingly, we find the following:

مؤنث	مذكر	
طالبةٌ واحدةٌ	طالبٌ واحدٌ	١
كُرَّاسةٌ واحدةٌ	كتابٌ واحدٌ	
حقيبةٌ واحدةٌ	قلمٌ واحدٌ	
طالبَتانِ اثنتانِ	طالبانِ اثنا	٢
كُرَّاسَتانِ اثنتانِ	كتابانِ اثنا	
حقيبتانِ اثنتانِ	قلمانِ اثنا	

(2) 11 and 12

Although they consist of two words each, both words of the numbers 11 and 12 agree with the gender of the *ma'dūd*. The significant difference between this case and that of 1 and 2 is that this is a case of *ʿadad*–*ma'dūd* proper, where the *ʿadad* comes before the *ma'dūd*, unlike 1 and 2 where the object comes first and the number comes at the end.

مؤنث	مذكر	
إِحدى عَشْرَةَ طالبةً	أحدَ عَشَرَ طالبًا	١١
إِحدى عَشْرَةَ كُرَّاسةً	أحدَ عَشَرَ كتابًا	

أَحَدَ عَشَرَ قَلَمًا	إِحْدَى عَشْرَةَ حَقِيَّةً	
إِثْنَا عَشَرَ طَالِبًا	إِثْنَا عَشْرَةَ طَالِبَةً	١٢
إِثْنَا عَشَرَ كِتَابًا	إِثْنَا عَشْرَةَ كُرَاسَةً	
إِثْنَا عَشَرَ قَلَمًا	إِثْنَا عَشْرَةَ حَقِيَّةً	

(3) 20 to 90

The 10s (with the notable exception of 10 itself) are even easier. They do not have separate forms for masculine and feminine. Although they might adapt for *i'rāb* (عَشْرُونَ becoming عَشْرِينَ , and خَمْسُونَ becoming خَمْسِينَ , for example) they remain impervious to gender. The same word is hence used for masculine as for feminine.

مذكر	مؤنث	
عَشْرُونَ طَالِبًا	عَشْرُونَ طَالِبَةً	٢٠
ثَلَاثِينَ كِتَابًا	ثَلَاثِينَ كُرَاسَةً	٣٠
خَمْسُونَ رَجُلًا	خَمْسُونَ امْرَأَةً	٥٠
ثَمَانُونَ حَرْفًا	ثَمَانُونَ كَلِمَةً	٨٠
تِسْعِينَ رَنْدًا	تِسْعِينَ سَيَّارَةً	٩٠

(4) 100s and 1000s

The 100s and the 1000s are as impervious to gender as were the 10s. And like the 10s, they use the same form for both genders. The only difference lies in the *i'rāb* that they impart to the *ma'dūd*.

مذكر	مؤنث	
مِائَةُ طَالِبٍ	مِائَةُ طَالِبَةٍ	١٠٠
خَمْسِمِائَةِ كِتَابٍ	خَمْسِمِائَةِ كُرَاسَةٍ	٥٠٠
سَبْعِمِائَةِ فَرَسٍ	سَبْعِمِائَةِ سَاحَةِ	٧٠٠

أَلْفُ امْرَأَةٍ	أَلْفُ رَجُلٍ	١٠٠٠
سَبْعَةُ آلَافٍ كَلِمَةٍ	سَبْعَةُ آلَافٍ حَرْفٍ	٧٠٠٠
تِسْعَةُ آلَافٍ سَيَّارَةٍ	تِسْعَةُ آلَافٍ رَنْدٍ	٩٠٠٠

Before we go on to the erratic numbers, there is an observation to be made. You would have noticed that after the number 100 itself, the numbers become combinations. So, 700 is actually مِائَةٌ + سَبْعٌ , and 9000 is تِسْعَةٌ + آلَافٌ .

Now, this combination, before even looking at the *ma'dūd* that comes afterwards, is actually an *'adad*—*ma'dūd* combination in itself. Therefore the rules of *'adad*—*ma'dūd* will apply even within these combinations. You would be able to pick some of that up from the examples given.

By way of demonstration, in 9000, since the first number is 9, and 9 as a rule causes its *ma'dūd* to become *jam'* and *majrūr*, you see آلَافٍ and not أَلْفٍ . With سَبْعُمِائَةٍ you see the *jarr* in مِائَةٌ , but not the *jam'*, since the word مِائَةٌ has no plural form. You would also notice that these words, upon combining with the following word, drop their *tanwīn*, in the same manner as the *muḍāf* does.

And with all of that behind us, we may now go on to get to know the erratic numbers.

The “erratic” numbers

We describe these numbers as erratic, but in reality they are not. There is actually a pattern amidst all the confusion, and once you recognize that pattern you know the rule.

The numbers that remain after the stable ones have been dealt with are many, but they may be classed into four groups, each of which exhibits a certain pattern of *tawāfuq* (consonance, or similarity) and *takhāluf* (dissonance, or dissimilarity). The similarity and dissimilarity we speak of here is of course with reference to the gender of the *'adad* and *ma'dūd*.

There are only four patterns:

- *takhāluf*
- *takhāluf—tawāfuq*
- *tawāfuq—neutral*
- *takhāluf--neutral*

In the first pattern the *‘adad* is a single word, not a combination, and it takes a gender opposite to that of its *ma‘dūd*; hence, *takhāluf*. This works for the numbers 3 to 10.

In the second pattern the *‘adad* is made up of two words. The first one opposes the *ma‘dūd* in gender while the second agrees with it; hence, *takhāluf—tawāfuq*. This applies to the numbers 13 to 19.

In the third pattern we have a two-word *‘adad* again, but the second word is neutral, serving both masculine and feminine. These are of course the 10s: 20, 30, 40... up to 90. The first part of the combination denotes the units 1 and 2 only, as in 81 and 42. This first part takes the same gender as that of the *ma‘dūd*; hence, *tawāfuq—neutral*.

The fourth pattern covers the remainder of the units attached to the 10s from 20 onwards. In other words, 23 to 29, 33 to 39, 43 to 49... all the way up to 93 to 99. Here the pattern is *takhāluf—neutral*, meaning that the word indicating the unit will take a gender opposite to that of its *ma‘dūd*.

(1) 3 to 10: *takhāluf*

١٠ - ٣ تخالف	
مؤنث	مذكر
ثلاث طالبات	ثلاثة طلاب

سَبْعُ سَمَوَاتٍ	سِتَّةُ أَيَّامٍ
تِسْعُ سَاعَاتٍ	عَشْرَةُ دَرَاهِمَ

An important note, here. When considering, for the purposes of this rule specifically, whether a certain form of the *jam'* is masculine or feminine, the rule is to revert back to its singular form. If the singular is masculine, the plural would be treated as masculine for *tawāfuq* and *takhāluf* purposes, and vice versa. The fact that it happens to be a broken or unbroken plural is irrelevant in this regard. Always remember this verse:

﴿سَخَّرَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ لَيَالٍ وَثَمَانِيَةَ أَيَّامٍ﴾ [الحاقة ٧]

In it, لَيَالٍ is the plural of ليلة which is feminine; hence its 'adad takes the masculine form of سبع on account of *takhāluf*. On the other hand, أَيَّامٍ is the plural of the masculine word يوم , so its 'adad follows the rule of *takhāluf* and becomes ثمانية , feminine.

(2) 13 to 19: *takhāluf*—*tawāfuq*

١٣ - ١٩ تخالف - توافق	
مؤنث	مذكر
ثَلَاثَ عَشْرَةَ طَالِبَةً	ثَلَاثَةَ عَشَرَ طَالِبًا
سَبْعَ عَشْرَةَ لَيْلَةً	سِتَّةَ عَشَرَ يَوْمًا
ثَمَانِ عَشْرَةَ امْرَأَةً	ثَمَانِيَةَ عَشَرَ دَرَاهِمًا
تِسْعَ عَشْرَةَ سَاعَةً	تِسْعَةَ عَشَرَ رَنْدًا

(3) 21—22, 31—32... 91—92: *tawāfuq—neutral*

This pattern applies to only 16 numbers. They are the units 1 and 2 for the range covering the 20s to the 90s. Its pattern, as stated before, is *tawāfuq—neutral*, meaning that the first part of the ‘*adad*’ will agree with the *ma‘dūd* in gender, while the second part is neutral to both genders.

٩٢ - ٩١ ... ٤٢ - ٤١ / ٣٢ - ٣١ / ٢٢ - ٢١ توافق - مُحايد	
مؤنث	مذكر
إِحْدَى وَعِشْرُونَ طَالِبَةً	وَاحِدٌ وَعِشْرُونَ طَالِبًا
إِثْنَتَانِ وَسِتُّونَ لَيْلَةً	إِثْنَانِ وَأَرْبَعُونَ يَوْمًا
إِحْدَى وَثَمَانُونَ امْرَأَةً	وَاحِدٌ وَخَمْسُونَ دَرَكَمًا
إِثْنَتَانِ وَثَلَاثُونَ سَاعَةً	إِثْنَانِ وَتِسْعُونَ رَنْدًا

(4) 23—29, 33—39... 93—99: *takhāluf—neutral*

The final table covers the units 3 to 9 for the range of the 20s to the 90s. Its pattern is *takhāluf—neutral*, with the word denoting the unit opposing the gender of the *ma‘dūd* while the other word indicating the ten remains neutral.

٩٩ - ٩٣ ... ٤٩ - ٤٣ / ٣٩ - ٣٣ / ٢٩ - ٢٣ تخالف - مُحايد	
مؤنث	مذكر
ثَلَاثٌ وَعِشْرُونَ طَالِبَةً	ثَلَاثَةٌ وَعِشْرُونَ طَالِبًا

سَبْعَةٌ وَأَرْبَعُونَ يَوْمًا	سِتُّ وَسِتُّونَ لَيْلَةً
ثَمَانِيَةٌ وَخَمْسُونَ رَنْدًا	تِسْعٌ وَتِسْعُونَ امْرَأَةً

And with that we have come to the end, not only of this lesson, but also of the section of this book dealing with anomalous causes of *i'rāb*.

SECTION THREE

Miscellaneous aspects of *iʿrāb*

When all is said and done about the causes and signs of *iʿrāb*, both regular and irregular, there are still some aspects to *iʿrāb* that would stand the student in good stead to know. The lessons that form this section touch upon three such aspects.

Lesson 9 looks at the *iʿrāb* of the *fiʿl muḍāriʿ*. Broadly speaking, *iʿrāb* has come to be perceived as a phenomenon that affects the *ism* and not the *fiʿl*. For most *afʿāl* that is quite true, but the *fiʿl muḍāriʿ* is a notable exception. Although nowhere as sophisticated as the *iʿrāb* of the *ism*, it remains important to know the cases and causes of *iʿrāb* in the *fiʿl muḍāriʿ*.

Lesson 10 takes on the idea of the *fiʿl* being immanent within certain *asmāʾ*²—with the result that those *asmāʾ* come to exert the same effect upon the words around it as an actual *fiʿl* would.

The lesson following it discusses the idea of the *place-value* of *iʿrāb*. This idea arises out of the consideration that words which are impervious to *iʿrāb* (such as *mabnī* nouns) still occur in sentences where they would have taken *iʿrāb* had it not been for their non-receptivity to *iʿrāb*. So although they do not get *iʿrāb*, they still fill positions within the sentence that have *iʿrāb*-related connotations.

LESSON 9

Iʿrāb of the fiʿl muḍāriʿ

The *ism*, we know well enough, lends itself to three states of *iʿrāb*: *rafʿ*, *naṣb* and *jarr*. And each state has its own signs that denote it.

Among all the *afʿāl*, the *fiʿl muḍāriʿ* also lends itself to three distinct states, all of which bring about some changes in either the *ḥarakāt* or letters at its end. There are two differences, though.

- **Firstly**, the *fiʿl* also has a *marfūʿ* and a *manṣūb* state, but in place of the *majrūr* state it has a state called *majzūm*.
- **Secondly**, while the *ism* tends to take its *iʿrāb* from the structure of the broader sentence, the causes of *iʿrāb* in the *fiʿl* tend to be factors that act directly upon the *fiʿl* itself, rather than playing a broader role in context of the sentence.

At the simplest level, the three *iʿrāb* states of the *fiʿl muḍāriʿ* are demonstrated by the change in the last letter of the word *يَفْعَلُ* :

مرفوع	منصوب	مجزوم
يَفْعَلُ	يَفْعَلْ	يَفْعَلْ

Rafʿ of the fiʿl muḍāriʿ

No special causes are required for the *fiʿl muḍāriʿ* to be *marfūʿ*. Being *marfūʿ* is its natural state. And the sign of it being *marfūʿ* is that *ḍammah* above the *lām* in *يَفْعَلُ* . But we know from our study of *ṣarf* that *يَفْعَلُ* is only one of fourteen forms that the *fiʿl muḍāriʿ* can take.

All these forms appear in this table. The forms they have in it are their *marfūʿ* forms.

غائب	مخاطب	متكلم
يَفْعَلُ	تَفْعَلُ	أَفْعَلُ
يَفْعَلَانِ	تَفْعَلَانِ	نَفْعَلُ
يَفْعَلُونَ	تَفْعَلُونَ	
تَفْعَلُ	تَفْعَلِينَ	
تَفْعَلَانِ	تَفْعَلَانِ	
يَفْعَلْنَ	تَفْعَلْنَ	

Naşb of the *fi'l muḍāri'*

There are two things we need to learn here. First, what does the *fi'l muḍāri'* look like when it becomes *manşub*? And second, what are the things that make it *manşub*? The table shows what happens to the end of the *fi'l muḍāri'* in the state of *naşb*.

غائب	مخاطب	متكلم
يَفْعَلُ	تَفْعَلُ	أَفْعَلُ
يَفْعَلَا	تَفْعَلَا	نَفْعَلُ
يَفْعَلُوا	تَفْعَلُوا	
تَفْعَلُ	تَفْعَلِي	
تَفْعَلَا	تَفْعَلَا	
يَفْعَلْنَ	تَفْعَلْنَ	

There are seven words that cause the *fi'l muḍāri'* to become *manşub* and undergo the changes evident in the table. They are:

أَنَّ ، لَنْ ، كَيْ ، إِذَنْ ، حَتَّى ، لِ ، فَ

We will now briefly discuss each one, together with some examples.

(1) اَنَّ

This word, which is probably the most common cause of *naṣb* for the *fiʿl muḍāriʿ*, is the equivalent of *to in to hear*. If I want to say, *I want TO hear the Qurʾān*, I would say,

أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَسْمَعَ الْقُرْآنَ.

(2) لَنْ

This word has four effects upon the *fiʿl muḍāriʿ*: (1) it negates it; (2) it restricts its meaning to the future; (3) it adds strong emphasis to it (“will never”); (4) and, pertinent to our present purposes, it makes it *maṣṣūb*.

﴿وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا﴾

(3) كَيْ

كَيْ means *so that, or, in order to*.

يَجْتَهِدُ الطَّالِبُ كَيْ يَنْجَحَ.

(4) إِذَنْ

A student says to his teacher: *I will work hard in studies*. The teacher responds by telling him, *In that case you will pass*. This word, إِذَنْ, is the equivalent of the phrase *in that case*.

الطالب: سَوْفَ أَجْتَهِدُ فِي الدِّرَاسَةِ. المدرّس: إِذَنْ تَنْجَحَ.

(5) حَتَّى

حَتَّى is the equivalent of *until* in the statement, *Laylat al-Qadr lasts until dawn rises*.

تَدُومُ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ حَتَّى يَطْلُعَ الْفَجْرُ.⁹

(6) لَـ

This particular لَـ is synonymous to كَيْ and is therefore known as the *lām* of كَيْ. So we can say,

⁹ In the Qurʾān the word حَتَّى is followed by the *ism* مَطْلَع and causes it to become *majrūr*. Before an *ism* حَتَّى causes *jarr*, while before the *fiʿl muḍāriʿ* it causes *naṣb*.

يَجْتَهِدُ الطَّالِبُ لِيَنْجَحَ.

فَ (7)

The particle فَ plays a number of roles in Arabic. One of those is to indicate causality. This is when it is used to convey the meaning of *as a result*, where what precedes the فَ is the cause of what follows it. For example, *Work hard; as a result you will pass.*

اجْتَهِدْ، فَتَنْجَحَ.

Jazm of the fi'l muḍāri'

Before we get to the causes of jazm in the fi'l muḍāri', let us first take a look at what the fi'l muḍāri' looks like when it becomes majzūm. Jazm in this context means that its last letter gets a sukūn (jazm is another name for sukūn), and the English for majzūm is jussive.

غائب	مخاطب	متكلم
يَفْعَلُ	تَفْعَلُ	أَفْعَلُ
يَفْعَلَا	تَفْعَلَا	نَفْعَلُ
يَفْعَلُوا	تَفْعَلُوا	
تَفْعَلُ	تَفْعَلِي	
تَفْعَلَا	تَفْعَلَا	
يَفْعَلْنَ	تَفْعَلْنَ	

There are five causes for jazm in the fi'l muḍāri'. They are:

لَمْ ، لَمَّا ، لَأَمْ الأَمْر ، الشَّرْط ، الأَمْر

(1) لَمْ

In terms of meaning this particle renders the *fi'l muḍāri'* negative and in the past tense. In terms of *i'rāb* it makes it *majzūm*. So, Zayd wrote nothing:

لَمْ يَكْتُبْ زَيْدٌ شَيْئًا.

(2) لَمَّا

The *لَمَّا* we deal with here is not the normal one which simply means *when*. This particular *لَمَّا* means, *not yet*, as in the verse which says, *Faith has not yet entered your hearts*:

﴿وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ﴾ [الحجرات ١٥]

(3) لَامُ الْأَمْرِ

The *amr*, or imperative, which comes in the form of *افْعَلْ* is as a rule addressed at the second person (i.e. you). When we want to convey a similar command to someone in the third person (he, she, they) then we would say, *Let him do*. To do this in Arabic you add a *lām* with a *kasrah* before the *fi'l muḍāri'*. In this sense the Qur'ān states, *Let he of means spend of his means*.

﴿لَيُنْفِقْ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِنْ سَعَتِهِ﴾ [الطلاق ٧]

This *lām* is called the *lām of amr*. It is often preceded by a *wāw* or a *fā'*, in which case the *lām* might get a *sukūn*, or remain with its *kasrah*.

﴿وَلْيَحْكُمْ أَهْلُ الْإِنْحِيلِ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ﴾ [المائدة ٤٧]

﴿فَلْيَسْتَقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا﴾ [النساء ٩]

(4) الشَّرْطُ

In a conditional sentence¹⁰ there are two parts: the condition, and its consequence. When either of these contains a *fi'l muḍāri'* they are rendered *majzūm*. Thus, if I wish to say, *If you honour me, I will honour you*, you would express yourself in terms such as

إِنْ تُكْرِمْنِي أُكْرِمَكَ.

¹⁰ Conditional sentences are dealt with in Lesson 12.

(5) الأَمْر

Consider the sentence, *Stand, and I will help you*. It begins with a command, *Stand*, after which the speaker mentions why he wants the person to stand: it is because he wants to help him. If a *fi'l muḍāri'* is used in this type of extension of the *amr* it will be *majzūm*.

قُمْ، أَنْصُرَكَ.

LESSON 10

The *fi'l* immanent in the *ism*

Consider the following examples:

الرَّسُولُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ هُوَ الْمُبَلِّغُ عَنِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى كِتَابَهُ.

يَوْمَ الْجُمُعَةِ مَكْرُوهٌ صَوْمُهُ.

﴿...وَقَتْلِهِمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بَغَيْرِ حَقٍّ.﴾

مَرَرْنَا بِالْبَيْتِ الْمَكْسُورِ بِأَبْه.

You will notice that certain words have been underlined, while certain letters and their *ḥarakāt* were shaded. In the first sentence the word with the shaded letter is كِتَابَهُ and its shaded letter is its *i'rāb*: it is *manṣub*. In the second sentence it is صَوْمُهُ and it is *marfū'*. In the third, الْأَنْبِيَاءَ and it is *manṣūb*, while in the last it is بِأَبْه , *marfū'*. The question is: in each case, what is the cause of *i'rāb*?

The answers are as follows:

- كِتَابَهُ : *manṣūb* due to being *maf'ūl bihī*
- صَوْمُهُ : *marfū'* due to being *fā'il*.
- الْأَنْبِيَاءَ : *manṣūb* due to being *maf'ūl bihī*
- بِأَبْه : *marfū'* due to being *nā'ib al-fā'il*

These answers might come as a bit of a surprise for you. We are speaking of *fā'il*, *maf'ūl bihī* and *nā'ib al-fā'il*—yet there is no *fi'l* to be seen in any of these sentences! Surely these are concepts connected to a *fi'l*. The *fā'il* is the agent who carries out the deed described by the *fi'l*; the *maf'ūl bihī* is the object upon which that deed is executed; and when the *fi'l* is passive, the *maf'ūl* takes the place as well as *i'rāb* of the missing *fā'il* and becomes the *nā'ib al-fā'il*. So how can you have a *fā'il*, or a *maf'ūl bihī*, or a *nā'ib al-fā'il* if you don't even have a *fi'l*?

The answer is: we actually have a *fi'l*. Not one that is patently visible in the sentence as it stands, but it is there. We say that the *fi'l* in these cases is immanent (i.e. contained within) the *ism*. Which specific *ism*? The underlined ones, of course.

Take a close look at the underlined words:

- المَبْلَغُ
- مَكْرُوهٌ
- قَتْلٌ
- الْمَكْسُورُ

Do you notice that all of them have something in common? They are all connected with deeds.

- المَبْلَغُ is connected with the deed of *conveying*; it indicates the doer of that act. It is the *ism al-fā'il* of the verb بَلَغَ يُبَلِّغُ .
- مَكْرُوهٌ is connected with the deed of *disliking*; it indicates the thing that is disliked. It is the *ism al-maf'ul* of the verb كَرِهَ يُكْرِهُ .
- قَتْلٌ describes the act of *killing* with no reference within itself to the killer or the victim. It is the *maṣdar* of the verb قَتَلَ يَقْتُلُ .
- الْمَكْسُورُ is connected with the deed of *breaking*; it indicates the thing that is broken. It is the *ism al-maf'ul* of the verb كَسَرَ يُكْسِرُ .

Since these words are so closely connected with their respective verbs, it should be fairly easy to rephrase them into expressions containing the actual verbs immanent within them. So—

- الذي يُبَلِّغُ = المَبْلَغُ
- يُكْرِهُ = مَكْرُوهٌ
- يَقْتُلُونَ = قَتْلٌ
- الذي كُسِرَ = الْمَكْسُورُ

Let's see what happens when we apply these rephrasings in the original sentences.

الرَّسُولُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ هُوَ الَّذِي يُبَلِّغُ عَنْ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى كِتَابَهُ.

يَوْمَ الْجُمُعَةِ يُكْرَهُ صَوْمُهُ.

﴿...وَيَقْتُلُونَ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ.﴾

مَرَرْنَا بِالْبَيْتِ الَّذِي كُسِرَ بَابُهُ

And *voila*, it all makes perfect sense again!

What is to be remembered from this lesson is that there are times when the *fi'l* might not reveal its presence in the sentence upon first glance, but lies immanent within an *ism*. That *ism* tends to be of the type that is closely related to the *fi'l*, such as the *ism al-fā'il*, the *ism al-maf'ūl* and the *maṣḍar*.

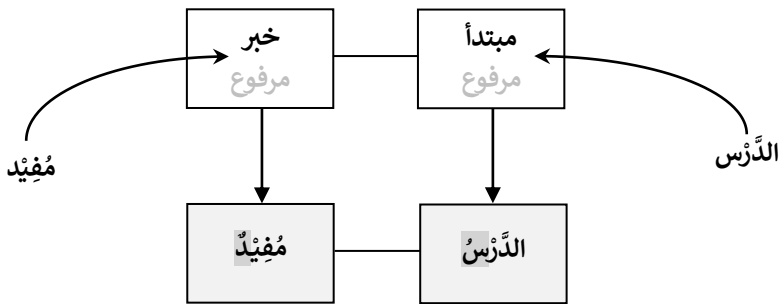
Being aware of this phenomenon will be of great help in making sense of complex texts when you encounter them.

LESSON 11

Place value of the *iʿrāb*

Consider the nature of a sentence. Underneath each actual sentence is a template that contains the essential structure of the sentence. If it is going to be a *jumlah ismiyyah* this template creates two unfilled spaces: one for the *mubtadaʿ*, and one for the *khavar*. Although there are no words within them as yet, those two spaces are already filled with *iʿrāb* potential. So, when words eventually come along to fill them, the potential *iʿrāb* becomes actualized, and the word becomes *marfūʿ*. Let's demonstrate by a diagram.

JUMLAH ISMIYYAH TEMPLATE



All of this works perfectly well when we work with nouns that are receptive to *iʿrāb*. They fill spaces with *rafʿ* potential and become *marfūʿ*, or with *naṣb* potential and become *manṣūb*, or with *jarr* potential to become *majrūr*. But what happens when they are not *muʿrab*? When they are *mabnī*, or even when they are entire clauses or sub-sentences within themselves?¹¹

If this is a bit mystifying, let us demystify it through the use of examples. First, the *mabnī*.

¹¹ The idea of sub-clauses and sub-sentences within broader sentences gets discussed in greater detail in the next section.

Iʿrāb and mabnī

هَذَا كِتَابٌ.

The *iʿrāb* of كِتَاب is easily understood: it fills the potentially *marfūʿ* space of the *khavar*, so it becomes *marfūʿ*. But how about هَذَا ? It is also filling a *marfūʿ* position—that of the *mubtadaʿ* to be precise. So why is it not *marfūʿ*?

Well, being *marfūʿ* is a consequence of being *muʿrab*. An *ism* can only legitimately be described as being *marfūʿ*, *manṣūb* or *majrūr* when it is *muʿrab* in the first place. And هَذَا as one of the *asmāʾ al-ishārah* (demonstrative pronouns) is *mabnī*. So there is a clash between what its nature as *mabnī* demands, and what its role and position in the sentence seeks to impart to it.

We solve this conundrum with the notion of the *place value* of *iʿrāb*. All these parts of sentences that hold *iʿrāb* implications have a certain *iʿrāb* value.

- The *mubtadāʾ*, the *khavar*, the *ism* of *kāna*, the *khavar* of *inna*, the *fāʿil*, the *nāʾib al-fāʿil* and all their *tawābiʿ* (followers in *iʿrāb*) hold the value of *rafʿ*.
- The *khavar* of *kāna*, the *ism* of *inna*, the *mafʿūl bihī*, the *mafʿūl muṭlaq*, the *mafʿūl lahū*, the *ḥāl*, the *ẓarf*, the *tamyīz* and their *tawābiʿ* all hold the value of *naṣb*.
- The *majrūr* after the *ḥarf al-jarr*, the *muḍāf ilayh* and their *tawābiʿ* all hold the value of *jarr*.

So when a *mabnī* word comes to fill one of these positions, it is prevented by its *mabnī* nature from receiving the *iʿrāb* itself, but not from accepting the value (and hence conveying the meaning) of its position. We then describe it as being, not actually *marfūʿ*, *manṣūb* or *majrūr*, but as occupying a *marfūʿ/manṣūb/majrūr* position.

The expression we use to describe this place value of *iʿrāb* is فِي مَحَلِّ الرَّفْعِ , فِي مَحَلِّ النَّصْبِ and فِي مَحَلِّ الْجَرِّ. So هَذَا in the sentence above would be فِي مَحَلِّ الرَّفْعِ .

Iʿrāb and sub-sentences

Up to this point we have only looked at a sentence as a single unit with a simple structure. It is either a *jumlah ismiyyah* consisting of *mubtadāʾ* + *khavar*, or modified through the addition of *kāna* or *inna* before it; or it is a *jumlah fiʿliyyah* constructed as *fiʿl* + *fāʿil* + *maʿfūl bihī*, or alternatively, *fiʿl majhūl* + *nāʾib al-fāʿil*. At the simplest level, each of these parts is conceived of as a single word.

So, it was either a case of

زَيْدٌ كَاتِبٌ / كَانَ زَيْدٌ كَاتِبًا / إِنَّ زَيْدًا كَاتِبٌ

or of

ضَرَبَ زَيْدٌ عَمْرًا / ضُرِبَ عَمْرٌو.

Now what if we were to be creative and do this:

زَيْدٌ يَضْرِبُ عَمْرًا

What kind of sentence would this be? It starts with an *ism* so it is a *jumlah ismiyyah*. And *Zayd* will be the *mubtadaʾ*. Now, how about the *khavar*? You don't see a single word like *كَاتِبٌ* to deem as the *khavar*. What you do see is:

يَضْرِبُ عَمْرًا

Hang on! Doesn't that look like a complete sentence on its own? It begins with a *fiʿl*, *يَضْرِبُ* so it is a *jumlah fiʿliyyah*. And a *fiʿl* has this built-in pronoun (in this case هو) that acts as its *fāʿil*. And then you have *عمر* as the *maʿfūl bihī*. That is a complete *jumlah fiʿliyyah*!

Now let's get back to the original sentence and the structure it is supposed to have. We will use a table to analyse the sentence and write beneath every part its description in terms first of the narrower sub-sentence, and thereafter its position within the analysis of the broader sentence:

عَمَرُوا	يَضْرِبُ	زَيْدٌ
مفعول به	فعل + فاعل	مبتدأ
جملة فعلية		
خبر		

So, the *khavar* of this sentence is not a single word like كَاتَبَ . It is an entire sentence within a sentence. This is then where the question arises: what *iʿrāb* would be given to this *khavar* which is an entire sub-sentence? Despite the fact that the *khavar* is as a rule *marfūʿ*, we cannot describe the whole sub-sentence as *marfūʿ*, if for no other reason then simply because it is not an *ism muʿrab*. So how would we describe it?

If you have been paying attention when we discussed how we express *iʿrāb* for *mabnī* words, you might already know the answer. Instead of *marfūʿ* we will use the expression في محل الرفع .

There can of course be a multitude of permutations for such sub-sentences—permutations that cover the spectrum of all essential and non-essential parts of the sentence, and comprise of all three *iʿrāb* cases. However, the purpose of this lesson is not to cover all of that, but merely to impart an understanding of the concept of the place value of *iʿrāb*. If that has been achieved, the lesson is over.

And with that we come to the end of Section Three of this book.

SECTION FOUR

Complex sentence structures

Up to this point you have learnt the rules that comprise the essential core of Arabic grammar. While that core covers a substantial chunk of what it takes to deal with an unmarked text, there is one important consideration that remains.

Text is not always going to be as one-dimensional as the simple *jumlah ismiyyah* with its *mubtada'* and *khavar*, or the *jumlah fi'liyyah* with its *fi'l*, *fā'il* and *maf'ūl bihī*. Language is intended to convey information and ideas, and the more detailed the information or idea becomes, the greater will be the complexity of the sentence. So while some sentences might be brief and to the point—and, therefore, grammatically uncomplicated—you will occasionally come across sentences that seem to go on and on, running into several lines before eventually coming to an end.

As daunting as the prospect of complex sentences might appear, there is a method of reducing their complexity down to a manageable simplicity. The two lessons that remain in this book teach the skill required to grapple with complex sentence structures.

Lesson 12 deals with the structure of the conditional sentence, or *jumlah shartīyyah*, while Lesson 13 focuses on the skill of differentiating between the essential and non-essential parts of a complex sentence.

LESSON 12

The *jumlah shartīyyah* (conditional sentence)

Consider this sentence: *If you knock, I will open the door*. As it stands it appears as one single sentence. But if you look closer you can actually see two separate sentences. (1) *You knock*. (2) *I will open the door*. By placing the conditional particle *if* at the beginning we achieve the effect of turning Part 2 (i.e. *I will open the door*) into a result that hinges upon Part 1 (i.e. *You knock*). Part 1 is thus the *condition* required for the *result* to come into existence.

This type of sentence has the following structure:

conditional particle + condition + result

In Arabic we call the parts by the following names:

- conditional particle: *ḥarf al-shart*
- condition: *shart*
- result: *jawāb al-shart* or *jazāʾ*

To the sentence itself we refer as a *jumlah shartīyyah*, or conditional sentence.

So where is the complexity, you might ask. The complexity which the *jumlah shartīyyah* presents lies in the fact that you have in it not one, but two sentences, each one with its own complete grammatical structure. You will be able to see that in the following example.

إِنْ أَكْرَمَ زَيْدٌ وَالِدَ عَمْرٍو أَكْرَمَ عَمْرٌو وَالِدَ زَيْدٍ

*If Zayd honours 'Amr's father, 'Amr will honour Zayd's father.*¹²

Now, let us analyse this sentence:

¹² If you were vigilant, you would have noticed that the verb *أكرم* is in the past tense, yet we translate it in the present tense and the future tense. This is one of the unique features of the *jumlah shartīyyah*, as will soon be discussed, along with the effect that it has on the *fi'l muḍāri'*.

حرف الشرط	الشرط				جواب الشرط			
إِنْ	أَكْرَمَ زَيْدٌ وَالِدَ عَمْرٍو				أَكْرَمَ عَمْرٌو وَالِدَ زَيْدٍ			
	أَكْرَمَ	زَيْدٌ	وَالِدَ	عَمْرٍو	أَكْرَمَ	عَمْرٌو	وَالِدَ	زَيْدٍ
	فعل	فاعل	مفعول	مضاف إليه	فعل	فاعل	مفعول	مضاف إليه
	جملة فعلية				جملة فعلية			

This is by no means restricted to the *jumlah fi'liyyah*. The example below presents us with a *shart* and its *jawāb*, each of which is a *jumlah ismiyyah*.

إِنْ كَانَ خَالِدٌ صَدِيقَكَ فَأَنَا صَدِيقُكَ

If Khālīd is your friend, then I am your friend.

حرف الشرط	الشرط				جواب الشرط			
إِنْ	كَانَ خَالِدٌ صَدِيقَكَ				فَأَنَا صَدِيقُكَ			
	كَانَ	خَالِدٌ	صَدِيقَ	كَ	ف	أَنَا	صَدِيقُ	كَ
	فعل ناقص	اسم كان	خبر	مضاف إليه	حرف	مبتدأ	خبر	مضاف إليه
	جملة اسمية				جملة اسمية			

The key to reducing complex sentences into manageable simplicity lies in **being able to identify the essential parts of the sentence**. For that you would need to have the most basic sentence structures before your mind's eye. These are:

- the basic *jumlah ismiyyah*

- the *jumlah ismiyyah* modified through *kāna*
- the *jumlah ismiyyah* modified through *inna*
- the basic *jumlah fi'liyyah*
- the *jumlah fi'liyyah* modified by the *fi'l* becoming passive

With the *jumlah shartīyyah* there is the added dimension of not one, but two sentences, each with its own structure. As long as you know what to look for, you are adequately prepared.

Before concluding, there are two aspects of the *jumlah shartīyyah* that remain. They are the conditional particles, or *ḥurūf al-shart*, and the effect that the *jumlah shartīyyah* has on the *fi'l muḍāriʿ*.

Ḥurūf al-shart

While *إِذَا* is perhaps the most common particle of *shart* in use, it is by no means the only one. The words below are all used to create conditionality, although some of them may have other non-conditional usages as well:

إِذَا ، مَنْ ، مَتَى ، مَهْمَا ، أَيَّنَمَا ، لَوْ

1. *إِذَا* means *when*. Depending on the context, it may impart a conditional meaning to a sentence, as in *Sūrah al-Naṣr*:

﴿إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ، وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا، فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ.﴾

When the help of Allah comes, and the victory, and you see the people entering the religion of Allah in multitudes—then extol the praise of your Lord and seek forgiveness from Him.

2. *مَنْ* means *who*. Like *إِذَا* it can also impart conditionality, as in:

مَنْ جَدَّ وَجَدَ.

Who strives, will find.

It can also be used with the *fi'l muḍāriʿ*:

﴿وَمَنْ يَخْرُجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكُهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ﴾ [النساء ١٠٠]

Whoever goes out of his house, migrating to Allah and His Messenger, then death overtakes him—his rewards has become incumbent upon Allah. (4:100)

3. متى means *when*. When used in a conditional sense it produces examples such as:

مَتَى طَلَعَ الْفَجْرُ أَذَّنَ الْمُؤَذِّنُ.

When dawn breaks, the muadhdhin gives the adhān.

Change the *fi'l* to *muḍāriʿ* and you get

مَتَى يَطْلُعُ الْفَجْرُ يُؤَذِّنُ الْمُؤَذِّنُ.

4. مهما may be translated as *whatever*, or *no matter what*. It may be used with the *fi'l* *māḍī* or the *fi'l* *muḍāriʿ*.

مَهْمَا قُلْتَ مَا صَدَّقْتُكَ.

Whatever you say, I will not believe you.

مَهْمَا تَفْعَلْ أَضْرِبُكَ.

No matter what you do, I will hit you.

5. أينما means *wherever* or *no matter where*. It may also be used with both forms of the verb.

أَيْنَمَا ذَهَبْتَ وَجَدْتُكَ.

Wherever you go, I will find you.

﴿أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكُكُمُ الْمَوْتُ﴾

No matter where you are, death will overtake you.

6. Like *إن*, *لو* means *if*.

لَوْ سَاعَدْتَنِي سَاعَدْتُكَ.

If you help me, I will help you.

You may also use it with the *fi'l muḍāri'*—but note the difference in effect on the *i'rāb* of the *fi'l muḍāri'*:

لَوْ تَسَاعَدْتَنِي أُسَاعِدُكَ.

Effect on the *fi'l*

The examples above will help you to identify the effect that the *jumlah sharṭiyyah* has on the *fi'l māḍī* and the *fi'l muḍāri'*.

- The *fi'l māḍī* retains its form but loses its tense, becoming instead *muḍāri'* in terms of tense. Instead of translating جاء as *came*, we will now translate it as *comes*.
- The *fi'l muḍāri'* tends, with most *ḥuruf al-sharṭ*, to become *majzūm*, both in the *sharṭ* and its *jawāb*. With some, like لو, this does not happen.

LESSON 13

Simplifying the complex sentence

Take a look at this piece of text:

طالت الفترة، وساد الظلام في العالم، وغاب النور والعلم. وخفتت الأصوات التي رفعها الأنبياء والمرسلون في عصورهم بالتوحيد النقي والدين الخالص في صحبات الجهل والضلالة التي صاح بها المحرّفون والدجالون. وانطفأت المصابيح التي أوقدها أنبياء الله ورسله وخلفاؤهم من العواصف التي هبت حيناً بعد حين.

وأصبحت الديانات العظمى – وفي آخرها المسيحية السمحة – فريسة العابثين والمتلاعبين، ولعبة المحرفين والمنافقين، حتى فقدت روحها وشكلها. فلو بعث أصحابها الأولون وأنبياءها المرسلون أنكروها وتجاهلوها.

وأصبحت اليهودية مجموعة من طقوس وتقاليد لا روح فيها ولا حياة. وهي بصرف النظر عن ذلك ديانة سلالية لا تحمل للعالم رسالة، ولا للأمم دعوة، ولا للإنسانية رحمة. أما المسيحية فقد امتحنت بتحريف الغالين وتأويل الجاهلين منذ عصرها الأول. وأصبح كل ذلك ركاما دفنت تحته تعاليم المسيح البسيطة، واختفى نور التوحيد وإخلاص العبادة لله وراء هذه السحب.

If you are somewhat bewildered, no one will blame you. Thus far we have used simple examples to demonstrate the rules of grammar. That simplicity appears to have given way to almost another language altogether!

What lies at the root of the bewilderment? Three things:

- first, the absence of *ḥarakāt*;
- second, the unprecedented vocabulary;
- and third, the dense structure of the sentences.

The first problem is not really a problem. We study *naḥw* and *ṣarf* precisely to know where to place which vowel signs. As for vocabulary, it was never going to remain at the level of textbook exercises. Learning a language is essentially about broadening your vocabulary, so coming across new words should not be seen as an insurmountable problem. It is what you should expect. And there is a simple way to remove the apparent obstacle: this is why dictionaries exist.

The real problem here is the dense sentence structure. The simplicity of knowing that a sentence might be *ismiyyah*, *fi'liyyah* or *sharṭiyyah*, and mastering their respective structures seem a far way from knowing how to reduce the dense undergrowth of some of these sentences to a manageable level. But as daunting as the task may appear, it is achievable. And not only is it achievable, but this last lesson is aimed exactly at imparting the skill required to reduce complex sentence structures to simplicity.

Two cardinal rules

There are two cardinal rules by which you will have to live:

1. ESSENTIALS & NON-ESSENTIALS

Separate **essential** parts of the sentence from **non-essential** parts.

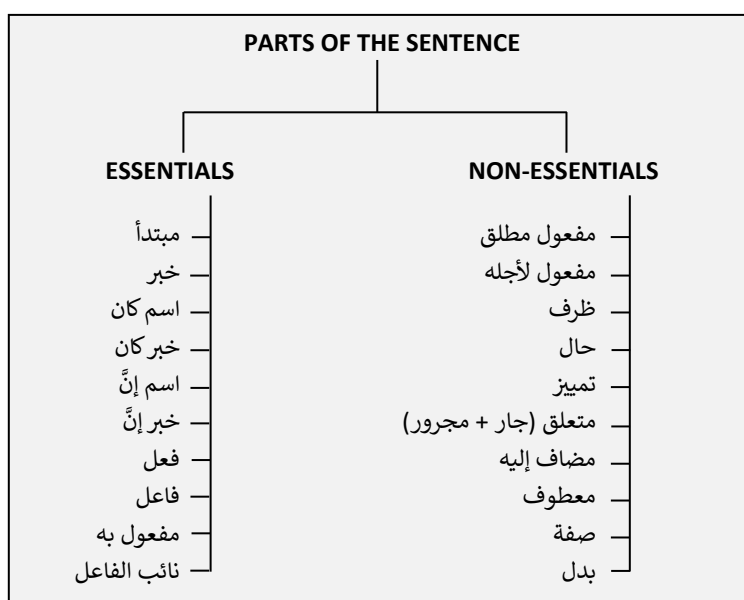
2. PHRASES & SUB-SENTENCES

Be aware that parts of the sentence sometimes come in the form of **phrases**, or even complete **sub-sentences**, instead of single words.

The *jumlah ismiyyah* and the *jumlah fi'liyyah* both have certain major parts. The *jumlah ismiyyah* has the *mubtada'* and *khavar*, while the *jumlah fi'liyyah* has the *fi'l*, *fā'il* and *maḥlūl bihī*. Then, when you modify the *jumlah ismiyyah* through adding *kāna* before it, you get the *ism* of *kāna* and the *khavar* of *kāna*. Similarly, the

addition of *inna* gives you the *ism* of *inna* and the *khavar* of *inna*. Modify the *jumlah fi'liyyah* and you get the *fi'l majhul* and the *nā'ib al-fā'il*.

The parts of the sentence given in the above paragraph are the **essential components of a sentence**. Everything else is non-essential. Your non-essentials will thus include the remainder of the causes of *naṣb*, both causes of *jarr*, and all the *tawābi'*.



There is something very important that you will recall about sentence structure. A *jumlah ismiyyah* is basically a sentence that tells you that

A	is	B
مبتدأ	was	خبر
	will be	

while the *jumlah fi'liyyah* tells you that

X	does	Y		Z
فاعل	did	فعل	to	مفعول به
	will do			

or that

Y	was/is/ will be done to	Z ^x
فعل		نائب الفاعل

Every information-bearing sentence (or *jumlah khabariyyah*, which is the general term that covers both the *ismiyyah* and *fi'liyyah* types of sentences) does precisely what these diagrams indicate. Therefore, the moment you are able to identify the *essentials* of your sentence, you would have grasped the central idea which your sentence is trying to convey. Everything else would then simply be additional information—and hence, *non-essential*.

Let's go back to the text at the beginning of this lesson. The first sentence is a simple *jumlah fi'liyyah* with no non-essential frills:

طَالَتِ الْفَتْرَةُ

The interval (between two prophets) had grown long.

Both parts in this sentence are essentials: طالت is the *fi'l* and الفترة is its *fā'il*.

Now let's look at the next sentence to see how non-essentials get attached to a simple sentence:

وَسَادَ الظَّلَامُ فِي الْعَالَمِ

Darkness reigned in the world.

Here we have greyed out the non-essentials and left the essential *fi'l* and *fā'il* in black. The core idea which the sentence conveys is that darkness reigned. The non-essential, which is here a *muta'alliq* consisting of the *ḥarf al-jarr* في and its *majrūr* العالم , serves to indicate where the reign of darkness takes place: in the world.

وَغَابَ النُّورُ وَالْعِلْمُ

Light and knowledge were absent.

The *fi'l* غاب and its *fā'il* النور are sufficient to form a basic *jumlah fi'liyyah*. But while these two words might suffice to constitute a grammatically complete sentence, they do not necessarily suffice to convey everything the writer wishes to say. So, in order to convey the complete idea in the writer's mind, he will add non-essential components to the skeleton of the basic sentence. When we say they are non-essential, this does not mean they are unneeded from the perspective of what he wants to say. Their being non-essential is only in terms of grammatical structure. In other words, they are additional to the basic *jumlah ismiyyah* or *fi'liyyah*.

In the case of this sentence, the basic sentence is complete at the *fā'il*. From that basic sentence we know that light was absent. But the writer wants us to know that along with light, knowledge was absent as well. To add knowledge, العلم , he uses the device of *ʿāṭf* through the letter و . The word العلم now becomes attached to the *fā'il* of the sentence as its *ma'ṭūf*, and as such it gets to bear the *i'rāb* of the *ma'ṭūf 'alayh* (which is the *fā'il* of the sentence).

The next sentence ups the ante considerably. By stringing together a series of non-essentials a very dense sentence structure is created—but it all boils down to a simple *jumlah fi'liyyah* at the core.

وَحَفَّتِ الْأَصْوَاتُ [الَّتِي رَفَعَهَا الْأَنْبِيَاءُ وَالْمُرْسَلُونَ فِي عَصُورِهِمْ بِالتَّوْحِيدِ النَّفِيِّ وَالِدِّينِ
الْخَالِصِ] [فِي صَيِّحَاتِ الْجَهْلِ وَالضَّلَالَةِ الَّتِي صَاحَ بِهَا الْمُحَرِّفُونَ وَالِدَّجَالُونَ].

The voices which the Prophets and the Messengers raised in their times with pure monotheism and pristine religion, **became indistinct** amidst the howls of ignorance and deviation with which the corrupters and deceivers were screaming.

The essential idea which this sentence seeks to convey is that certain voices became indistinct. That idea is succinctly conveyed by the essential *fi'l* and *fā'il*. However, there is more that the writer wishes to tell us. He wants to tell us which voices he is speaking of, and he wants to inform us what caused them to grow

indistinct. For this he employs two strings of non-essentials, each of which we have placed between a set of square brackets ([...]). Let us analyse each set.

[اَلَّتِي / رَفَعَهَا الْاَنْبِيَاءُ / وَالْمُرْسَلُونَ / فِي عَصُورِهِمْ / بِالتَّوْحِيدِ / النَّقِيِّ / وَالِدَيْنِ /
الْخَالِصِ]

To describe the voices concerned the author employs the *ism mawṣūl* التي . This word will combine with the phrase after it, called the *ṣilah*, to provide a composite description, or a *ṣifah*, for the voices. So what sort of *ṣilah* do we have here? Our *ṣilah* is in fact a complete *jumlah fiʿliyyah*: رفعها المرسلون consisting of *fiʿl*, *fāʿil* as well as *mafʿūl bihī*.

So the combination of *ism mawṣūl* and *ṣilah* gives us a *ṣifah* for الأصوات . We know that the *ṣifah* must as a rule follow the *mawṣūf* in *iʿrāb*, and we also know that الأصوات is *marfūʿ*. So what will the *iʿrāb* of our composite (as opposed to single-word) *ṣifah* be? It is not a single *ism*, so it cannot be a case of straightforward *marfūʿ*. It would therefore have to be a case of place value *iʿrāb: fī maḥalli l-raʿ*.

So, with that covered, let's move on to the next word. The Prophets were not the only ones to have raised their voices. There were also the Messengers—hence the addition of المرسلون through the device of ʿatf. We know that the *maʿtūf* follows the *maʿtūf ʿalayh* in *iʿrāb*, so that explains why the word المرسلون is *marfūʿ*.

The next *mutaʿalliq* tells us when the Prophets and Messengers raised their voices: في عصورهم , each one in his own respective era. Next, when the Prophets and Messengers raised their voices, with what message was it that they did so? It was with pure monotheism and pristine, uncorrupted religion. How would this be incorporated in the sentence? Through the addition of a *mutaʿalliq* (بالتوحيد) whose *majrūr* is given a *ṣifah* (النقي), followed by an ʿatf (و) whose *maʿtūf* (الدين) is also qualified by a *ṣifah* (الخالص).

You would be noticing that what goes into constructing these lengthy strings of non-essentials is nothing other than the normal phenomena of grammar that you

have learnt about. They simply repeat themselves over and over. So as long as you can spot them, understand what their words mean, and recognize the role they play in the sentence, you have nothing to be concerned about.

In 95% of the cases you will encounter, it is the same basic structures of grammar that assemble themselves into complex structures. Sometimes, when they encounter very complex sentences, students tend to make the assumption that if they studied the greater intricacies and complexities of grammar, they would be able to solve the problem. This is a common fallacy. In the overwhelming majority of cases you can adequately solve problems of complexity by applying nothing but your basic knowledge of grammar, coupled with (and this ought to go without saying) a thorough understanding of all the words used in the sentence.

Three simple steps suffice:

- Know the **meaning of each and every word** in the sentence.
- Ascertain which are the **essentials** of your sentence, and **grasp the basic idea** of the sentence.
- Determine what is the **role of the non-essentials**.

Now, we are still left with the second string of non-essentials. Let's apply these steps and see how they help us.

[فِي صَيِّحَاتٍ / الْجَهْلِ / وَالضَّلَالَةِ / النَّبِيِّ / صَاحٍ - بِهَا - الْمُحَرِّقُونَ / وَالِدَجَّالُونَ].

Before having a go at grammar, you must first understand what the words صَيِّحَات , صِحاح , ضلاله , محرق , and دجال mean. Grammar alone is not going to be of much use in unlocking the meanings of those words. You are going to have to use your dictionary. And only when you have done that are you allowed to start thinking about grammar. So,

howls

صَيِّحَات

ignorance	جهل
deviation	ضلالة
screamed	صاح
corrupter	محرّف
deceiver	دجّال

Remember that this is a non-essential string within a larger sentence. So let's bring the essentials back to put things into perspective.

وَحَفَّتِ الْأَصْوَاتُ ... [فِي صَيِّحَاتِ الْجَهْلِ وَالضَّلَالَةِ الَّتِي صَاحَ بِهَا الْمُحَرِّفُونَ وَالدَّجَّالُونَ].

This allows for the identification of essentials, which is Step 2.

In Step 3 we go on to determine the role of the non-essentials. This determination will depend to a great degree on the internal structure of the string. So let's first analyse the string:

في	صبيحات	الجهل	و	الضلالة	التي	صاح	بها	المحرّفون	و	الدجّالون
جار	مضاف	مضاف إليه	عطف	معطوف	اسم موصول	فعل	متعلق	فاعل	عطف	معطوف
	موصوف					جملة فعلية = صلة				
						صفة				
	مجرور									

So, in the final analysis, it is nothing but a *muta'alliq* consisting of a *ḥarf al-jarr* and its (somewhat complicated) *majrūr*. However, not a single one of the complicated small parts forms some strange or arcane construct of grammar. All of them are normal and standard building blocks of sentences.

And now on to the central question of Step 3: What is the role of this *muta'alliq* in the broader sentence? We already know that the essential idea which the sentence conveys is that the voices of the Prophets and Messengers had become

indistinct. Sounds typically become muffled and indistinct when they are in the midst of other sounds which drown them out. This second series of non-essentials seeks to tell us what those other sounds were that caused the message of the Prophets and Messengers to become drowned out.

What we have done here by greying out the non-essentials of the sentence, and highlighting the essentials, is a skill you will have to learn to do in your mind. You might have to practice it manually for a while until you become so adept at it that it becomes almost second nature.

But a very important warning here: **Take care not to get stuck on the manual routine of identifying essentials.** The point of learning a language is not to be able to label the parts. It is to gain proficiency in it, and proficiency means to pass the stage of mechanically breaking down sentences in order to reach a level where you almost instinctively sense their inner structure.

The same goes for determining the grammatical structure of a non-essential string within a larger sentence: **Do not get caught in mechanical analysis.** The joy of mastering the language and savouring its beauty is marred, if not destroyed, by the tedious process of identifying and labelling parts. As necessary as that process is, it is only a transient stage. **Do not forget this!**

Let us now complete the remaining sentences in the text at the beginning of this lesson. Our approach is a simple 3-step process:

- **Step 1: Vocabulary**
- **Step 2: Essentials**
- **Step 3: Role of the non-essentials**

وانطفأت المصابيح التي أوقدها أنبياء الله ورسله وخلفاؤهم من العواصف التي هبت حيناً بعد حين.

Step 1: Vocabulary

was
extinguished

انطفأ

lamps	مصابيح
lit	أُوقِدَ
successors	خُلَفَاء
tempests	عواصف
blew	هَبَّ
time	حِينَ

Step 2: Essentials

From the greying out you can see that we have here a *jumlah fi'liyyah* that is conveying the idea that *lamps were extinguished*.

Step 3: Role of the non-essentials

The non-essentials answer two questions:

Which lamps? The lamps originally lit by the Prophets and Messengers of Allah and their successors.

What extinguished them? They were extinguished by the tempestuous winds which blew from time to time.

وأصبحت الديانات العظمى - وفي آخرها المسيحية السمحة - فريسة العابثين والمتلاعبين، ولعبة المحرفين والمنافقين، حتى فقدت روحها وشكلها.

Step 1: Vocabulary

religions	ديانات
great	عظمى
Christianity	مسيحية
magnanimous	سمحة

prey	فريسة
triflers	عابثين
manipulators	متلاعبين
toy	لُعْبَة
hypocrites	منافقين
lost	فَقَدَ
soul	روح
form	شكل

Step 2: Essentials

We have here a *jumlaḥ ismiyyah* modified through the addition of *aṣbahā*, one of the sisters of *kāna*. It means *to become*. The basic idea which the sentence conveys is that one thing became another: Christianity became prey.

Step 3: Role of the non-essentials

The non-essentials stand in two groups. The first group tells us more about religions as the *ism* of *aṣbahā*, while the second group gives greater details about the *khavar* of *aṣbahā*.

The religions being spoken of in this sentence are first described through a single word *ṣifāḥ* (الْعُظْمَى) as being the major great religions of the world. Note that the *ṣifāḥ* is an example of *ism maqṣūr*. Its *i'rāb* will therefore be the same as that of its *mawṣūf*, which is *marfūʿ*—except that the sign of *i'rāb* will not be as visible as your normal *ḍammah*.

A second description follows in the form of a sub-sentence (وفي آخرها المسيحية (السمحة)). Since it is not a single word, it will be *fī maḥalli l-rafʿ* rather than *marfūʿ*.

The *khavar* of *aṣbahā* is فريسة , meaning prey. The second group of non-essentials identifies the people to whom the great religions became prey. Through the use of

a *mudāf ilayh* they are identified as people who trifled with religion (العابثين) and manipulated it (المتلاعبين).

The use of *ʿatf* goes on to inform that the religions were also turned into a toy (لُعْبَة) in the hands of corruptors (المحرِّفين) and hypocrites (المنافقين).

The last non-essential part of this sentence tells us how far this process of corruption went: it went on until (حَتَّى) the religions lost (فَقَدَتْ) their souls (رُوحَهَا) and their forms (شَكْلَهَا).

Thus, the non-essentials of this sentence serve—

1. to identify which religions are being spoken of,
2. to identify the type of people whose prey the religions became,
3. to add the fact that the religions became toys,
4. to identify the type of people in whose hands they became toys, and
5. to indicate how far the corruption went.

In general, the non-essentials expand the basic idea which the sentence conveys.

Now, the next sentence.

فلو بعث أصحابها الأولون وأنبياءها المرسلون أنكروها وتجاهلوا.

Step 1: Vocabulary

was resurrected	بُعِثَ
companions/ people	أَصْحَاب
earliest/first	أَوَّلُونَ
sent	مُرْسَلُونَ
reject	أَنْكَرَ

disregard

تَجَاهَلَ

Step 2: Essentials

The sentence is an example of *jumlah shartīyyah*. There are thus two sentences, one being the *shart* and the other its *jawāb*. The *shart* states that if the earliest adherents of those religions had to be resurrected...

The essential *jawāb* comes in one word that contains *fi'l*, *fā'il* as well as *maf'ūl bihī*: أَنْكَرُوْهَا , meaning that they would reject those religions.

Step 3: Role of the non-essentials

The non-essential addition to the *shart* uses 'atf to add the Prophets (أَنْبِيَآؤَهَا) and adds to it a *ṣifah* (المرسلون) to indicate that they were sent to those nations.

To the *jawāb* there is the non-essential addition of a second response through 'atf: تَجَاهَلُوْهَا . In addition to rejecting those religions, they would also disregard them.

The non-essentials of this sentence add further information which the author wishes to convey.

وَأَصْبَحَتِ الْيَهُودِيَّةُ مَجْمُوعَةً مِنْ طُقُوسٍ وَتَقَالِيدٍ لَا رُوحَ فِيهَا وَلَا حَيَاةَ.

Step 1: Vocabulary

Judaism	يهودية
group/set	مجموعة
rituals	طُقُوسٌ
traditions	تقاليد
life	حياة

Step 2: Essentials

Judaism became just a group of certain things. That is the basic idea of the sentence. It is a modified *jumlah ismiyyah* with *aṣbaḥa*, its *ism* and its *khavar*.

Step 3: Role of the non-essentials

The essentials of the sentence only went as far as telling us that Judaism became a group of certain things. What those things are will now be conveyed by the non-essentials.

First, the writer brings the word طقوس in a *muta'alliq* (من طقوس) to identify the first component in that group of things. Then he uses 'atf to mention the second component: تقاليد.

Finally he wishes to tell us that those rituals and traditions were wholly bereft of soul and life. To achieve this he uses the *lā li-nafyi l-jins*, and a *muta'alliq*: لا روح فيها . ولا حياة .

وهي بصرف النظر عن ذلك ديانة سلائية لا تحمل للعالم رسالة، ولا للأمم دعوة،
ولا للإنسانية رحمة.

Step 1: Vocabulary

averting	صَرَفَ
sight	نَظَر
racialist	سَلَائِيٌّ
to carry	حَمَلَ
world	عَالَم
message	رِسَالَة
nations	أُمَم
humanity	إِنْسَانِيَّة
mercy	رَحْمَة

Step 2: Essentials

The essential idea of this sentence is that Judaism is a religion which will now be qualified through the use of a *ṣifah*. Thus, a simple *jumlah ismiyyah*: ... هي ديانة.

Step 3: Role of the non-essentials

Clearly, the author doesn't simply want to tell us that Judaism is a religion. He wants to tell *what sort* of religion it had become. For that he will add the *ṣifah* سُلالية. With this non-essential addition the sentence is now complete.

But this is not all the writer wants to say. There are three further points which he wants to make, and he will make them through a second *ṣifah*. Only, this time the *ṣifah* will not be a single word like سُلالية, but an entire *jumlah fi'liyyah* consisting of a *fi'l* with its inner *fā'il* (لا تحمل), a *muta'alliq* (للعالم) and a *maḥḥūl bihī* (رسالة).

There are two more things left to say, which he will add by latching on to the *jumlah ismiyyah* with the device of *ʿatf*. Both *maḥḥūfs* leverage off the *fi'l* of the *jumlah ismiyyah* which is لا تحمل. The first *maḥḥūf* adds the fact that this particular religion does not carry any invitation (دعوة) for the nations (للأمم). The second *maḥḥūf* adds that it does not carry any mercy (رحمة) for mankind (للإنسانية).

There is something else which the writer wanted to say. A very literal translation would amount to, *with averting the sight from that*, but a more idiomatic translation gives us something along the lines of *over and above that*. He achieves this through the device of a *ḥarf al-jarr* (بِ), followed by its *majrūr* (صرف), attached to a *muḍāf ilayh* (النظر), followed by another *ḥarf al-jarr* (عن) and its *majrūr* (ذلك): بصرف النظر عن: ذلك.

The simplicity of a basic essential sentence is not always enough to get one's full idea across. This is where the full range of non-essential parts of the sentence becomes useful.

أما المسيحية فقد امتحنت بتحريف الغالين وتأويل الجاهلين منذ عصرها الأول.

Step 1: Vocabulary

was afflicted	أُمْتُحِنَ
corruption	تحريف
extremists	غاليين
interpretation	تأويل
ignorant	جاهلين
since	مُنْذُ
period	عَصْر
first/ earliest	أَوَّل

Step 2: Essentials

Christianity was afflicted. That is the basic idea here. Hence, a simple *jumlaḥ ismiyyah* in which the *khavar* is a *fiʿl* instead of an *ism*. So the *khavar* is *fi maḥalli l-raḥ*. With what was it afflicted, and since when? Those questions will be answered by the non-essentials.

Step 3: Role of the non-essentials

What afflicted Christianity were two things: corruption (تحريف) by the extremists (الغاليين), and interpretation (تأويل) by the ignorant (الجاهلين). The first is given the format of *ḥarf al-jarr—majrūr—muḍāf ilayh*, while the second latches on through *ʿatf*, and then a *muḍāf ilayh*.

When did this affliction start? Since (مُنْذُ) its earliest period (عصرها الأول). This adverbial phrase is a *mutaʿalliq* consisting of the *ḥarf al-jarr* مُنْذُ , followed by its *majrūr* عصر attached to its own *muḍāf ilayh* ها , followed thereafter by a *ṣifah* for عصر , which is the word الأول .

وأصبح كل ذلك ركاما دفنت تحته تعاليم المسيح البسيطة.

Step 1: Vocabulary

pile	رُكَّام
was buried	دُفِنَ
teachings	تعاليم
the Messiah	المسيح
magnanimous	سَمَح
simple	بسيط

Step 2: Essentials

The key message of this sentence is that all of that corruption came to be a pile. It therefore employs the structure of a *jumlah ismiyyah* modified through the addition of *aşbaḥa*.

Step 3: Role of the non-essentials

What was under that pile? Those are the details that the non-essentials of the sentence impart to us. It gives us a description of the pile, but not in a single-word *şifah*. It gives its description in a complete *jumlah fi'liyyah*. Since رُكَّام as the *khābar* of *aşbaḥa* is *manşūb*, this whole sentence will follow and be *fī maḥalli l-naşb*.

This sub-sentence has a *fi'l majhūl*, دُفِنَتْ , and its *nā'ib al-fā'il* تعاليم . This *nā'ib al-fā'il* is first attached to a *muḍāf ilayh* (المسيح) to indicate whose teachings they are, and then it is given a *şifah*: البسيطة . In addition, a *ẓarf* (تَحْتَهُ) is added to indicate where the teachings were buried.

واختفى نور التوحيد وإخلاص العبادة لله وراء هذه السحب.

Step 1: Vocabulary

hid	اِخْتَفَى
monotheism	توحيد

purifying	إخلاص
worship	عبادة
behind	وراء
clouds	سُحُب

Step 2: Essentials

The simple *jumlah fi'liyyah* that is the essence of this sentence tells us that a light hid.

Step 3: Role of the non-essentials

What light was it? It was the light of monotheism and worshipping none other than Allah. The grammatical structure which conveys this identification of the light is initially the *muḍāf ilayh* (نور الهداية), and secondly the *ʿatf* on the *muḍāf ilayh*. The *maʿtūf* on the *muḍāf ilayh*, which is إخلاص, now gets its own *muḍāf ilayh*, العبادَة, rounded off with the *mutaʿalliq* لله.

Where did the light hide? Behind all these clouds (وراء هذه السُّحُب) of corruption, says the *zarf* and its *muḍāf ilayh*—which is in itself an *ism al-ishārah* (هذه) and its *mushār ilayh* (السحب).

LESSON 14

Common errors

Before concluding this book, one final chapter. This chapter focuses on errors of grammar commonly made in the reading of texts. The errors which we will deal with are two:

1. in *ʿatf*, choosing the correct *maʿtūf ʿalayh*
2. in the *fiʿl*, making the right choice between *maʿrūf* (active) and *majhūl* (passive)

These two errors were selected for discussion, not only because they are commonly made, but also because they can cause major changes to the meaning of a sentence. By focusing acute attention on them here, it is hoped that the student would be easily able to avoid these pitfalls. Forewarned is forearmed.

ERROR 1: Choosing the correct *maʿtūf ʿalayh*

ʿAtf is normally a simple process. If my sentence is something as simple as

جاء زيدٌ

and I wish to add a *maʿtūf*, I simply say

جاء زيدٌ وعمرو

and give the *maʿtūf* the same *iʿrāb* as the *maʿtūf ʿalayh*.

But what if there stands before the *و* of *ʿatf*, not one word, but two? And they are *muḍāf* and *muḍāf ilayh*? Let's take an example from the text quoted in the previous lesson:

وانطفأت المصابيح التي أوقدها أنبياءُ الله و رسله

You can see the و of *ʿatf*. After it you see the underlined word *ورسله*. Now look at the two shaded words before the و : *أنبياء* is *marfūʿ* because it is the *fāʿil* of *أَوْقَدَ*, while *الله* is *majrūr* because it is the *muḍāf ilayh* of *أنبياء*. That much is trite.

The question is: what *iʿrāb* will the word *رسل* take? If you choose *أنبياء* as your *maṭūf ʿalayh* you will make it *marfūʿ*, hence *رُسُلُهُ*. But if you choose *الله* you will make it *majrūr* as *رُسُلِهِ*. So which one will it be?

To help you make the correct choice you have two factors: context, and common sense. You have to step back, look at the context of the sentence, and ask yourself: Where would *رسل* fit best? Are they the ones who did the lighting of the lamps along with the *أنبياء*? Or do the *أنبياء* belong to the *رسل* in the same manner as they belong to *الله*?

If you go for the first choice—that the *أنبياء* and the *رسل* both lit the lamps—and give *rafʿ* to the *maṭūf* following the *fāʿil*, this makes perfect sense. But if you make the second choice and decide to give *jarr* to the *maṭūf* following the *muḍāf ilayh*, the meaning drastically changes. The sentence would now mean that the Prophets *who belong to Allah as well as to His Messengers*, lit the lamps!

Let's use a simpler example to demonstrate how meaning changes through choice of *maṭūf ʿalayh*.

جاء زيدٌ صديقُ خالدٍ وسعيد

Depending on your choice of *maṭūf ʿalayh*, this sentence could mean one of two things:

- If you select the *muḍāf ilayh* *خالد* as your *maṭūf ʿalayh*, and make *سعيد* *majrūr*, the sentence means that Zayd, who is the friend of both Khālīd and Saʿīd, came.

- Alternatively, if you select the *fā'il* زيد as your *ma'ṭūf* 'alayh and make سعيد *marfū'*, it means that Zayd—who is Khālīd's friend—came, and Sa'īd came as well.

It makes sense, therefore, to exercise due care before you decide to assign a particular *i'rāb* to your *ma'ṭūf*. It is not always as straightforward and automatic a process as might appear to the untrained eye. Sentences become complex, word meanings grow challenging at times, and occasions come along when the subtle connections between parts of the sentence can be a bit of an obstacle, even to a seasoned reader.

It might be of interest to mention here the anecdote usually related about the origins of *naḥw*. Abu l-Aswad al-Du'alī was a Tābi'ī born during the lifetime of the the Nabī ﷺ (the type of Tābi'ī referred to as a *mukhaḍram*). His very first steps in codifying the grammar of the Arabic language came in response to a person (probably a non-Arab) falling victim to this very mistake of 'aṭf in reciting the 3rd verse of Sūrah al-Tawbah:

﴿وَأَذَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى النَّاسِ يَوْمَ الْحَجِّ الْأَكْبَرِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولُهُ﴾

And [it is] an announcement from Allah and His Messenger to the people on the day of the greater pilgrimage that Allah is disassociated from the disbelievers, and [so is] His Messenger.

Instead of reciting *ورَسُولُهُ* in the *raf'* case, he read *ورَسُولِهِ* in *jarr*. The result of this misreading turns the meaning of the verse into, *Allah is dissociated from the disbelievers as well as from His Messenger*. This turn of *i'rāb* takes the intended meaning, which is that Allah as well as His Messenger are dissociated from the disbelievers, into something quite contrary: that Allah is dissociated from both the disbelievers and His Messenger. It is said to have been the seriousness of this error that spurred Abu l-Aswad al-Du'alī into codifying the first rules of grammar.

The proper *i'rāb*, of course, is *raf'*, and the word must be read as *ورَسُولُهُ*. The reason for it being *marfū'* is because it is the *mubtada'* in a new elliptical sentence in

which the *khavar* has been omitted. If completed, this sentence would have looked something like this:

وَرَسُولُهُ أَيضًا بَرِيءٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

Another grammatical possibility which readily suggests itself to the mind is to read the word *manṣūb*, ورسوله as *maʿtūf* upon الله. This is in fact one of the recorded readings; however, it is not one of seven or ten Canonical Readings.

The purpose of this anecdote has been to demonstrate how seminal the ʿatf error has been to the development of the discipline of *naḥw*. As the error that launched the entire discipline of grammar in Arabic, it is indeed an error any student would be well advised to guard against.

ERROR 2: Choosing the correct voice of the *fiʿl*

You have already learnt in *ṣarf* that a verb can be both active, or *maʿrūf*, and passive, or *majhūl*. Accordingly, we can have both ضَرَبَ and ضُرِبَ. Then you learnt in *naḥw* that ضَرَبَ will give rise to a certain sentence structure, while ضُرِبَ gives a somewhat different structure of sentence.

If your *fiʿl* is ضَرَبَ your basic sentence structure will be

فعل + فاعل مرفوع + مفعول به منصوب

while for ضُرِبَ it will be

فعل + نائب الفاعل مرفوع

In an unmarked text, when you come across a *fiʿl*, the correct choice of voice (active or passive) is therefore as crucial to a correct reading as it is to a correct understanding. So are there any guidelines or pointers that would assist in making the right choice and avoiding error?

There are, and you will presently be given four factors to help you make the right choice. They are:

- **meaning**;
- **transitivity**, i.e. whether the verb is transitive or intransitive;
- the **relationship** between verb and noun;
- and **context**.

Meaning

Nothing can happen in grammar unless you understand the meaning of the word. Grammar doesn't live in words; it lives in sentences. And sentences only start making sense when the meanings of the words in them are understood.

So, wherever you come across a verb in a sentence, and you find yourself undecided about whether that verb should be read in the active or passive voice, *make sure you understand the meaning of that verb completely*. Lack of understanding, an incomplete understanding, or an incorrect understanding will definitely create grammatical complications for you. But while the complications themselves will be grammatical, their root will be purely lexical, pertaining to the meaning of the word.

Let us demonstrate with an example. Take this sentence:

قَشَعَ السَّحَابُ

Let's assume you already know that a سَحَاب is a cloud. That leaves the verb قَشَعَ. Are you supposed to read it *ma'rūf* as قَشَعَ, or *majhūl* as قُشِعَ? Until and unless you have consulted your dictionary to find out the meaning of the verb قَشَعَ يَقْشَعُ you have no way of determining which voice is the applicable one here.

You may of course guess—and many students actually do just that. What they don't realise is that by doing so they deprive themselves from a precious opportunity to learn the rule involved, and if that rule has already been learnt,

the opportunity becomes one of implementing the rule, thereby familiarising yourself with it. It is only by constant and conscious application of the rule—as opposed to striking luck in guesswork—that you will master this discipline. So do not do yourself a disservice by resorting to guessing.

Once you have figured out that قَشَعَ means *to disperse*, you are in a position to decide between active and passive. The question you now need to ask yourself is: does a cloud disperse something else, or is it itself dispersed by something like the wind, for example? Clouds are dispersed, and they do not by themselves disperse other things. The correct reading therefore would be,

قُشِعَ السَّحَابُ

Transitivity

The basic meaning of the verb leads to the aspect of *transitivity*. A verb may be either transitive, *mutaʿaddī*, or intransitive, *lāzim*. As these terms themselves indicate, this division of the verb has to do with whether the verb transfers its effect on to an object (*maʿfūl bihī*), or not. The verb that does or can transfer its effect on to a *maʿfūl bihī* is *mutaʿaddī*, while the one that cannot take a *maʿfūl bihī* is *lāzim*.

For the sake of simple demonstration, consider the verbs جَاءَ and ضَرَبَ . You will notice how easy it is to give a *maʿfūl bihī* to ضَرَبَ . Try to do the same with جَاءَ . Not as easy. This is because جَاءَ is *lāzim* while ضَرَبَ is *mutaʿaddī*.

So how is all of this connected with the choice between *maʿrūf* and *majhūl*? Well, you would remember that when the verb becomes *majhūl* its *fāʿil* disappears while its *maʿfūl bihī* steps in to become the *nāʾib al-fāʿil*. So what if the verb has no *maʿfūl bihī* in the first place? What would then become the *nāʾib al-fāʿil*? Understand this, and you will comprehend why it is by and large the *mutaʿaddī* type of the verb to which the passive voice will occur.

So, if you come across a verb which you have already determined is *lāzim*, you probably won't have to worry about making it *majhūl*.¹³ But once you have determined that your verb is *mutaʿaddī*, then this is where you need to apply your thinking to decide between *maʿrūf* and *majhūl*.

Let us demonstrate through an example. You have already seen the verb قَشَعَ , and since it denotes the act of one thing dispersing another, you know that it is *mutaʿaddī*. So when you encounter it in a sentence such as the one we had above,

قَشَعَ السَّحَابُ

you know that it may, in theory, be either *maʿrūf* or *majhūl*. But once we change the verb from قَشَعَ to ذَهَبَ , it is now *lāzim*, and because it is *lāzim* the chances of it being *majhūl* are virtually nothing. It can therefore only be

ذَهَبَ السَّحَابُ

Noun-verb relationship

Above we asked a question about the relationship between the cloud and the act of dispersing: does the cloud disperse something else, or does it itself get dispersed? This question forms a good introduction to the relationship between verb and noun.

When you encounter a verb and noun in a sentence, the natural first step would be to determine their respective meanings. Once you know their meanings you may proceed to investigate the relationship between them. At the most basic level, it may be either a relationship in which the *noun does the verb*, or one in which the *verb gets done to the noun*.

Consider, for example, the relationship between this pair of simple words:

¹³ This does not mean that *lāzim* verbs never become *majhūl*. They do, but when they do come as *majhūl* there is a giveaway: the *fiʿl lāzim majhūl* is almost invariably accompanied by a *mutaʿalliq*, as in ﴿جِيءَ بِالنَّبِيِّينَ﴾.

الخبز — أكل

Will the خبز do the act of أكل, or will the act of أكل be done to the خبز ? This might be easy, but exactly the same considerations go into this one as would go into something along the lines of

اضطرَّ الرجل

Context

In investigating the noun-verb relationship we simply consider a pair of words and the relationship between them. However, the texts that you will be encountering in the course of your studies are never going to be as simple as a pair of words. They are going to be lengthy and complex texts, and like all lengthy and complex texts they tell a singular story. That story is the *context*.

In the last example, اضطرَّ الرجل , there is nothing to tell us whether the act of اضطرَّ , meaning *forcing (someone)*, was done *by the man*, or whether it was *done to him*. We therefore have no immediate way of deciding whether the verb should be *ma'rūf* as اضْطَرَّ , with the man being its *fā'il*, or whether the verb should in fact be *majhūl* as اُضْطَرَّ , with the man becoming its *maf'ūl bihi/nā'ib al-fā'il*.

But let's widen the story and see whether we find something in the broader context that will help us to come to a decision on *ma'rūf* or *majhūl*.

كان رجلٌ يسافرُ في الجبال، فتنزل المطرُ، واحتاجَ إلى موضعٍ ينامُ فيه، فاضطرَّ الرجل إلى كهفٍ.

He was travelling in the mountains when rain started coming down. So what did he do? Did he force something else, or was he himself forced to the cave? Do you see from here how context can help unravel the *ma'rūf*–*majhūl* conundrum?

Always remember the golden rule: **do not guess, but consider and think!** Doing that might be very pedestrian at this stage, but practice makes perfect, and by

constant and conscious repetition you will eventually master these steps to the extent where they become second nature.

And once you reach that level, you have achieved proficiency in *naḥw*.

Epilogue

With all these very technical discussions behind us, we now come to the end of this book. The point of all this repetitive grammatical analysis and prognostication of errors was not to get the student hung up on the idea of *naḥw* as a technical subject requiring nothing but the mechanical labelling of parts. Far from it, *naḥw* is the logic that suffuses living language.

Language lives. It lives in the written text, in the spoken word, and in the unspoken thought. It lives in the formation of ideas and in the myriad number of ways in which they are communicated. It lives in the received tradition as much as it lives on when that legacy is continued.

This is the Arabic language. A language of infinite beauty, irresistible power and incomparable splendour. It is the language that lived on the lips of the Beloved Messenger ﷺ and which was selected by Allah for His final revelation. In it are anchored our history, our culture, our traditions, our highest achievements and our deepest aspirations. By choosing to study it you have become part of it. Treasure that.

This book has exposed you to only one side of the language: its syntax. Do not let your experience of the Arabic language stop there. Go on to savour its sweetness, marvel at its beauty, and be overawed by its power. For that you will need to respond to the first command of revelation:



Of technical grammar you would need but a modicum. When faced with the higher intricacies of grammar you could always consult a specialist or refer to the higher works of the discipline (all of which you do *not* need to study from cover to cover). Do not let the dry technicalities of *naḥw* rob you of the opportunity to savour the wonders of this language: the lyrical music of its poetry, the

compelling power of its prose, and the absolutely incomparable majesty of the Qurʾān.

You have begun your journey. Now, as you are traversing its course, remember three things:

- The language you are learning is beautiful: **enjoy it!**
- It is the language of Allah's Beloved ﷺ: **love it as you love him, and learn it with the intention of keeping his Sunnah alive!**
- It is the language Allah chose for His final revelation: **let it bring you closer to Him.**

ثم الصلاة على المبعوث للأُمم ❖ والحمد لله في بدء وفي ختم