Re-examination of the Semantic Components of "Ishfāq" in the Holy Qur'an with Especial Emphasis on Historical Semantics

Mahmoud Karimi [1], Muhammadhasan Shirzad [2]*, Muhammadhussein Shirzad[3]

[1] Associate Professor, Department of Quran and Hadith Studies,Imam Sadiq University, Tehran, Iran
karimii@isu.ac.ir

[2] Ph.D in Quran and Hadith Studies,Imam Sadiq University,Tehran, Iran
m.shirzad861@gmail.com

[2] Ph.D in Quran and Hadith Studies,Imam Sadiq University, Tehran, Iran
m.shirzad862@gmail.com

Abstract

"Ishfāq" is among the highest frequency words belonging to the semantic field of "fear" in the holy Quran. Nevertheless, a study of lexicographical and exegetical sources indicates that there is not enough knowledge concerning the semantic components of this term, and its differences with such words as *Khawf* and *Khashiyyah* considered close in meaning with the former. The present research is an attempt to trace the oldest history of the root "sh-f-q" in Semitic languages, making use of historical semantics methodology. Studying the semantic changes of this root towards the Quranic Arabic, this study seeks to reexamine its semantic components in the holy Quran. Although some Muslim lexicographers hold that there is a polysemy between the words "shafaq" meaning the redness of the horizon after sunset, and "Ishfāq", meaning fear, considering both from the same etymon, this study concludes that there is no etymological relation between the above-mentioned words, each having its own distinctive historical origin. "Ishfāq" involves two significant semantic components, i.e. fear and scarcity. It thus signifies a kind of fear emanating from scarcity of water, food, money, etc.

Keywords: Quranic vocabulary, fear, historical semantics, etymology, Semitic linguistics.

1- Introduction

When speaking about the semantic field of fear and dread in the Holy Qur'an, what attracts one's attention more than other things is the variety and multiplicity of words referring to fear in this holy text (See Alexander, 2002, p. 194). Words such as "khawf", "khashyat", "taqwā", "ḥadhar", "wajal", "faraq", "ru'b", and "ruhb" are the words used in various verses of the Holy Qur'an. To these we can add the word "ishfāq" used in ten verses of the holy Qur'an - eight times in the form of "mushfiqūn" (21: 28, 49/ 23: 57/ 42: 18/ 70: 27) and "mushfiqīn"(18: 49/ 42: 22/ 52: 26) as the plural active participle; and two times in the form of verbs "ashfaqtum" (58: 13) and "ashfaqna" (33: 72).

Lexical variety in the semantic field of fear has raised certain questions to the commentators of the Holy Qur'an. Firstly, what is the wisdom behind this variety?

Secondly, are these words quite synonymous, or there are certain semantic distinctions among them? Thirdly, if there are semantic distinctions among them, what is the exact nature of these distinctions? Much has been said on this topic. Some scholars in the field of Qur'anic exegesis such as Shaykh Ṭūsī have expressly considered these words synonymous, denying any type of semantic distinction among them (See Ṭūsī, 1420, vol. 1, p. 184, vol. 6, p. 244; also Ṭabresī, 1408, vol. 6, p. 443). However, some have attempted to indicate their semantic distinctions in a way (See Abūhilāl 'Askarī, 1400, pp. 235-238). In this context, distinctions between "khawf", and "khashyat" have attracted the attention of scholars in the field of Qur'anic exegesis more than other things, thus mentioning certain distinctive shades of meaning for them (See Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1417, vol. 15, p. 258; Muṣṭafawī, 1368, vol. 3, pp. 144-145; Qurashī, 1371, vol. 2, p. 250). However, a survey of lexicographical and exegetical sources indicates that there is not adequate knowledge about the semantic components of "ishfāq", and its differences with words such as "khawf", and "khashyat" that have a close meaning with it.

Taking these preliminary points to account, the present article is an attempt to study the semantic components of the word "Ishfāq" in the Holy Qur'an, revealing the features of this special type of fear. To reach this goal, we are supposed to benefit from the capacity of historical semantics as a discipline, thus increasing our knowledge of the conceptual value of this word. Historical semantics is the study of the origin, basic meaning, and development of individual words as well as of their relationship to words in different languages of the same origin (See Palmer, 1976, pp. 11-12; Campbell, 1999, pp. 254-263; Bussmann, 2006, pp. 385, 1048).

2- The Meaning of the Root in Arabic Language

A study of lexicographers' ideas indicates that the root "sh-f-q" is used in the Arabic language to convey five different meanings.

a. First it is noteworthy that the word "shafaq" (شَفَق) is used in the meaning of the redness of the horizon after sunset due to the mingling of the light of the day with the darkness of the night (Khalīl bin Aḥmad, 1410, vol. 5, p. 45; Jawharī, 1407, vol. 4, p. 1501; Rāghib Isfahānī, 1412, p. 458). Usage of the word in this meaning occurs in Surah 84: (فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِالشَّفَقِ) (84: 16).

It is worth mentioning that lexicographers such as Zajjaj have taken "shafaq" in the meaning of "day" in its general meaning. The Qur'anic evidence for this meaning may lie in the contrast between the words "shafaq" and "Layl" in the above-mentioned Surah: (فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِالشَّفَقِ ۞ وَ اللَّيْلِ وَ مَا وَسَقَ) (84: 16, 17) (See Ibn Manẓūr, 1414, vol. 10, p. 180).

b. Muslim lexicographers hold that the verb forms "ashfaqtu" and "shaffaqtu" occurring in Mazid trilateral conjugation of the root, are used in the sense of "reduced", thus their verbal nouns (maṣādir) i.e. "ishfāq" and "tashfīq" bear the meaning of "reduction" (Fīrūzābādī, 1426, p. 897). Likewise, the phrase "عَطَاءٌ مُشَفَّق" means a "modest gift or bounty" (Khalīl bin Aḥmad, 1410, vol. 5, p. 44; Jawharī, 1407, vol. 4, p. 1502). Kumayt b. Zayd, the outstanding poet of Kufa (60-126AH), has used the word "مُشَفِّق" in the hemistich "لِلسّائلينَ يَداهُ غيـرُ مُشَفِّق", in the same meaning (See Ibn Manẓūr, 1414, vol. 10, p. 180). Taking the point into account that the words "ishfāq" and "tashfiq" are used in the transitive meaning of "reduction", we can conclude that the verb form "shafiqa" (شَفِقَ) in its Mujarrad trilateral conjugation in the Arabic language has had the intransitive meaning of "to be scarce" (See

Gesenius, 1939, p. 974).

It should be noted that in a further step in the process of semantic changes, we witness the formation of the meaning "to be stingy" out of "to be scarce" based on the cause for effect metonymy. According to Muslim lexicographers, Arabs have used the verb form (شَفِقَ یَشـفَقُ) in its Mujarrad triliteral conjugation in the meaning of "to be mean and stingy". Usage of the root "ش ف ق" in the hemistich "کَما شَـفِقَتْ عَلَـی الـزّادِ" "العیـالُ" is a good witness to this meaning (Ibn Fāris, 1399, vol. 3, p. 197; Ibn Manẓūr, 1414, vol. 10, p. 180). The formation of the meaning "stinginess" out of "shortage" is based on the idea that human beings are practically stingy towards the consumption of their possessions if they are inadequate or scarce.

c. As Arabic lexicographical sources suggest, Arabs have used "شَفَق" to refer to any worthless thing (الـرَّدِیءُ مِـن الأشـیاء) (See Azharī, 2001, vol. 8, p. 261; Ṣāḥib bin 'Abbād, 1414, vol. 5, p. 242). Accordingly, "ثَـوبٌ شَفَقٌ" and "مِلحَفَةٌ شَفَق" have been used respectively in the meaning of worthless sheet and dress lacking quality material (Khalīl bin Aḥmad, 1410, vol. 5, p. 44; Ibn Manẓūr, 1414, vol. 10, p. 180). It goes without saying that the formation of this meaning from "ش ف ق" is based on the second meaning of this root, i.e. to be scarce. Of course, the second meaning suggests shortage in terms of quantity, while the third meaning suggests shortage in terms of quality.

d. According to Muslim lexicographers, the root "sh-f-q" in its *If'āl* form, refers to the meaning of "fear" (Khalīl bin Aḥmad, 1410, vol. 5, p. 45; Fayyūmī, 1412, vol. 1, p. 317). Nevertheless, a small group of lexicographers such as Ibn Durayd (d. 321 AH), hold that "شَـفِقتُ" suggests fear as

"أَشـفقتُ" does (Ibn Durayd, 1987, vol. 2, p. 874). However, most lexicographers have considered this idea incorrect (Jawharī, 1407, vol. 4, p. 1502; Ibn Manẓūr, 1414, vol. 10, p. 180; Ṭurayḥī, 1375, vol. 5, p. 193).

In addition to the verbal noun "إشـفاق", the words "شَفَق" and "شَـفَقَة" considered a specific type of verbal nouns, are also used in the meaning of "fear" and "anxiety" (Khalīl bin Aḥmad, 1410, vol. 5, p. 44; Ibn Manẓūr, 1414, vol. 10, pp. 179-180). Rāghib Isfahānī (d. 401 A.H) adds that "ishfāq" is the care combined with fear. When it is made transitive with the preposition "*min*", the meaning of fear would be clearer: (الَّذِینَ یَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَیْبِ وَ هُـمْ مِنَ السَّاعَة مُشْـفِقُون) (21: 49). However, when it is made transitive with the preposition "*fī*", the meaning of care would be highlighted: (قَالُوا إِنَّا کُنَّا قَبْلُ فِی أَهْلِنَا مُشْفِقِین) (52: 26) (Rāghib Isfahānī, 1412, pp. 458-459; also See Khalīl bin Aḥmad, 1410, vol. 5, p. 45).

e. Based on the evidence available, the root "sh-f-q" is also used in the sense of "to be kind and friendly". Almost all the lexicographers have considered this meaning of "sh-f-q" relevant to that of "fear". This relation is justified by the fact that "shafaq" and "shafaqah" refer to goodness and compassion that the compassionate does to the object of compassion, because of being afraid of his unfavorable conditions (Khalīl bin Aḥmad, 1410, vol. 5, p. 44; Azharī, 2001, vol. 8, p. 261).

Finally, it is noteworthy that some lexicographers have sought to find out a common meaning for the root "sh-f-q", referring and linking all the above meanings to it through an analytical process. In this regard, first, we should mention Ibn Fāris (d. 395A.H). Although as the founder of the theory of semantic core (See 'Abd al-Tawwāb, 1420, p. 14),

he is not supposed to find out a core meaning in Maqāʼīs for different usages of any root, he considers a core meaning for "sh-f-q", deriving all other usages from it. According to him, the core meaning of "sh-f-q" is "lenience" and "delicacy" (Ibn Fāris, 1399, vol. 3, p. 197; also See Abūhilāl 'Askarī, 1400, p. 236). Muṣṭafawī (d. 1426 A.H), a contemporary lexicographer, influenced by Ibn Fāris, regards the core meaning of "sh-f-q" as something in which softness, thinness, and weakness - rather than hardness, solidity, and strength - are combined. According to him, the redness of sunset is called "shafaq" since the sunlight at that time is weak and feeble. Likewise, fear is called "ishfāq", since it is the outcome of weakness and incapacity in man (Muṣṭafawī, 1368, vol. 6, pp. 86-87).

3- The Meaning of the Root in Other Semitic Languages

The trace of the root "sh-f-q", one of the oldest tri-consonantal roots in the Semitic languages, can be seen in all branches of this language family. According to phonological correspondence, the phoneme "q" (ق) is stable in all Semitic languages.

However, the phoneme "f" (ف) corresponds to "p" (پ) in the languages of the northern Semitic branches, and the phoneme "sh" (ش) corresponds sometimes to "sh" and sometimes to "samekh" in the same branches (See Gray, 1971, pp. 10-13; Moscati, 1980, pp. 43-45; Leslau, 1991, p. XXVII). Given these explanations, it is expected that the cognate of the root "sh-f-q" would be "sh-p-q" (ش پ ق) and "s-p-q" (س پ ق) in other Semitic languages. According to these introductory remarks, the cognates of the Arabic root "sh-f-q" (ش ف ق) are as follows:

3-1- Northeast Semitic Branch

The oldest surviving texts from the Semitic language family belong to Akkadian, the earliest language that is split off from the proto-Semitic language (See Wolfensohn, 1929, pp. 17-18; Rubin, 2010, p. 6). The Akkadian word "sapāqu" which signifies, firstly, the verbal meaning "to be sufficient", conveys the meaning "to be able, strong". Then, the word "sapqu" which is derived from "sapāqu" represents the adjective meaning "able, strong, and competent" (Gelb, 1998, vol. 15, pp. 161, 167; Black, 2000, p. 317). The construction of the meaning "strength" from the meaning "sufficiency" indicates that Akkadians had a maximum viewpoint towards "sufficiency". So, in their viewpoint, reaching the stage of sufficiency is considered as reaching a high stage of power and ability.

According to the typology of meaning-construction, the sense relation between "ability" and "sufficiency" can be seen in various languages. For example, the Arabic root "gh-n-y" (غ ن ى) signifies both "financial ability" and "sufficiency" (See Khalīl bin Aḥmad, 1410, vol. 4, pp. 450-451; also Zabīdī, 1414, vol. 20, pp. 27-29).

3-2- Northwest Semitic Branch

The word שָׂפַק (šāpaq) in Biblical Hebrew and its cognate סָפַק (sāpaq) in New Hebrew signify "to be sufficient, to suffice" (Gesenius, 1939, p. 974; Klein, 1987, pp. 455, 676). In addition, the word סָפַק (sāpaq) and its derivatives in Jewish Aramaic, and also the root ܣܦܩ (SPQ) and its derivatives in Syriac language mean "to suffice, to be sufficient, and to be enough" (Dalman, 1901, p. 285; Jastrow, 1903, vol. 2, pp. 1015-1016; Brun, 1895, p. 412; Costaz, 2002, p. 234). Moreover, Semitists have introduced a word with the form of "špyq" in Official Aramaic which conveys the adverbial meaning "sufficiently" (Hoftijzer & Jongeling, 1995, vol. 2, p. 1183).

According to linguistic data, it is noteworthy that the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Syriac perception of "sufficiency" is maximal as the same as Akkadians. That's why the Hebrew words שֵׂפֶק (šēpeq) and סֵפֶק (sēpeq) signify "abundance, plenty, and ability" in addition to "sufficiency" (Gesenius, 1939, p. 974; Klein, 1987, pp. 455, 676). The word "špq" in Official Aramaic also means both "richness" and "abundance" (Hoftijzer & Jongeling, 1995, vol. 2, p. 1184). Moreover, some Syriac derivatives of the root ܣܦܩ (SPQ) signify "to be able", "to be capable", and "to be competent". For example, the words ܣܦܩ (spaqʔ), ܣܦܝܩܘܬܐ (sapīqūtā), and ܣܦܩܐ (sapqā) respectively mean "to make able", "ability", and "able" (Brun, 1895, p. 412; Payne Smith, 1903, vol. 2, pp. 386-387; Costaz, 2002, p. 234).

3-3- South Semitic Branch

Discussing the southern branch of Semitic languages, we should finally mention the Sabaic, a dialect of old south Arabic languages. According to surviving epigraphs of southern Saudi Arabia, the words which are derived from the root "ŠFQ" in Sabaic are as follows: (A) "hšfq" which means "to enrich, to do abundantly"; (B) "šfqm" which means "abundantly, in abundance"; and ultimately, (C) "mhšfq" which means "abundant" (Beeston, 1982, p. 131; Biella, 1982, p. 522).

4- The Meaning of the Root in the Holy Qur'an

Based upon statistical dictionaries of Qur'anic lexicons, the root "sh-f-q" (ش ف ق) is used eleven times in Qur'anic verses (See 'Abd al-Bāqī, 1364, p. 384; Rūḥānī, 1407, vol. 1, p. 466). According to Muslim lexicographers and exegetes, this root means "sunset redness" once and means "fear" ten times in the Holy Qur'an. It is worth mentioning that the root "sh-f-q" signifies the two above-mentioned meanings solely in Arabic, and is not

found in other Semitic languages (See Zammit, 2002, pp. 240-241).

Although some Muslim lexicographers such as Ibn Fāris believe that the words "shafaq" (شَــفَق) which means "sunset redness" and "ishfāq" (إشـفاق) which means "fear" are polysemous (See Ibn Fāris, 1399, vol. 3, p. 197; also Muṣṭafawī, 1368, vol. 6, pp. 86-87), the linguistic data indicate that there is no etymological relation between the two above-mentioned words at all. Based upon existing evidence, the two words "shafaq" (شَفَق) and "ishfāq" (إشـفاق) are derived from two different origins and are homonymous[1] (For further evidence and analysis, see succeeding segments of the essay).

With this introduction, the process of construction of the Qur'anic words "shafaq" and "ishfāq" are as follows:

4-1- The Process of Construction of the Qur'anic Word "Shafaq" (شَفَق):

According to historical linguistic data, the word "shafaq" (شَــفَق) traces back to a biconsonantal stem in proto Afro-Asiatic[2], namely "ŝVp". This ancient word reconstructed based on surviving data from the Egyptian, Berber, and West Chadic language branches, means "to shine, to be light" (Orel & Stolbova, 1995, p. 492). Moreover, the word "ŝip", conveying the nominal meaning of "light, day", is derived from "ŝVp" in proto Afro-Asiatic (Orel &

---

[1] For further information about polysemy and homonymy, see Saeed, 2009, pp. 63-64; Riemer, 2010, p. 161.

[2] The Afro-Asiatic, also called Hamito-Semitic and Erythraic, is an ancient language with a history of nearly ten to twelve thousand years. This language is the ancestor of several language families in Asia and Africa, including Semitic, Berber, Egyptian, Chadic, Cushitic, and Omotic (For further information, see Bennett, 1998, pp. 21-22; Bussmann, 2006, pp. 28-29; Bomhard, 2014, pp. 4-7).

Stolbova, 1995, p. 492). Transferring to the Semitic language branch, the afformative "q"[3] is added to the biconsonantal root "ŜP", and therefore, the new tri-consonantal word "shafaq" (شَـــفَق), signifying a special kind of light (sunset redness), is constructed in Arabic[4].

4-2- The Process of Construction of the Qur'anic Word "Ishfāq" (إشفاق):

According to linguistic data, the meaning-construction of "fear" from the root "sh-f-q" (ش ف ق) is as follows:

A) The Meaning-Formation of "Scarcity" from "Sufficiency":

The comparison between the Arabic root "sh-f-q" (ش ف ق) and its cognates in other Semitic languages points out that although this root signifies "scarcity" in Arabic, it signifies "abundance" in other Semitic languages. The different perceptions of the concept "sufficiency, adequacy" are the root cause of this semantic distinction.

It has already been noted that the sense relation between "adequacy" and "abundance" has made it possible that the latter is born out of the former in several Semitic languages, such as Akkadian, Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, and Sabaic. Now it should be added that "adequacy" is a concept that can also be related to "scarcity" based upon minimum attitudes towards "sufficiency". In this view, reaching the stage of sufficiency is possible through reaching a minimum amount of supplies that can only meet the basic and necessary demands.

Far from Semitic culture, a typological

study also confirms the above-mentioned reality. For example, the English verb "suffice" is always used to express the minimum. That's why the English phrase "Suffice it to say that" is used when the speaker wants to make his/her point clear with the fewest possible words and sentences. Supporting the recent claim, the etymological data on "suffice" indicates that this word is rooted in the Latin word "sufficere", which literally means "to make or cause to be under" (See Donald, 1872, p. 501; Skeat, 1888, p. 608).

From an anthropological point of view, it is highly significant that the obvious distinction between Arabs and other Semitic people in the perception of "sufficiency, adequacy" is resulted in the specific lifestyle of the Arabs. The unfavorable climate of the Ḥijāz and its unsuitable environmental conditions, hampering the agriculture and animal husbandry, always compelled Arabs to be satisfied with the minimum supplies (For further information about the climate in Arabian peninsula, See 'Alī, 1993, vol. 7, pp. 6-8, 17; Bayyūmī, 1998, pp. 120-123; also See Montgomery Watt, 1988, pp. 9-12). The inappropriate situation forced lots of inhabitants to abandon the sedentary life to become capable of finding food resources for themselves and their own livestock (Farrūkh, 1984, p. 57; Dallū, 1989, vol. 1, pp. 83-84). The poor water and food resources made Arabs look at the world based on a scarcity mindset. Acquiring those scarce natural reserves, Arabs always were preparing themselves for constant competition with other tribes and clans. The long, bloody conflicts in the pre-Islamic era, called "ʔyyām al-'Arab", were rooted in resource shortages (Hittī, 1991, p. 22; Birrū, 1996, pp. 34, 203-205, 236-237).

Other Semitic people, however, viewed the world based on abundance mindset due to suitable environmental conditions and prosperous economy. For example, we can mention the southern lands of the Arabian

---

[3] For studies regarding the semantic and morphologic functions of formatives in Semitic languages, see O'leary, 1923, pp. 180-191; Gray, 1971, pp. 45-48; Moscati, 1980, pp. 80-84; Lipinski, 1997, pp. 215-228.

[4] For further examples of tri-consonantal lexicons in Semitic languages which are constructed by adding afformative "q", See Orel & Stolbova, 1995, p. 427; Dolgopolsky, 2008, p. 380.

Peninsula. While the northern parts of the peninsula, such as Ḥijāz, consisted largely of barren deserts and infertile lands, the southern parts of the peninsula, known as "Bilād al-Yemen", were considered as the main centers of civilization and urbanization. The fertile lands, springs, and rivers in southern parts of peninsula prepared the ground for prosperous agriculture and production of various food products (Ālūsī, 1314, vol. 1, pp. 202-203; Dallū, 1989, vol. 1, pp. 66-70). Viewing "adequacy" with a maximal approach, the Sabaic root "sh-f-q" signifies "abundance" (See Beeston, 1982, p. 131; Biella, 1982, p. 522). The Holy Qur'an also mentions the abundance of blessings in the region of Saba: "There was certainly a sign for Saba in their habitation: two gardens, to the right and to the left. Eat of the provision of your Lord and give Him thanks: a good land and an all-forgiving Lord!" (34: 15).

B) The Meaning-Formation of "Fear" from "Scarcity":

At this stage, two secondary meanings are formed from the root "sh-f-q" (ش ف ق) which signifies "scarcity":

1) The meaning-formation of "to be stingy" from "to be scarce" based upon the cause for effect metonymy: The prevalence of scarcity mindset among Arabs made them to be always afraid of running out of what they had. Therefore, Arabs became too stingy to consume their own properties. That's why generosity was considered as the most admirable morals among pre-Islamic Arabs, and characters such as Ḥātim Ṭāʾī have been always respected and praised by all (For further information, see Izutsu, 2002, pp. 75-77).

2) The meaning-formation of "to fear" from "to be scarce" based upon the cause for effect metonymy: According to historical data, the pre-Islamic Arab society was founded upon fear due to the prevalence of scarcity mindset among Arabs. The results of this kind of mindset are as follows: being fearful instead of being confident, fear of resource shortages, permanent competition rather than cooperation, prevalence of distrust, spread of anxiety and worry, replacing selfishness with integrity, spread of despair in society, expansion of pessimism instead of optimism, food hoarding, constant conflict over limited sources, bloody wars rather than peace and security, and so on. It is obvious that a society which has been accustomed to such a dire situation for successive generations, unconsciously considers a conceptual relation between fear and scarcity.

The above-mentioned evidence makes it clear that the Qur'anic word "ishfāq" (إشفاق) contains two important semantic components: fear and scarcity. Thus, what draws a semantic distinction between "ishfāq" (إشــفاق) and other words, such as "khawf" (خــوف) and "khashyat" (خشية) is that "ishfāq" signifies the narrow meaning of "fear of scarcity".

The last stage of meaning-formation of the Arabic root "sh-f-q", however, began in the Qur'anic Arabic period, and ended in transition to the Classical Arabic period. According to the surviving Arabic dictionaries, the oldest of which were written in the last half of the second century (A.H.), the meaning of the Arabic root "sh-f-q" is widened. Afterward, this root has signified the absolute meaning of "fear", and its semantic distinctions with other Arabic words, such as "khawf" and "khashyat" has been forgotten.

5- "Ishfāq" (إشفاق): fear of scarcity in the Holy Qur'an

Along with etymological data, the close reading of the uses of the root "sh-f-q" (ش ف ق) in the Holy Qur'an proves that the Qur'anic word "ishfāq" (إشفاق) contains two semantic components: fear and scarcity. To discuss this issue in depth, we are going to

cite a couple of Qur'anic verses in which the word "ishfāq" means "fear of scarcity":

A) The Holy Qur'an describes the condition of believers and disbelievers on the Day of Judgment:

«تَرَى الظَّالِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا وَ هُوَ وَاقِعٌ بِهِمْ وَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَ عَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فِى رَوْضَاتِ الجَنَّاتِ لَهُم مَّا يَشَاءُونَ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ» (شورى/٢٢).

"You will see the unjust fearing on account of what they have earned, and it must befall them. And those who believe and do good shall be in the meadows of the gardens. They shall have what they please with their Lord. That is the great grace" (42: 22).

The Qur'anic phrase (مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا) clearly states that the wrongdoers are afraid of their partial, minor achievements in the Day of Judgment. The Almighty God, however, speaks about the gardens of Paradise which is the symbol of the abundance of blessings. Moreover, the Qur'anic phrase (لَهُم مَّا يَشَاءُونَ) indicates that all the heavenly blessings are ready in accordance with the maximum wishes of righteous people, without any shortages or scarcity (See Ṭūsī, 1420, vol. 9, pp. 157-158; Fakhr Rāzī, 1420, vol. 27, p. 593).

B) Another usage of the root "sh-f-q", signifying "fear of scarcity", in the Holy Qur'an is:

«يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَىْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَةً ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَ أَطْهَرُ فَإِن لَّمْ تَجِدُوا فَإِنَّ اللهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ❊ ءَأَشْفَقْتُمْ أَن تُقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَىْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَاتٍ ...» (مجادلة/١٢-١٣).

"Believers, whenever you consult the Prophet, offer charity before your consultation. This will be better for you and more pure. However, if you do not find anything to give in charity, then God is All-forgiving and All-merciful. Were you afraid that giving in charity before your consultation would make you poor?" (58: 12-13).

The Almighty God commanded the believers to pay money as alms before meeting the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Adding "فَإِن لَّمْ تَجِدُوا", The Omniscient God exempted needy Muslims from paying. However, the Almighty God strongly criticized other Muslims for refusing to pay alms due to fear of becoming poor and dismissed it as inappropriate, unacceptable behavior. According to the textual context, there were some prosperous Muslims who rejected providing aid because of their stinginess (See Ṭūsī, 1420, vol. 9, pp. 551-552; Zamakhsharī, 1407, vol. 4, pp. 493-494; Fakhr Rāzī, 1420, vol. 29, pp. 495-497).

Finally, it is worth mentioning that "ishfāq" (إشفاق) signifies in other Qur'anic verses, the absolute meaning of "fear", not the narrow meaning of "fear of scarcity". Describing believers in the Holy Qur'an, for instance, the Almighty God says that they are afraid of the day of Resurrection and divine punishment:

«الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ وَ هُم مِّنَ السَّاعَةِ مُشْفِقُونَ» (انبياء/٤٩)

"Those who fear their Lord in secret and they are fearful of the Day of Judgment" (21: 49).

«وَ الَّذِينَ هُم مِّنْ عَذَابِ رَبِّهِم مُّشْفِقُونَ ❊ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّهِمْ غَيْرُ مَأْمُونٍ» (معارج/٢٧-٢٨)

"Who are afraid of the torment of their Lord, the punishment of their Lord is not something for them to feel secure of" (70: 27-28).

6- Conclusion

Applying the methods of historical semantics, this essay studied the semantic components of the Qur'anic word "ishfāq" (إشفاق) and clarified the features of this particular type of fear in the context of the revelation of the Holy Qur'an. This study pointed out:

1. Contrary to the views of

lexicographers such as Ibn Fāris, linguistic data indicates that the Arabic root "sh-f-q" (ش ف ق) is homonymous. This root is used 11 times in the Holy Qur'an: once in the nominal form of "shafaq" (شَـفَق) which means "sunset redness", and 10 times in the verbal form of "ashfaqa yushfiqu ishfāq-an" (أَشفَقَ يُشفِقُ إِشفاقاً) which means "to fear". "Shafaq" (شَـفَق) is constructed of the afformative /q/ and the proto Afro-Asiatic word "ŝVp" which means "to shine, to be light". "Ishfāq" (إِشـفاق), however, is rooted in the ancient Semitic root "sh-f-q" which means "sufficiency, adequacy".

2. The successive stages of meaning-formation of "ishfāq" from proto-Semitic to Classical Arabic are as follows:

- "Sufficiency" as the initiating point for constructing the meaning of "fear".

- The meaning-construction of "scarcity" from "sufficiency", based upon the minimal attitude towards sufficiency. According to this view, reaching the stage of sufficiency is possible through reaching a minimum amount of supplies that can only meet the basic needs.

- The meaning-construction of "fear" from "scarcity": The everyday life of pre-Islamic Arabs was full of fear of scarcity due to the dire environmental condition, e.g. barren deserts and resource shortages.

- Finally, the Qur'anic word "ishfāq" signified the absolute meaning of fear due to semantic widening.

3. What makes a semantic distinction between "ishfāq" (إِشـفاق) and other words, such as "khawf" (خــوف) and "khashyat" (خشـية) is that "ishfāq" signifies the narrow meaning of "fear of scarcity" which can be clearly seen in Q. 42: 22, and Q. 58: 13.

Bibliography

The Holy Qur'an.

'Abd al-Bāqī, Muḥammad Fu'ād. (1364). *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li 'Alfāẓ al-Qur'an al-Karīm*. Cairo: Dār al-Hadīth.

'Abd al-Tawwāb, Ramaḍān. (1420). *Fuṣūl fī Fiqh al-'Arabīyyah*. Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānijī.

Abūhilāl 'Askarī, Ḥassan bin Abdullāh. (1400). *al-Furūq fī al-Lughat*. Beirut: Dār al-Āfāq al-Jadīdah.

Alexander, Scott C. (2002). "Fear". *Encyclopedia of the Qur'an*. vol. 2, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe. Leiden: Brill.

'Alī, Jawād. (1993). *al-Mufaṣṣal fī Tārīkh al-'Arab Qabl al-Islām*. Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm li al-malā'īn / Baghdad: Maktabat al-Nahḍat.

Ālūsī, Maḥmūd Shukrī. (1314). *Bulūgh al-Arab fī Ma'rifat Aḥwāl al-'Arab*. ed. Muḥammad Bahjat al-Atharī. Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Miṣrī.

Azharī, Muḥammad bin Aḥmad. (2001). *Tahdhīb al-Lughat*. ed. Muḥammad 'Iwaḍ Mur'ib. Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-'Arabī.

Bayyūmī, Muḥammad. (1998). *Dirāsāt fī Tārīkh al-'Arab al-Qadīm*. Iskandarīyya: Dār al-Ma'rifat al-Jāmi'īyya.

Beeston, A. F. L. et al. (1982). *Sabaic Dictionary*. Beirut: Librairie du Liban.

Bennett, Patrick R. (1998). *Comparative Semitic Linguistics: A Manual*. Winona Lake. Indiana: Eisenbrauns.

Biella, J. Copeland. (1982). *Dictionary of Old South Arabic: Sabaean Dialect*. Cambridge: Scholars Press.

Birrū, Tawfīq. (1996). *Tārīkh al-'Arab al-Qadīm*. Damascus: Dār al-Fikr / Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Mu'āṣir.

Black, J. et al. (2000). *A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.

Bomhard, Allan R. (2014). *Afrasian Comparative Phonology and Vocabulary*. Charleston, SC: Signum Desktop Publishing.

Brun, S. (1895). *Dictionarium Syriaco-Latinum*. Beirut: Typographia PP. Soc. Jesu.

Bussmann, Hadumod. (2006). *Routledge

Dictionary of Language and Linguistics. London & New York: Routledge.

Campbell, Lyle. (1999). *Historical Linguistics*. Cambridge/ Massachusetts: The MIT Press.

Costaz, Louis. (2002). *Syriac-English Dictionary*. Beirut: Dar El-Machreq.

Dallū, Burhān al-Dīn. (1989). *Jazīrat al-'Arab Qabl al-Islām*. Beirut: Dār al-Fārābī.

Dalman, Gustaf. (1901). *Aramäisch-Neuhebräisches Wörterbuch zu Targum, Talmud und Midrasch*. Frankfurt: Kauffmann.

Dolgopolsky, Aharon. (2008). *Nostratic Dictionary*. Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research.

Donald, James. (1872). *Chambers's Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*. Edinburgh: W. & R. Chambers.

Fakhr Rāzī, Muḥammad bin 'Umar. (1420). *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb (al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr)*. Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-'Arabī.

Farrūkh, 'Umar. (1984). *Tārīkh al-Jāhilīyyah*. Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm li al-malā'īn.

Fayyūmī, Aḥmad bin Muḥammad. (1412). *al-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr*. Beirut: al-Maktabat al-'Ilmīyya.

Fīrūzābādī, Muḥammad bin Ya'qūb. (1426). *al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ*. ed. Muḥammad Na'īm al-'arqasūsī. Damascus: al-Risālat Institute.

Gelb, Ignace, et al. (1998). *The Assyrian Dictionary*. Chicago: Oriental Institute of Chicago University.

Gesenius, William. (1939). *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. ed. F.A. Brown, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Gray, Louis. (1971). *Introduction to Semitic Comparative Linguistics*. Amsterdam: Philo Press.

Hittī, Philip. (1991). *al-'Arab: Tārīkh Mūjaz*. Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm li al-malā'īn.

Hoftijzer, J. & Jongeling, K. (1995).

Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions. Leiden: Brill.

Ibn Durayd, Muḥammad bin Ḥassan. (1987). *Jamharat al-Lughat*. ed. Ramzī Munīr Ba'lbakī. Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm li al-malā'īn.

Ibn Fāris, Aḥmad. (1399). *Mu'jam Maqā'īs al-Lugha*. ed. 'Abd al-salām Muḥammad Hārūn. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.

Ibn Manẓūr, Muḥammad bin Mukarram. (1414). *Lisān al-'Arab*. Beirut: Dār Ṣādir.

Izutsu, Toshihiko. (2002). *Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Jastrow, Marcus. (1903). *A Dictionary of the Targumim*. London / New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Jawharī, Ismā'īl bin Ḥammād. (1407). *Tāj al- Lughat wa Ṣiḥāḥ al-'Arabīyya*. ed. Aḥmad 'Abd al-Ghafūr 'Aṭṭār. Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm li al-malā'īn.

Khalīl bin Aḥmad. (1410). *Kitāb al-'Ayn*. ed. Mahdī Makhzūmī & Ibrāhīm Sāmirrā'ī. Beirut: Dār wa Maktabat al-Hilāl.

Klein, E. (1987). *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew Language*. Jerusalem: The University of Haifa.

Leslau, Wolf. (1991). *Comparative Dictionary of Ge'ez*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.

Lipinski, Edward. (1997). *Semitic Languages: Outline of a Comparative Grammar*. Leuven: Peeters.

Montgomery Watt, William. (1988). *Muhammad's Mecca: History in the Qur'an*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Moscati, Sabatino. (1980). *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages: Phonology and Morphology*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.

Muṣṭafawī, Ḥassan. (1368). *al-Taḥqīq fī Kalimāt al-Qur'an al-Karīm*. Tehran: Ministry of Islamic Culture &

Guidance.

O'leary, De Lacy. (1923). *Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages*. London: Kegan Paul.

Orel, Vladimir & Stolbova, Olga. (1995). *Hamito-Semitic Etymological Dictionary*. Leiden: Brill.

Palmer, F. R. (1976). *Semantics: A New Outline*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Payne Smith, Robert. (1903). *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Qurashī, Sayyid 'Alī Akbar. (1371). *Qāmūs-e Qur'an*. Tehran: Dār al-Kutub al- Islāmīyyah.

Rāghib Isfahānī, Ḥussein bin Muḥammad. (1412). *al-Mufradāt fī Gharīb al-Qur'an*. ed. Ṣafwān 'Adnān Dāwūdī, Damascus: Dār al-Shāmīyya / Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm.

Riemer, Nick. (2010). *Introducing Semantics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rubin, Aaron D. (2010). *A Brief Introduction to the Semitic Languages*. Piscataway: Gorgias Press.

Rūḥānī, Maḥmūd. (1407). *al-Mu'jam al-Iḥṣā'ī li 'Alfāẓ al-Qur'an al-Karīm*. Mashhad: 'Āstān-e Quds-e Raḍawī Institute.

Saeed, John. (2009). *Semantics*. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell.

Ṣāḥib bin 'Abbād. (1414). *al-Muḥīṭ fī al-Lughat*. ed. Muḥammad Ḥassan 'ĀliYāsīn. Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kitāb.

Skeat, W. (1888). *An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥussein. (1417). *al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*. Qum: Daftar-e Nashr-e Islāmī.

Ṭabresī, Faḍl bin Ḥassan. (1408). *Majma' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*. ed. Sayyid Hāshim Rasūlī Maḥallātī & Faḍlullāh Ṭabāṭabā'ī Yazdī. Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-'Arabī.

Ṭurayḥī, Fakhr al-Dīn. (1375). *Majma' al-Baḥrayn*. ed. Sayyid Aḥmad Ḥusseinī.

Tehran: kitābfurūshī Murtaḍawī.

Ṭūsī, Muḥammad bin Ḥassan. (1420). *al-Tibyān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*. ed. Aḥmad Qaṣīr 'Āmilī. Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-'Arabī.

Wolfensohn, Israel. (1929). *Tārīkh al-Lughāt al-Sāmīyyah*. Beirut: Dār al-Qalam.

Zabīdī, Muḥammad Murtaḍā. (1414). *Tāj al-'Arūs min Jawāhir al-Qāmūs*. ed. 'Alī Shīrī, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.

Zamakhsharī, Maḥmūd bin 'Umar. (1407). *al-Kashshāf 'an Ḥaqā'iq Ghawāmiḍ al-Tanzīl*. Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī.

Zammit, Martin. (2002). *A Comparative Lexical Study of Qur'anic Arabic*. Leiden: Brill.