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SEMANTIC GOVERNANCE OF THE CENTRAL TERM: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF VOCABULARY IN CONSTRUCTING MEANING WITHIN THE QUR'ANIC TEXT

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ABSTRACT

This research deals with the phenomenon of the pivotal term in the Quranic text, as an active semantic center in shaping meaning and directing the textual context. The Holy Quran does not build its meanings arbitrarily, but rather relies on vocabulary that performs a governing function that directly affects the understanding of the verse and the determination of its purpose. The study relies on the method of description and analysis of words that are considered pivotal in the context, as they are elements that contribute to building the ethical and doctrinal message of the text, and create a structural impact on the course of discourse. The results of the analysis showed that these words exercise semantic authority that affects the direction of interpretation, and that neglecting or ignoring their function leads to a disruption in the moral structure of the text and deprives it of its rhetorical and objective harmony. Accordingly, the pivotal term is considered an interpretive entry point of high value in understanding Quranic texts, especially when it is invested within the context of contemporary grammatical, rhetorical, and lexicographical studies.

KEYWORDS: Governance, Pivotal Term, Semantic Orientation.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most remarkable manifestations of rhetorical inimitability in the Qur'an lies in its unique ability to construct coherent and integrated meaning through precisely selected and purposefully employed words. These words transcend mere syntactic structures to perform a central semantic function known as the pivotal word (*al-lafz al-maḥwarī*). This term is not merely a linguistic unit within the context; rather, it becomes a semantic nucleus a guiding axis that shapes the reader's understanding of the text and helps to unveil its intrinsic purposes.

The significance of this word lies in what may be termed semantic sovereignty (*al-ḥākimiyyah al-dalāliyya*), referring to its capacity to regulate meaning and steer the context across its various dimensions ethical, in which it reinforces values and moral principles, and theological, in which it fosters a monotheistic and devotional consciousness.

This study proceeds from a foundational hypothesis: that the pivotal word is not a marginal linguistic element, but a fundamental semantic structure that plays a vital role in generating Qur'anic discourse. It functions as an interpretive key that facilitates a deeper comprehension of the text and its underlying framework.

The research adopts a syntactic and rhetorical approach in analyzing this phenomenon, relying on specialized exegetical and rhetorical sources in an attempt to uncover the impact of such words in shaping the semantic structure and coherence of the Qur'anic text.

The study is organized into two main sections, preceded by this introduction and followed by a conclusion: The First Section includes two subtopics: Subtopic One explores pivotal words with ethical dimensions, analyzing them within their various contexts and extracting their derived meanings.

Subtopic Two is devoted to examining theologically oriented pivotal words, focusing on their influence in constructing meaning and forming conceptual frameworks. The Second Section addresses the impact of altering the pivotal word on the semantic transformation of meaning. Subtopic One presents a comparative study between two distinct semantic systems.

Subtopic Two investigates the shift in meaning within a single context in the absence of the pivotal word or when multiple pivotal words are present, with an analysis of its dimensions and its effect on textual understanding.

2. FIRST - THE LEXICAL MEANING

Al-Ḥākimiyyah (Sovereignty/Rulership) is an artificial verbal noun (1) derived from the root verb ḥakama to understand its lexical meaning, it is necessary to refer to the meaning of the root ḥ-k-m as found in classical Arabic lexicons.

The term ḥakama has been associated with multiple meanings, including:

1. Prevention/Restraint: Al-Khalīl (d. 175 AH) said: "A man 'aḥkama' something from me, meaning he prevented it... 'ḥikmat al-lijām' (the bridle strap) is what surrounds the horse's jaw, so called because it restrains it from running. Everything that you prevent from corruption, you have 'ḥakamta,' 'ḥakkamta,' or 'aḥkammta' it." 2)
2. Judgment/Adjudication (with ḍamma on the ḥā' - ḥukm): It is stated in Lisān al-'Arab: "Al-ḥukm means adjudication, and its plural is aḥkām... 'Al-ḥukm' is the verbal noun of your saying: 'ḥakama baynahum yaḥkumu' (he judged between them), i.e., he ruled, judged in favor of, or against (3)." (
3. Justice: Ibn Manẓūr (d. 711 AH) said: "Al-ḥikmah (wisdom) is justice." (4)
4. Knowledge and Jurisprudence: Al-Azharī (d. 370 AH) said: "Al-ḥukm is knowledge and jurisprudence." 5)
5. Return/Reversion: Citing Ibn al-A'rābī: "He said: ḥakama fulān 'an al-shay' - meaning, he returned (to it)... I have not heard of ḥukm meaning 'to return' from anyone other than Ibn al-A'rābī, who is a trustworthy authority." (6)
6. Mastery/Perfection: Ibn Manẓūr said: "Aḥkama al-amr - he perfected it... Al-ḥakīm is one who perfects matters." (7)

From the Shar'ī (Islamic legal) perspective, the semantic range of the word ḥukm in the Qur'an appears to be contextually fluid, shaped by the textual demands of each occurrence. However, despite this fluidity, its meanings never depart from those found in the classical lexicons. Sometimes it signifies judgment, as in the verse:

"Those who were arrogant will say: 'Indeed, we are all in it (Hell); indeed, Allah has judged between the servants'" (8)

At other times, it denotes perfection, as in:

"Alif Lām Rā. [This is] a Book whose verses are perfected and then detailed from [one who is] Wise and Acquainted ." (9)

Occasionally, it implies understanding, intellect, or jurisprudential insight, as in:

"And when he reached his maturity and was fully grown, We gave him judgment and knowledge. Thus

do we reward the doers of good" (10)

In other instances, it may carry alternative contextual implications.

From the academic and disciplinary standpoint, the term *ḥukm* adapts to the foundational frameworks of the discipline in which it appears. In *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* (Principles of Jurisprudence), it refers to:

"The address of God relating to the actions of the legally accountable individual, whether as a demand, a choice, or a declarative statement." (11)

Accordingly, jurists divide *ḥukm* into two major categories:

Taklifi ḥukm (prescriptive ruling), which is linked to commands and prohibitions.

Waḍ'ī ḥukm (declarative ruling), which pertains to causes, conditions, and legal effects.

The *uṣūliyyūn* (legal theorists) have elaborated on all the elements connected to *ḥukm*: the *ḥākim* (legislator), the *maḥkūm fih* (subject of the ruling), and the *maḥkūm 'alayh* (the one upon whom the ruling is enacted).

In contrast, among the jurists (*fuqahā'*), the term *ḥukm* has been used with various meanings, such as legal effect, description, and objective or purpose.

What concerns us in this study is the term *al-ḥākimiyyah*, a term that did not appear as a technical term in early scholarly works. Rather, what appeared was the notion of the necessity of rulership—that is, the necessity of establishing a compelling authority who maintains order, protects the public interest, and prevents injustice.

Ibn Khaldūn recognized this necessity and its role in human society. In his *Muqaddimah*, he wrote:

"Kingship is a natural position for human beings. We have already clarified that human life and existence are not possible except through their mutual association and cooperation... and for that, they needed a restraining authority, which is the ruler over them. And by the very nature of human society, this ruler is the dominant, sovereign king who holds power." (12)

Second – The Pivotal Word: Concept and Criteria

Now that the meaning of *ḥākimiyyah* (sovereignty) has been clarified, we turn to defining the pivotal word in order to identify the characteristics that distinguish it from other lexical items.

To begin with, it is important to note that the adjective *maḥwarī* (pivotal) is derived from the root *ḥ-w-r*, which, according to the lexicon, means "to return to or from something" (13). The term *miḥwar* (axis) in classical Arabic denotes "the iron pin around which the tongue of the belt buckle rotates, and the iron rod upon which a pulley spins; it is called

miḥwarah" (14). In more modern usage, *maḥwar* also means: "center or axis of all things" (15). From this, we may infer that the axis implies the notion of a center or foundation, around which all associated elements revolve. Hence, any word that exhibits such properties becomes a pivotal word, because its semantic function is central—what some scholars refer to as essential meaning:

"The meaning that represents the core of the lexical root shared among all its derived forms and morphological constructions." (16)

Early Arab linguists were attentive to the concept of core or essential meaning, even if they did not explicitly name it as such. They demonstrated it through documentation and analysis, as observed in works like *Mu'jam Maqāyīs al-Lughah* by Ibn Fāris (d. 395 AH), and *al-'Abbāb al-Zākhir wa-al-Lubbāb al-Fākhir* by al-Ṣaghānī (d. 650 AH). For instance, Ibn Fāris assigns a foundational meaning to the root *w-j-b*, stating:

"The letters *wāw*, *jīm*, and *bā'* constitute a single root, which indicates the falling or occurrence of something, from which other meanings branch. For example, *wajaba al-bay'* (the sale became obligatory) means it became binding and took effect. *Wajaba al-mayyit* (the deceased) means he fell, i.e., died. *Wajaba al-ḥā'it* (the wall) collapsed—*wajbah*." (17)

Similarly, al-Ṣaghānī identifies a core meaning in the root *r-'-b*, stating:

"*Al-ra'b* (with *fathā*): fullness. One says *ra'abtu al-ḥawḍ*—I filled the reservoir. A *sil rā'ib* is a torrent that fills the valley... *Al-ra'b*, *al-ru'b*, and *al-ru'ub* all denote fear. *Al-ra'ib* is also the fatty, dripping hump of a camel. One says: *sanāmun ra'ib*—a fat and full hump." (18)

Characteristics of the Core or Pivotal Meaning:

1. It is present in all or most usages of the word and is extracted by examining those usages.
2. The appearance and identification of the core meaning depends on the linguist's ability to trace and analyze it.
3. The relationship between the core meaning of a word and its various applications sometimes requires interpretation in order to establish a link. Therefore, it can be said that identifying the pivotal meaning often relies on rational inference.

These features are all encapsulated in Ibn Jinnī's (d. 392 AH) foundational definition of minor derivation (*al-ishtiqāq al-ṣaghīr*), as he states:

"The minor derivation is that which is present in the speech and texts of the people; for example, when you take a root and analyze it, you will find a shared meaning among its derivatives—even if their forms

and patterns differ. Take the root s-l-m), for instance: from it you derive the meaning of safety and soundness, such as in *salima* (to be safe), *yaslam* (he becomes safe), *sālim* (one who is safe), *Salmān*, *Salma*, *salāmah* (safety), and *salīm* (literally, one who is bitten but called such in hope of healing). The rest of the forms in this root follow the same principle, if you interpret them as such; and this applies to other roots as well." (19)

His phrase "you analyze it and find a shared meaning" confirms the earlier point that the identification of a pivotal meaning relies on the linguist's scrutiny. Likewise, his phrase "if you interpret them as such" supports the idea that discovering the core meaning among a word's various uses may require interpretation to connect them.

One might ask: Does this mean that the core (pivotal) meaning is the same as minor derivation (*ishtiqaq saḡhīr*)?

The answer is: the relationship is that of the particular to the general. Every instance of *ishtiqaq saḡhīr* reveals a core meaning, but not every core meaning constitutes minor derivation. This is because *ishtiqaq saḡhīr* refers to a root with one unified meaning, while the core meaning can encompass a root with a general or plural semantic field, not necessarily limited to a single notion.

There are words in the Arabic language whose roots are closely related, distantly related, or even semantically divergent, and such cases are abundant in *Mu'jam Maqāyīs al-Lughah* (20).

The pivotal word is the central lexical unit around which the meaning of the verse—or even the entire Qur'anic context—revolves. Through it, the contextual relationships are shaped, whether at the level of meaning, function, or structure. In other words, it is the semantic nucleus that grants the context its direction and the verse its unique communicative intent . (21)

Third: How Does the Pivotal Word Guide the Meaning of the Verse?

1. It determines the semantic center of gravity of the verse.
2. It semantically frames the remaining words in the verse to serve its function.
3. It gives the verse a clear functional character, such as: command, prohibition, affirmation, report, promise, or warning.

Fourth: The Relationship Between the Pivotal Word and the Context

The pivotal word contributes to:

Guiding the overall direction of the verse's context.

Defining the type of relationship between the sentences. Reinforcing the rhetorical and emotional impact on the recipient. Constructing thematic connections between verses, especially in Makkan chapters.

Section One: The Pivotal Word in the Structure of Qur'anic Meaning – An Applied Study Subsection One: Pivotal Words with Ethical Value – e.g., *Taqwā* (piety), Mercy, Justice

First: The Concept of Value-Oriented Pivotal Words

Following the clarification of the concept of the pivotal word, a value-oriented pivotal word refers to those expressions that convey normative judgments and constitute the ethical and legal value system that the Qur'an seeks to establish. These words contribute to shaping both individual and collective behavior.

Among the most prominent examples are: truthfulness, justice, benevolence, patience, trustworthiness, mercy, wickedness, injustice, lying, betrayal, and others.

Such words form a foundation in the structure of Qur'anic rulings. They are frequently accompanied by a predicate (*khābar*) that grants them a transformative function, moving them from being merely abstract moral values to becoming active tools with behavioral implications.

Second: Semantic Features of Ethical Terms

1. Constructive and Evaluative Function:

These terms are not used merely for descriptive purposes; rather, they serve to evaluate actions and situations, either in praise or in censure.

2. Conceptual Stability and Coherence:

These words maintain consistent meanings that are not subject to changes based on cultural mood or shifting societal trends; on the contrary, they help to form the basis of such frameworks.

3. Connection to Qur'anic Objectives:

Each ethical term contributes to a specific Qur'anic aim—whether doctrinal, legislative, or educational.

4. Derivational Flexibility and Discursive Expansion:

These words allow for the construction of multiple discursive patterns, such as commands and prohibitions, praise and blame, and reward and punishment.

Third: The Relationship Between Ethical Terms and Context

When ethical terms appear within a Qur'anic context, they:

Direct the recipient toward the authentic moral standard.

Reorganize events according to a framework of

good and evil, reward and punishment.

Define the rhetorical dimension of the verse or the Qur'anic passage.

First: Justice (al-'Adl) God Almighty says:

"Indeed, Allah commands justice and excellence (iḥsān)." [Qur'an, al-Naḥl: 90]

The verse opens with the word justice ('adl) before excellence (iḥsān)—a sequence that is neither arbitrary nor stylistically neutral, but rather carries precise rhetorical and legal significance. The prioritization of 'adl underscores its primacy in the structure of social life, as it represents the foundation upon which relationships are built. Iḥsān, on the other hand, is a virtue that embellishes this foundation, but cannot replace it.

This distinction was clarified by Imam 'Alī (peace be upon him) in his commentary on the verse, where he said:

"Justice is fairness, and iḥsān is generosity." (22)

Thus, iḥsān is an additional virtue that enhances justice, but does not substitute for it. And when the Imam was asked,

"Which is better, justice or generosity?" He replied: "Justice puts things in their proper place, whereas generosity takes them out of their due course. Justice is a universal principle, while generosity is a circumstantial exception. Therefore, justice is more noble and superior." (23)

The placement of justice before excellence in this verse is one of the Qur'an's most eloquent rhetorical strategies in conveying the core message and anchoring its principles in the mind of the reader (24). It signals that justice is not merely a recommended virtue, but a necessary condition—an indispensable pillar without which no social system can function. Iḥsān may be added, but only in ways that do not undermine justice.

The verse begins with the emphatic particle *inna* ("Indeed"), followed by a verbal clause affirming God's command regarding justice and iḥsān. This is a declarative mode of expression (*khābarī*), in which the message is presented as a fixed, affirmed divine injunction—not simply as moral guidance, but as a legislative directive with legal and social implications. The use of the verb "He commands" (*ya'mur*) evokes the image of a divine sovereign issuing authoritative decrees to regulate human conduct and societal interactions. (25)

Thus, justice in this verse is not a mere ethical recommendation, but a legal principle upon which rights are established and duties are delineated (26). It is a call for the institutionalization of justice, not merely its adoption as a personal virtue. Every individual, institution, and governing body is

obligated to implement it in accordance with divine legislation

Lexically, the word 'adl denotes: "To judge with equity; it is said of something that matches or equals another, that it is its 'idl' (equal)." (27)

It is the act of giving each their due (28), a function perfectly aligned with the word's usage in the verse. It is a comprehensive term that regulates behavior, prevents transgression, and establishes boundaries.

In the Qur'an, 'adl is consistently tied to contexts of legal and organizational significance—particularly in matters of judgment, testimony, conflict resolution, and the distribution of rights.

When justice is upheld, relationships can be built on solid ground, characterized by balanced rights and fair obligations. However, when justice is absent, iḥsān alone is insufficient to repair the disorder, as it remains an individual act, not a universal standard. Hence, the word 'adl in this verse is the cornerstone of the social and legal order, and its placement at the beginning of the verse signifies its firmness and authority.

Second: Truthfulness: God Almighty says: "This is the Day when the truthful will benefit from their truthfulness." [Al-Mā'idah: 119]

The repetition of the trilateral root ṣ-d-q in both *al-ṣādiqīn* ("the truthful") and *ṣidquhum* ("their truthfulness") imbues the verse with a strong connotative charge that intensifies the semantic value of truthfulness and highlights its direct relationship to divine reward, namely benefit. This repetition is not merely rhetorical; rather, it establishes a causal unity that emphatically ties the quality of truthfulness to its outcome, using a decisively declarative style.

The verse opens with the phrase "This is the Day...", setting a judicial and solemn atmosphere that refers to the Day of Judgment, where the efficacy of truthfulness is made manifest—not merely as an ethical value but as a decisive criterion for divine evaluation and reward.

As noted in the exegetical literature:

"If you ask: What is the meaning of His saying, 'The truthful will benefit from their truthfulness'? If it refers to their truthfulness in the Hereafter, it is not a realm of action. If it refers to their truthfulness in this world, it may not fully match the context, which is about Jesus's truthfulness on the Day of Judgment. I say: it refers to truthfulness that persists with the truthful in both their worldly life and the Hereafter" (29).

Thus, truth assumes an evaluative function, becoming a divine metric by which individuals are assessed and rewarded. It reflects the genuineness of

the soul and testifies to the purity of intention—acting as a divine witness to inner sincerity.

Truthfulness, then, does not merely distinguish its bearer from hypocrites or deceivers; it becomes a tool of divine justice, revealing the moral and spiritual state of the individual.

Moreover, the utility of truthfulness is expansive: its benefit is not confined to worldly gain but extends to the Hereafter, as evidenced in the subsequent verse:

"For them are Gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him. That is the supreme triumph." [Al-Mā'idah: 119]

This suggests that the effect of truthfulness transcends time, stretching from temporal reality into eternal reward.

Thus, truth is presented as a central pillar in eschatological reckoning, serving a declarative and evaluative role in divine judgment. Without it, the beneficiaries would not have been distinguished, nor would the reasons for salvation be clarified. (30)

Third: Patience

God Almighty says:

"And Allah loves the patient." [Āl 'Imrān: 146]

This noble verse illustrates encouragement (*targhīb*) as one of the most prominent rhetorical purposes in the Qur'anic discourse. The attribution of divine love to a specific group—*al-ṣābirīn* ("the patient")—imbues the statement with heightened rhetorical intensity, elevating the rank of patience.

Assigning love to God is among the most exalted forms of motivation the Qur'anic text employs, urging believers to embody this trait. Here, patience is not treated as a general human virtue, but rather as a magnet for divine affection, elevating it to the level of the noblest moral attributes.

The structure of the verse is highly concise yet deeply impactful. It consists of only three elements:

The verb *yūḥibb* ("He loves")—carrying intimacy and favor

The subject *Allāh*—bearing majesty and divine authority

The object *al-ṣābirīn*—defining the ethical and spiritual direction of the message

According to transmitted reports, the "patient" here refers to those who remained steadfast in obeying God and His Messenger during times of hardship and in the face of enemies. They were not shaken by the absence of their Prophet, nor did they falter under trials or withdraw from confrontation.

Thus, the verse not only exalts patience but also presents it as a qualifier for divine love, urging believers to maintain their resolve and moral

integrity in adversity.

Trial : God loves these and others like them—those who are patient with His command, in obedience to Him and to His Messenger, and in striving against His enemies—not those who falter and flee from their enemies, nor those who turn back because their prophet was killed or died, nor those who overcome with weakness due to the prophet's absence" . (31)

Hence, the term *al-ṣābirīn* (the patient) is not merely a moral descriptor but a value-laden criterion upon which divine selection and love are based. It appears in a declarative form within a context of trial and purification, serving as the basis for spiritual distinction among believers.

The recurrence of *ṣabr* in *Sūrat Āl 'Imrān* aligns with the discursive structure of the chapter, which revolves around steadfastness on the path of God. This steadfastness manifests in two primary dimensions:

- Intellectual steadfastness, reflected in verses that strengthen Islamic doctrine and solidify the faith of believers.
- Practical steadfastness, evident in verses concerning pilgrimage, and battle scenes from military expeditions.

Because patience is the essence of steadfastness, the root *ṣ-b-r* in its various derived forms appears five times in this *surah* (32), reflecting its centrality in the chapter's semantic structure.

Fourth: Loyalty

God Almighty says": And those who fulfill their covenant when they make one" [Al-Baqarah 2:177].

Loyalty to one's covenant is listed among the attributes of the righteous (*ahl al-birr*), making it a central pillar in constructing the Islamic value system. A covenant, in this context, emerges as a human virtue with profound social and political implications, reinforcing a culture of commitment and trustworthiness across both personal and institutional interactions.

The descriptive style employed in the verse serves a stabilizing function, embedding the notion of covenant-keeping as an essential characteristic of the righteous. Despite the seemingly declarative form, the structure implicitly conveys an obligatory tone—guiding behavior and correcting deviations in a way that strengthens societal relationships and preserves the fabric of mutual trust.

The temporal connector "when" (Arabic: *idhā*) emphasizes that loyalty is tied to practical fulfillment rather than mere intentions. In other words, the Qur'anic criterion evaluates human behavior at the moment the covenant is actualized, thereby

grounding the concept of trustworthiness in action, not in abstract claims.

The Qur'anic discourse does not limit covenants to individual contracts; rather, it extends to political agreements and international treaties, establishing the covenant as a cornerstone for social order and national stability.

The absence of loyalty undermines the moral vision of a just state and paves the way for the collapse of ethical norms and the disintegration of social constraints. As one scholar put it:

"Mutual trust is the capital of social life. Breaking one's covenant is among the sins that shake this trust and weaken the bonds of social relations. Hence, a Muslim is obligated to uphold three duties toward all—whether believer or disbeliever, righteous or wicked: fulfilling promises, rendering trusts, and honoring parents." (33)

From both educational and social perspectives, breach of covenant opens the door to moral decay and threatens societal peace. This is precisely why the verse ties it to the ethics of righteousness, placing it on par with faith, prayer, almsgiving, and patience.

Fifth - Fulfilling the Trust

God Almighty says:

"Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice." [Al-Nisā' 4:58]

The verse opens with the present-tense verb "commands" (ya'muru) preceded by the emphatic particle "inna", imbuing the divine instruction with assertiveness and authority. What follows—"that you render trusts" and "that you judge with justice"—are both expressed as nominalized verbal constructs (maṣḍar mu'awwal), granting the directive a sense of permanence and legislative stability.

This verse is not merely informative; it is an explicit command, thus elevating trustworthiness and justice to the level of legal and moral imperatives that admit no compromise. Trust becomes the standard for personal integrity, and justice the scale of sound governance.

The grammatical construction of the verse adopts a legislative tone, firmly establishing the principle of accountability and outlining a rigorous ethical framework to regulate the conduct of individuals and systems alike. The deliberate pairing of the terms "trust" (amānāt) and "justice" ('adl) defines the core of the legal meaning; each is presented as indispensable for any legitimate governance structure.

Should either concept be removed or omitted, the moral balance collapses, and the discourse shifts

from a foundational principle with societal impact to a mere moral suggestion lacking the power to reform reality.

The terms amānah and 'adl here do more than convey information; they function as evaluative and directive agents, establishing a dynamic relationship between the text and its audience. This relationship ensures the meaning is not only intellectually received but also morally and socially impactful. They are the two central axes upon which the context, effect, and functionality of the verse revolve. Without them, the sentence would become a hollow linguistic shell devoid of pragmatic utility.

As stated:

"Indeed, how excellent is that which He admonishes you with—that which He has commanded: fulfilling trusts and judging with justice" (34)

In the Qur'an, the word does not merely transmit meaning—it generates moral and behavioral transformation in the audience. The presence of amānah and 'adl as pivotal terms infuses the verse with semantic power, rendering the Qur'anic discourse reformative and communal, not merely recitational or ceremonial.

Section Two: Pivotal Terms with Doctrinal Significance

Doctrinal pivotal terms are those expressions that represent the core foundations of Islamic creed, forming the conceptual structure of faith-based propositions in the Qur'an. Among them are terms such as:

(Allah, faith [īmān], disbelief [kufr], monotheism [tawhīd], polytheism [shirk], prophethood, the Hereafter, revelation, the unseen [ghayb], accountability, Paradise, Hell, etc...

These words serve as semantic carriers that restructure the surrounding context in accordance with their theological nature.

Second: The Semantic Characteristics of Doctrinal Terms

1. Conceptual Rigidity:

These terms are expressed in forms that indicate absoluteness and permanence, not relative fluctuation—e.g., Allah, īmān, kufr.

2. Contextual Interdependence:

They appear within networks of verses that are conceptually interlinked—such as faith and righteous deeds, or disbelief and punishment.

3. Doctrinal Definitiveness:

They are rarely metaphorical; instead, they typically convey explicit and specific theological intent.

4. Central Role in Message Construction:

These terms often define the Qur'anic stance regarding the human being, existence, and ultimate destiny.

Third: The Effect of Doctrinal Terms on the Meaning of the Verse and Its Context

- At the Level of the Verse:

When a doctrinal term such as "Allah", "faith", or "prophethood" appears:

1. It establishes the semantic center of the verse.
2. It determines the type of discourse—whether legislative, declarative, warning, etc.
3. It imposes a rhetorical pattern, such as emphasis, exclusivity, or warning.
4. It guides the grammatical and semantic structure of the sentence and the use of conjunctions and connectors.

- At the Level of the Broader Context:

The term lays the epistemic and theological groundwork for the verses that follow, which then revolve around its core meaning.

It can influence the interpretive direction of an entire sūrah, as the doctrinal term often defines its thematic unity.

First: Monotheism (Tawḥīd)

God Almighty says:

"Allah – there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of [all] existence."

(Āl 'Imrān: 2)

This verse embodies the principle of absolute monotheism, the foundational pillar upon which the entire Islamic creed is built. The verse begins with negation—"lā ilāha"—to deny divinity from all besides Allah, followed by an exclusive exception—"illā huwa"—which affirms that divinity belongs solely to Him without partner.

The word "ilāh" in this context denotes the One worthy of worship, indicating that tawḥīd is not a mere abstract concept, but an existential truth upon which human servitude and belief are grounded. (35)

This is followed by two majestic divine attributes:

"al-Ḥayy" (the Ever-Living), indicating absolute life, untainted by death or decay—a life inseparable from divine knowledge and power. (36)

Then comes "al-Qayyūm" (the Sustainer of all existence), signifying that God is self-subsisting and that everything else depends on Him. (37)

This is a description of divine sovereignty and governance, demonstrating God's complete independence and exclusive control over creation.

The combination of God's oneness and His exalted attributes reveals that monotheism in the Qur'an is not a mere verbal assertion but a deep, heartfelt conviction, serving as the foundation of

worship and submission. (38)

The phrase "Allāhu lā ilāha illā huwa" employs a rhetorical structure known as restriction through negation and exception (qaṣr), emphasizing the absolute exclusivity of divinity to God alone. It serves as a conceptual and cognitive directive, erasing any polytheistic or pluralistic ideas in worship.

"It confirms God's unity and denies divinity from anyone else. The statement came to negate every individual false deity, then restricts divinity to Him, exalted is He. The first part of the verse attributes oneness to Him, and the second affirms that only He is truly divine.

Although the first verse implies the second, the second provides an explicit confirmation." (39)

Such a rhetorical construction not only conveys meaning but establishes spiritual conviction, channeling thought and behavior. It imparts a devotional effect, allowing the recipient to internalize a state of recognition, submission, and absolute surrender to God.

Second – Faith (Īmān) and Disbelief (Kufr)

God Almighty says:

"It is He who created you, and among you is the disbeliever and among you is the believer."

(al-Taghābun: 2)

The verse opens by describing God as "He who created you", where the use of the emphatic pronoun "He" (Arabic: huwa) highlights and asserts that creation is solely from God. Immediately thereafter, God differentiates between two categories of people based on their stance toward divine revelation: the believers and the disbelievers. These attributes appear in the active participle form (mu'min, kāfir), indicating a state of permanence and continuity, rather than transient action.

"God here points to the act of creation, which inherently reflects His power. He says: It is He who created you and granted you the gift of freedom and choice—so among you are disbelievers and among you are believers. On this basis, divine testing becomes justified and meaningful... Then He elaborates on the creation, explaining that this precise and purposeful act contains profound wisdom: 'We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them in vain—that is the assumption of the disbelievers.'" (40)

The context clearly conveys that human beings bear responsibility for their chosen path—whether belief or disbelief—since it is their own decision in response to guidance. As al-Ṭabrisī stated:

"Among you is one who chooses disbelief by poor choice, and among you is a believer by virtue of good choice." (41)

Accordingly, the Qur'an divides humanity into two groups: those who enjoy divine mercy, and those doomed to eternal misery.

The terms faith and disbelief serve as the central pivot of the verse, representing a sharp binary that does not allow overlap. They affirm human agency within the divine system of creation, which in turn justifies life's moral testing and endows it with profound significance. Human creation is not arbitrary; God granted humans both capacity and free will, thereby making them subject to moral accountability.

Thus, the verse not only outlines a human typology, but also establishes the theological foundation for justice, revealing that creation is tied to purpose. Salvation or ruin does not occur randomly; it is the consequence of human volition within a finely tuned divine framework.

Third – Shirk (Associating Partners with God)

God says:

"Indeed, association [with God] is a great injustice." [Luqman: 13]

Here, God makes it clear that shirk is not a mere sin; rather, it is a doctrinal transgression that strikes at the very heart of tawhīd (monotheism) and undermines the fundamental relationship between the servant and their Lord.

This meaning is delivered through a highly emphatic construction, combining the particle of emphasis "inna" with the lam of causality in "la-ẓulm" (a great injustice), indicating both emphasis and causal connection—that is, the greatness of the injustice stems from the act of shirk. The adjective 'aẓīm (great) intensifies the verse's condemnatory and cautionary tone, marking shirk as the greatest form of injustice against divine rights.

This declaration stands as a central theme in Luqman's counsel to his son, where the Qur'anic narrative emphasizes the danger of polytheism as the primary source of doctrinal deviation. As noted in al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ, Luqman was known to preach to his family, including his wife and son—both of whom initially rejected monotheism—until they embraced faith through his persistent exhortation:

"His son and wife were disbelievers, and he continued admonishing them until they accepted Islam." (42)

Scholars differ as to whether the phrase "Indeed, shirk is a great injustice" was spoken by Luqman directly, or whether it marks a shift to divine speech—an abrupt change in wording but not in meaning—to underscore the divine prohibition of shirk. (43)

Describing shirk as "a great injustice" does more than simply condemn it; it classifies it as the gravest form of injustice, since it involves equating the Creator with His creation—a notion incompatible with faith.

From an educational standpoint, this verse plays a critical role in redirecting communities toward doctrinal correction. It shows that advice and moral guidance are powerful tools in transforming individuals from error to truth, and from false pluralism to pure monotheism.

Thus, the verse offers a powerful model of faith-based pedagogy, showing how doctrinal upbringing can liberate the human soul from error, relying on both linguistic precision and spiritual depth. The Qur'anic text conveys a deep ethical message, clarifying that faith is not inherited, but rather a conviction upon which a person's actions in this life and the next are built.

Fourth – Certainty (Yaqīn)

God Almighty says:

"And worship your Lord until certainty comes to you."

[al-Hijr: 99]

This blessed verse affirms the Qur'an's emphasis on steadfastness in worship until the end of one's life. The word yaqīn (certainty) here has been interpreted as referring to death, meaning that a person is commanded to remain in worship so long as they are alive. (44)

The verb "worship" appears in the imperative form, while the noun "your Lord" carries with it the quality of divine lordship (rubūbiyyah), highlighting the relationship of servitude between the human and God.

The Qur'an opts for the word "certainty" instead of "death" to impart spiritual depth to the meaning. Death here is not just a biological endpoint, but the ultimate arrival at truth, the culmination of awareness, and the unveiling of existence's final reality. The expression "until certainty comes to you" is a goal-oriented temporal structure, indicating continuity and ascension rather than cessation.

Although the verse is directly addressed to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, it also addresses humanity in general, portraying worship as a lifelong journey. Worship does not cease with spiritual elevation or moral excellence.

Good deeds and acts of worship cultivate virtuous traits in the soul. As these traits grow stronger, they become the source of even nobler deeds and more refined servitude:

"Righteous deeds and acts of worship generate noble moral traits. When performed consistently and

earnestly, these virtues intensify within the soul, becoming themselves a new source of good deeds and higher spiritual devotion." (45)

Thus, the belief that the purpose of religious obligation ends once perfection is attained is fundamentally flawed. Divine obligation remains essential, as the human being lives within a society, and abandoning worship would lead to societal disorder. Even a perfected individual cannot thrive in a corrupted environment.

This verse offers a profound message: worship is not a temporary command, but an ongoing path leading toward the ultimate unveiling of truth. In this light, *yaqīn* is not mere death, but the completion of knowledge, the realization of truth, and the manifestation of the unseen.

Fifth – Prophethood and the Divine Message
God Almighty says:

"Muhammad is no more than a messenger. If he should die or be killed, would you then turn back on your heels"] *Āl ‘Imrān*: 144[

This noble verse unequivocally defines the status of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ within the sphere of prophethood, without ascribing to him any trace of divinity. It was revealed in the aftermath of the Battle of Uḥud, when a rumor of the Prophet's death spread, causing confusion and retreat among some Muslims. In response, this divine address reorients their perspective, reminding them that Islam is not dependent on the Prophet's physical presence, but is a religion founded upon the eternal message of God.

The verse employs the Arabic exclusivity construction "*mā... illā*", one of the strongest syntactic tools for emphasis, to firmly negate any doctrinal excess or deification of the Prophet.

This divine formulation safeguards Islamic theology from emotional or intellectual collapse following the Prophet's death. It directs believers to understand that steadfastness in faith and struggle (*jihad*) must not be contingent upon the Prophet's life, but must endure with the religion itself, which God has revealed as a timeless guide for all humanity.

This Qur'anic discourse also serves as a direct rebuttal to all forms of personality cults, which risk destroying any reformative or missionary movement once leadership becomes personalized rather than message-centered. As exegetes note, such a reaction signals a deficiency in both social and spiritual maturity. (46)

The Qur'an further delineates the functions of the Messenger in the verse:

"O Prophet, indeed We have sent you as a witness,

a bearer of glad tidings, and a warner."

] *al-Aḥzāb*: 45

Here, the term "witness" signifies oversight and testimony; "bearer of glad tidings" affirms the promise of reward for the believers; and "warner" emphasizes the grave consequences for those who disobey God's commands (47),

This understanding is reinforced in the verse:

"And We did not send before you [O Muhammad] except men to whom We revealed [the message]."

] *al-Naḥl*: 43[

This verse affirms that messengers are human beings, chosen by God to receive revelation. Their humanity makes the divine message more accessible to the human intellect, and counters the objection of the polytheists who rejected the notion of a human prophet. (48)

In this way, the Qur'anic text establishes that prophethood is a role of divine guidance, not a mantle of divinity. The message of the Prophet ﷺ endures through the firm establishment of his methodology, not through his physical presence. Thus, Islam is a faith rooted in theology, not in the personalities of its leaders.

Section Two: The Impact of Changing the Key Lexeme on the Semantic Transformation of Meaning

First Requirement: The Impact of the Key Lexeme within Two Opposing Semantic Structures

The term *taqābul* (opposition or contrast) is derived from the verb *qabila*, and Arabic lexicons have recorded various meanings for this root, including capacity, facing, confrontation, and joining. The lexicon *al-‘Ayn* states:

"*Al-qibal* means capacity—as in the phrase *lā qibala lahum* (they have no strength)—and in another sense, it refers to facing or confrontation, as in *laqītuhu qibalan*, meaning: I met him face-to-face" (49)

Ibn Fāris (d. 395 AH) also recorded the meaning of confrontation under this root in his *Maqāyīs al-Lughah*. (50) The word *qibal* may also denote joining or uniting. According to *al-Layth*:

"If you bring one thing close to another or unite them, you say: *qābaltuhu bihi*." (51)

Both *muqābala* and *taqābul* (opposition or contrast) share the same semantic field in Arabic. *Al-Jawharī* (d. 393 AH) states in his *Ṣiḥāḥ al-Lughah*:

"*Muqābala* means confrontation or opposition; *taqābul* is synonymous." (52)

This linguistic meaning of opposition as confrontation evolved into a more specific and technical sense in scholarly terminology—especially in logic and semantics. In this context, oppositions

refer to entities that cannot coexist in one subject from the same perspective. Hence, oppositional pairs are defined as:

"Two things that cannot coexist within the same subject from the same angle." (53)

These oppositions are classified into four categories:

1. Contraries (al-ḍiddān)
2. Contradictories (al-mutadāddān)
3. Privative and positive opposites (al-‘adam wa-l-malakāh)
4. Affirmative and negative opposites (al-ijāb wa-l-salb) (54)

The types of contrast mentioned by later scholars, and later by modern linguists, are now recognized as part of a broader field known in modern semantics as "semantic relations."

Ahmad Mukhtār ‘Umar asserts that all forms of oppositions – whether absolute, gradable, reciprocal, or directional – are merely different types of taqābul (contrast) (55)

It is evident to any reader that the Qur’an is replete with such oppositions, often for didactic purposes. These contrasts serve as rhetorical devices that generate a cognitive tension built on comparison and evaluative measurement. This makes contrast one of the most effective pedagogical styles in Qur’anic discourse.

To illustrate this, let us examine a paradigmatic contrast between two interrelated yet opposing semantic structures, as found in the verse:

"On the Day when the hypocrite men and hypocrite women will say to those who believe, 'Wait for us! Let us benefit from your light.' It will be said: 'Go back behind you and seek light.' Then a wall will be placed between them, with a door. Its interior contains mercy, but its exterior – facing it – is torment."] al-Ḥadīd: 13[

In this verse, we observe a structured contrast between two expressions:

"Its interior contains mercy"

"Its exterior – facing it – is torment"

The parallelism operates at multiple levels:

1. Grammatical predicate structure (isnād): Both expressions assign predicates to subjects: its interior / its exterior, mercy / torment.
2. Prepositional phrase as predicate (shibh al-jumla): The first clause uses fihī ("in it"), and the second uses min qibalihī ("facing it").
3. Possessive construction (iḍāfa): Both bāṭinuhū ("its interior") and zahīruhū ("its exterior") are constructed in the possessive form, referring to the same wall.

4. Lexical/semantic opposition: The word bāṭinuhū (its inner side) is juxtaposed with zahīruhū (its outer side). The root b-ṭ-n (to be hidden) signifies inwardness or concealment, while zahīr denotes what is visible or exposed.

Remarkably, the Qur’an does not contrast bāṭin with khārij (outside), but instead selects zahīr, which better aligns semantically as the antonym of bāṭin in the axis of hidden vs. apparent. This lexical choice showcases the miraculous precision of Qur’anic diction:

"The words correspond perfectly to the general thematic intent of the passage, and are so precise that no synonym could serve in their place." (57)

Thus, intentionality is inseparable from Qur’anic expression, and the word choice always corresponds to deeper theological and rhetorical aims.

Second Requirement: The Synergy of Multiple Key Lexemes in Constructing Contrastive Meaning

Surah al-‘Asr contains a set of structural cues that work together to form an integrated system of key lexemes (alfāz maḥwūriyya). To identify these lexemes, the text must be deconstructed and analytically examined.

The surah begins with an oath: "By Time" (wa-l-‘aṣr). The Qur’anic oath serves a particular rhetorical function, as clarified by early linguists such as Sibawayh, who emphasized that the purpose of the oath is to reinforce and strengthen the ensuing statement. (58) Among the prepositions used for oaths, the letter wāw is the most frequent, and typically, the verb of oath (aqṣama) is omitted. (59)

This particle (wāw) is restricted to overt and significant referents; oaths are sworn only upon what is meaningful and weighty to both speaker and listener. (60) The noun that follows it here is al-‘aṣr ("time" or "era"), a verbal noun with multiple possible meanings. According to al-Naḥḥās, no single interpretation can be exclusively upheld without evidence, which led him to reconstruct the meaning as: "By the Lord of Time," saying:

"The estimation is Rabb al-‘aṣr (Lord of Time), including everything that falls under the name of time, for there is no specific indication that warrants limitation. ‘Aṣr may refer to an age, to the afternoon, or even to a place of refuge." (61)

These meanings have been confirmed by various linguists (62) and Qur’anic exegetes. (63)

In the second verse – "Indeed, mankind is in loss" – the verse begins with two emphatic particles: inna and lām, both used when doubt or denial is presumed. (64) The use of emphatic structure underscores the truth of the human condition of loss, a claim reinforced by the divine oath that preceded it.

This loss is universal, as the word *al-insān* ("man") contains the definite article of genus, indicating total inclusiveness.

This is supported by the exegetical principle:

"The word *insān* here is general, referring to all human beings, and the proof lies in the subsequent exception—since one can only make exceptions from a majority, not from a singular entity ." (65)

This interpretation was echoed by *Abū 'Ubaydah* (d. 209 AH), who stated:

"*al-insān* here stands for *al-anāsī*—all of humanity ." (66)

Following this declaration, the noun "loss" (*khusr*) is presented as indefinite (*nakirah*), which in Arabic carries the rhetorical functions of magnification, gravity, and multiplicity. (67) This form of *khusrān* (loss) implies a state of deficiency, as there is no "loser" without something lacking. The term aligns with the oath by *al-'aṣr*, especially if interpreted as "the fading of daylight"—a temporal symbol also prone to decline and diminishment.

The gravest form of loss is the loss of redemption, for it leads to destruction. Additionally, the phrase is preceded by the preposition *fi*, used metaphorically here to imply immersion, indicating that man is deeply submerged in this loss.

All these structural features—the oath, the emphasis, the indefiniteness, and the prepositional phrase—combine to make the word "loss" (*khusr*) a key lexeme, signifying ruin and destruction.

Opposing this term is a set of redemptive, salvific key lexemes gathered in the next verse:

"Except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and enjoin each other to truth, and enjoin each other to patience ." (68)

This verse marks a psychological and emotional shift from fear and despair—induced by the preceding verse—towards hope, safety, and optimism. This shift is orchestrated by the structure of exception (*istithnā'*). The interplay of semantic and syntactic indicators is evident here. *Ibn Bābshādh* (d. 469 AH) notes:

"Exception is the exclusion of part from a whole using *illā* or its equivalents ." (69)

The exceptions here are defined through the relative pronoun "those who", followed by four key verbal actions: believed, acted, advised, and advised again. These individuals are exempted from the general attribution of loss, forming a semantic contrast with the prior generalization.

This contrastive structure generates an antithetical textual unit composed of central value-based key lexemes, each fulfilling a distinct semantic

function:

"*Āmanū*" (believed): A personal, doctrinal, and internal dimension. It precedes the others because faith forms the foundational axis from which all other virtues emerge.

"*Āmilū al-ṣāliḥāt*" (did righteous deeds): A socially applied and behavioral dimension. Human action impacts society and therefore must be framed ethically—thus, "righteous" qualifies the deeds, linking them morally to the fruit of faith.

"*Tawāṣaw bil-ḥaqq wa tawāṣaw bil-ṣabr*" (mutually enjoined truth and patience): This lexeme carries a sociological and dialogical weight, representing reciprocal moral interaction among members of a community. This act of mutual exhortation affirms the interactive, participatory nature of Qur'anic ethics.

Thus, each key lexeme occupies a distinct semantic space within the same verse, while jointly constructing a counter-discourse to the overarching theme of loss, thereby forming a harmonized, contrastive structure rooted in theological, ethical, and social dimensions.

3. SECTION THREE: SEMANTIC GOVERNANCE PATTERNS IN NON-QUR'ANIC TEXTS - THE TORAH AND ARABIC POETRY

Firstly: Semantic governance in the Torah is built upon a moral and legislative framework that articulates the relationship between the individual, God, and society. It expresses divine will through commandments, legal rulings, and historical narratives. In contrast, semantic governance in the Qur'an assumes a more unified and rigorous form, presenting the text as the direct speech of God and establishing a comprehensive system encompassing belief, law, and ethics.

One illustrative passage from the Torah appears in the Book of Exodus: 70 שמות:כ"ג:ז – שמות:כ"ג:ז

Arabic translation:

"Keep far from a false matter; do not kill the innocent and righteous, for I will not justify the wicked."

This verse belongs to a set of ethical and judicial injunctions given to the Israelites, emphasizing justice, truthfulness, and the protection of the innocent. The semantic governance of the wording in Exodus 23:7 revolves around divine justice, the rejection of falsehood, and the sanctity of innocence, reflecting a strict moral code in legal and

interpersonal dealings.

Semantic Governance of Key Phrases:

1. "Keep far from a false matter"
 - Ethical Significance: Falsehood is not merely a verbal error but a moral transgression that threatens justice and may lead to the oppression of innocents. The text directly links lying to the potential killing of the innocent, underscoring its gravity.
 - Judicial Governance: In legal contexts, lying – whether in testimony or in spreading false reports – corrupts judicial outcomes and is therefore strictly prohibited. 71
2. "Do not kill the innocent and righteous"
 - Legal Significance: The text sets firm boundaries against unjust condemnation, affirming that innocence must be preserved even at the expense of powerful interests.
 - Social Significance: Protecting the innocent reflects society's responsibility to uphold justice, regardless of the accused's status or visibility.⁷²
3. "For I will not justify the wicked"
 - Theological Significance: God declares Himself a just judge who does not justify the guilty, reinforcing the notion of uncompromising divine justice.
 - Doctrinal Significance: This phrase lays the foundation for the concept of justification in religious thought, where only the righteous are vindicated – a theme later echoed in Christian theology. 73

Secondly :In the realm of poetry, Al-Jawahiri masterfully employs parallel semantic relations through antithetical structures to depict the transience and volatility of life. He writes:

Life is sweetness and bitterness,
It passes like a spark from a blazing flint.

Such is the nature of time, and affliction its essence –

A cycle of advance and retreat.⁷⁴

In the first verse, Al-Jawahiri presents a contrasting pair – "sweetness" and "bitterness" – to describe worldly life as inherently variable. He suggests that human experience oscillates between moments of delight and hardship. By juxtaposing these opposites, he emphasizes their impermanence, reinforced by the verb "passes," which likens life to a fleeting spark from a flint – brief in both emergence and extinction.

This semantic contrast serves an evaluative function, critiquing the ephemeral nature of life and guiding the reader toward a deeper understanding of its transience.

In the following verse, the poet continues the pattern of antithesis with "advance" and "retreat," weaving a parallel structure that underscores the instability of existence. The key lexical elements in these oppositions enhance the rhetorical impact and resonate with the reader through their syntactic coupling. This creates textual cohesion at both the microstructural level – through the pairing of synonymous nouns with the conjunction "and" ("sweetness and bitterness," "advance and retreat") – and the macrostructural level, represented by the overarching message: that life, by its very nature, is a convergence of opposites and a constant state of flux.

4. ENDNOTES

1. See: Introduction to Grammar and Morphology, Abdul Aziz Atiq, p. 126; also see: Comprehensive Grammar, Abbas Hassan, vol. 3, p. 186.
2. Al-'Ayn, Al-Khalil, entry [ḥ-k-m], vol. 3, p. 67; also see: Dictionary of Language Measures, Ibn Faris (d. 395 AH), entry [ḥ-k-m], vol. 2, p. 91.
3. Lisan al-Arab, Ibn Manzur (d. 711 AH), entry [ḥ-k-m], vol. 3, p. 270.
4. Lisan al-Arab, Ibn Manzur, entry [ḥ-k-m], vol. 3, p. 270.
5. Tahdhib al-Lughah, Al-Azhari, entry [ḥ-k-m], vol. 4, p. 111.
6. Tahdhib al-Lughah, Al-Azhari, entry [ḥ-k-m], vol. 4, p. 111.
7. Lisan al-Arab, entry [ḥ-k-m], vol. 3, p. 271; also see: Al-Misbah al-Munir, Al-Fayoumi (d. 770 AH), p. 56.
8. Surah Ghafir, verse 48.
9. Surah Hud, verses 1 and 2.
10. Surah Al-Qasas, verse 14.
11. See: Irshad al-Fuhul, Muhammad Ali Al-Shawkani, p. 6; Al-Maḥṣūl, Al-Razi (d. 606 AH), vol. 1, p. 89.
12. Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldun, vol. 2, p. 574.
13. Al-'Ayn, entry [ḥ-w-r], vol. 3, p. 278.
14. Al-'Ayn, entry [ḥ-w-r], vol. 3, p. 288.
15. Contemporary Arabic Language Dictionary, Ahmad Mukhtar Omar, entry [ḥ-w-r], vol. 1, p. 579.
16. Arabic Semantics: Theoretical and Applied, Fayez Al-Daya, p. 20.
17. Dictionary of Language Measures, Ibn Faris, entry [w-j-b], vol. 6, pp. 89-90.
18. Al-'Abab al-Zākher wa al-Lubbāb al-Fākhir, Al-Ṣaghani, entry [r-'-b], vol. 1, pp. 539-540.
19. Al-Khassais, vol. 2, p. 136.
20. See for example, entry [s-l-q], vol. 3, p. 96.

21. Investigation into the Words of the Holy Qur'an, Hasan Al-Mustafawi, vol. 1, p. 11.
22. Nahj al-Balagha, vol. 4, Sermons of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), p. 51.
23. Nahj al-Balagha, Sermons of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), edited by Salih, p. 553.
24. See: Al-Zarkashi, Al-Burhan, vol. 3, p. 238.
25. See: Al-Razi, Mafatih al-Ghayb, vol. 21, p. 258.
26. See: Al-Zamakhshari, Al-Kashshaf, vol. 2, p. 628.
27. Dictionary of Language Measures, Ibn Faris, vol. 4, p. 246.
28. See: Lisan al-Arab, Ibn Manzur, vol. 11, p. 430.
29. Al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir, vol. 7, p. 119.
30. See: Al-Kashshaf, vol. 1, p. 697.
31. Jami' al-Bayan, Al-Tabari, vol. 6, p. 117.
32. See: Surah Al-Imran: verses 186, 146, 142, 125, and 16.
33. Al-Amthal, vol. 1, p. 499.
34. Al-Kashshaf, vol. 1, p. 535.
35. See: Meanings and Syntax of the Qur'an, vol. 1, Ibrahim ibn al-Sari ibn Sahal (Al-Zajaj), p. 336.
36. Al-Kashshaf, vol. 1, p. 384.
37. See: Mufradat Alfaz al-Qur'an, Al-Raghib al-Asfahani, p. 691.
38. See: Islamic Exposition (Hadiths on Doctrine), Sayyid Muhammad Taqi al-Mudarrisi, p. 79.
39. Al-Baḥr al-Muḥit fi al-Tafsīr, vol. 2, p. 74.
40. Al-Amthal, vol. 18, p. 380.
41. Al-Tibyan, vol. 10, p. 16.
42. Al-Baḥr al-Muḥit fi al-Tafsīr, vol. 8, p. 413.
43. Ibid.
44. Al-Kashshaf, vol. 2, p. 399.
45. Al-Amthal, vol. 8, p. 122.
46. See: Al-Amthal, vol. 2, p. 719.
47. See: Meanings of the Qur'an, vol. 5, Al-Nahhas, p. 359.
48. See: Tafsir al-Mizan, vol. 12, Sayyid Al-Tabataba'i, p. 256.
49. Al-'Ayn, entry [q-b-l], vol. 5, p. 166.
50. Dictionary of Language Measures, entry [q-b-l], vol. 5, p. 51.
51. Lisan al-Arab, entry [q-b-l], vol. 11, p. 540.
52. Al-Ṣiḥāḥ, entry [q-b-l], vol. 5, p. 1797.
53. Al-Ta'rifāt, p. 162.
54. Ibid., p. 163.
55. Semantics, Ahmad Mukhtar Omar, pp. 102-103.
56. Surah Al-Hadid, verse 13.
57. See: Commentary on the Treatise on the Inimitability of the Qur'an, Al-Khattabi, p. 73.
58. See: Kitab Sibawayh, vol. 3, p. 497.
59. See: Al-Kulliyat, Abu Al-Baqā Al-'Akbari, p. 922.
60. Linguistic Structures, Hadi Nahr, p. 214.
61. I'rab al-Qur'an, Al-Nahhas, vol. 5, p. 179.
62. See: Al-'Ayn, Al-Khalil, entry ['-ṣ-r], vol. 1, pp. 292-296.
63. See: Al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir, Ibn 'Ashur, vol. 30, pp. 528-530.
64. See: Dalā'il al-I'jāz, p. 325.
65. Al-Murtajal, Ibn Al-Khashshab, p. 299.
66. Majaz al-Qur'an, Abu 'Ubaydah Ma'mar ibn al-Muthanna, vol. 2, p. 310; also see: Syntax and Meaning in the Holy Qur'an, Muhammad Ahmad Khudair, p. 73.
67. See: Miftah al-'Ulum, Al-Sakkaki, vol. 1, p. 289.
68. Surah Al-'Asr, verse 3.
69. Commentary on Al-Muqaddima al-Muḥsiba, Ibn Babshadh, vol. 2, p. 321.
70. Book of Exodus, Chapter 23, Verse 7 - Hebrew Bible (Torah)
71. Commentary by Fr. Tadros Yacoub on Exodus 23
72. "The Upright Laws" - Commentary on Exodus by Rev. William Marsh
73. Coptic Treasures - Exodus 23:7
74. Diwan al-Jawahiri, p. 138, Dar al-Hurriya for Printing and Publishing, Baghdad (n.d.).

5. CONCLUSION

1. The pivotal term in the Qur'anic text does not merely constitute a linguistic component within the sentence; rather, it serves as a semantic nucleus that redirects interpretation and establishes a comprehensive purpose-driven understanding.
2. The study demonstrates that these terms possess clear semantic authority, such that their absence or substitution leads to a disintegration of Qur'anic meaning and a deviation from its rhetorical and educational aims.
3. There is a distinction between the notion of central meaning and the pivotal term. The former was pursued by early linguists such as Ibn Fāris and al-Ṣaghānī in their lexicographical work, and by Ibn Jinnī in al-Khaṣā'is, where they emphasized the unified general meaning conveyed by diverse usages of etymologically related terms. The pivotal term, on the other hand, refers to the word's influence as a central axis in shaping syntactic relationships and grammatical functions.
4. Value-based and theological examples (such as justice, faith, monotheism, and almsgiving) illustrate how these words play an evaluative

role in shaping thought and behavior. Meanwhile, the lexical oppositions (such as mercy vs. punishment, loss vs. faith) highlight the dialectical function of the text in elucidating the path of guidance in contrast with misguidance.

5. Awareness of the semantic authority embedded in the pivotal term offers a novel gateway to understanding Qur'anic texts.
6. Analyzing these authoritative terms expands the horizon of thematic exegesis. The researcher recommends adopting this analytical methodology in contemporary Qur'anic studies due to its impact on deepening comprehension and defining the prophetic function of the sacred text.

7. The pivotal term influences shifts or transformations in semantic meaning as a result of its engagement in processes such as reconciling opposites or synergizing across differing expressions.

8. The semantic governance of key lexical items in both the Torah and Arabic poetry reveals how language is employed to construct systems of ethical and moral values—expressing divine justice in religious texts and portraying the transience and volatility of life in poetic discourse—demonstrating the power of words to shape awareness and guide understanding across distinct religious and literary contexts.

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