



A Linguistic Analysis of the Qur'anic Narrative of "The Companions of the Cave" in Sura 'Al-Kahf' (The Cave [18]:9-26)

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Abstract

Narratives play an essential role in human communication and culture. A well-tailored narrative, whether it is a short story or a long novel, is considered a powerful tool in influencing people's thoughts, beliefs and therefore their behaviours. The glorious Qur'an is rich in narratives of various types. This paper focuses on studying the parable of "The Companions of the Cave" which is a very prominent narrative among the Muslim community. The present work is mainly concerned with studying the linguistic features of this parable. The investigation, presented in this paper, tackles all levels of linguistic analysis including: the phonological, lexical and morphological, grammatical, semantic, and stylistic levels. The investigation reveals a plethora of linguistic features in such a short story. One of the prominent findings of this research is that the stylistic features are plentiful than the other linguistic ones given the brevity of the story. It is worth mentioning that different modes of narration have been used in this significant parable such as authorial tone, direct speeches as well as dialogues. Furthermore, the scene description as well as the employment of semantic characteristics such as synonymy, antonymy, hyperbole, hyponymy and figures of speech allows the reader/listener to construct vivid images of the story. The paper also highlights the significance of employing the various phonological features on top of them are the auditory components such as rhyme and internal-rhyme, alliteration, assonance and consonance to engage the audience, grab their attention and facilitate the memorisation of the story.

Keywords: *Linguistic Analysis, Qur'anic Narratives, Parable, Stylistic features, lexical and grammatical aspects*

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1. Introduction:

The famous book of Ibn Kathir: "*Stories of the Quran*" *قصص القرآن* (2003) is behind my choice of this study. The book, which is also rendered into English, deals with all narratives, stories and parables mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an in a way that interestingly grabs the readers. In this book, Ibn Kathir, cited the verses of the Qur'an that relate each narrative separately, then he commented on each of them from a religious point of view. This method crystalizes each story and makes it easier for the reader to focus on a certain specific narrative. It is worth mentioning that this book, "*Stories of the Quran*" *قصص القرآن* is extracted from Ibn Kathir's book "*The Beginning and The End*" *البداية والنهاية* (١٩٨٨).

2- Aim of the Study:

The study aims at scrutinising the various linguistic features excelling the parable of "The Companions of the Cave" (Sura 18, verses 9-26). As this short story forms a fine literary piece of work, the study's main objective is to investigate its distinguished linguistic features.

3- Material:

The Qur'anic verses (9-26) of Sura 'The Cave' (i.e. Sura 18) of the Glorious Qur'an are the basic material of the present paper. Many Qur'anic exegeses and Arabic linguistic and grammatical books are consulted so as to understand the background of narrating this parable in the Qur'an, and to help scrutinize its verses.

4- Questions of the Research:

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The study tries to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the prominent linguistic features of this narrative?
- 2- What are the most prominent stylistic features that distinguish this Qur'anic narrative?
- 3- Which type of linguistic aspects is more abundant than the other ones in this parable?

5- Significance of the Research:

The Glorious Qur'an is rich in narratives such as: prophetic narratives (i.e. narratives of the Prophets relating their stories), general narratives, and parables, (like the one I am analyzing).

This research sheds light on some linguistic features of the narrative of "The Companions of the Cave" which, to the best of my knowledge, have not been investigated in English yet.

This parable specifically draws the attention of many scholars of both linguistics and literature, due to the miraculous style of the Qur'an in general, and of this Qur'anic short narrative in particular.

6. Method of Research:

This study attempts to perform a thorough investigation of the various linguistic features of this narrative adopting an eclectic approach that tackles most linguistic levels: the phonological, the lexical and morphological, the grammatical, the semantic, and the stylistic. This approach follows that of Crystal and Davy (2016).

The arrangement of the various linguistic characteristics traced in this parable is not due to certain prominence but is according to a linear linguistic arrangement, as one of the methods suggested by Crystal and Davy (2016). The first section tackles the various phonological aspects of the verses of the parable.

The Arabic Qur'anic verses constituting the chosen parable are supplied at the end of the paper in an appendix. The interpretation of these verses are cited

from Ghali's interpretation of the Glorious Qur'an (2003), entitled *Towards Understanding the Ever-Glorious Qur'an*. The English citation is provided following the Arabic version. This interpretation is adopted as Ghali is first, a Muslim native speaker of Arabic, second, a late Professor of English Linguistics at the Faculty of Languages and Translation, Al-Azhar University. He obtained his PhD. degree from the USA. Third, his interpretation is an authentic recent one.

7. Analysis and Discussion:

This section is dedicated to the analysis and discussion of the Qur'anic verses representing the parable under study. The first section is for handling phonological features.

7.1. Phonological Features:

As the Qur'an was revealed to be recited, there are distinctive and abundant phonological features. The most prominent ones are highlighted in this section.

7.1.1. Rhyme:

Rhyme is defined, in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1980), as "identity of sound between words or verse-lines extending from the end to the last fully accented vowel and not further." While Leech (1974) divides 'rhyme' into three types: "rhyme, para rhyme and reverse rhyme" (p. 89). He explains that rhyme (in all its types) is a kind of parallelism among sounds. He also states that:

Parallelism (in sound) exists wherever there is a partial, not fully, correspondence between pieces of text. There is no parallelism if all three structural parts of the syllable vary at once, nor if ... all three parts stay the same, (1974, p. 89)

This supports the view of Levin (1973) who stressed that 'rhyme' is one of the most essential phonological features of parallelism.

In order to clarify rhyme for his readers, Leech (1974, p.91) demonstrates that it is "a correspondence between rhythmic measures rather than syllables." Common rhymes, Leech adds, are mostly "monosyllabic". However, the reader

can find a good number of “two-syllable rhymes”, and in some instances “polysyllabic rhymes” (p.91).

Abrams and Harpham (2015) also clarify that “In English versification, standard rhyme consists of the repetition, in the rhyming words, of the last stressed vowel and of all the speech sounds following that vowel” (p. 349). Furthermore, Klarer (1999) emphasises that end rhymes are “the most frequent kind of rhyme in modern poems, based on identical syllables at the end of certain lines.” (p.148).

After presenting the definition of rhyme by scholars and linguists, it is important to highlight its significance either in language learning in general or in Qur'an in specific. Rhyme is a very important tool for language learning especially for young children and language learners. Many recent studies emphasise the significance of rhyme in pedagogy.

For instance, Read *et al.* (2014) studied the effect of rhyme on the word retention of young children. The experiment included reading rhymed and non-rhymed animal stories to children of 2-4 years old. The study concluded that rhyme “can facilitate active prediction”. Meanwhile, more recent studies by Riordan *et al.* (2018) and Timperley *et al.* (2020) showed the effect and importance of rhyme in developing the “children’s language and emergent-literacy related skills”. These studies about the importance of rhyme in language acquisition and story-telling align very well with the fact that the Qur'an was sent down from Allah in an audible form to be recited first to Prophet Mohammed who did not know how to read or write and have to memorise it well to pass it on to the rest of the world. Rhyme makes language musical, and help people remind it.

In the story of the Companions of the Cave, there is monosyllabic rhyme at the end of the 18 verses of the story. All verses end with a syllable consisting of a ‘plosive + a front open long vowel’ except for one verse only which ends with a pharyngeal fricative + front open long vowel. Out of the 18 verses, 17 of them end in /b/ or /t/ or /d/ or even the emphatic /q/ + /a:/. The eighteenth verse ends in the voiced pharyngeal fricative /ʕ / + /a:/.

In this respect, Gimson (1981) states that plosives are pronounced with “muscular energy” and “breath effort” (p. 151). He adds that “in the articulation of a fricative consonant, two organs are brought and held sufficiently close together for the escaping air-stream to produce strong friction; fricatives are, therefore, like plosives and affricates, characterized by a noise component.” (p. 178).

As for end of verse rhyme in Qur'an, El-Ezabi (1998) explains that there are 21 Suras in the Qur'an, among them is Sura “The Cave”, which all end by “the non-restricted type of rhymes”. He demonstrates that in these Suras, the last syllable of each verse [of the end of each verse] ends in a “low front long open vowel: [ā] (i.e. /a:/). Along with the preceding consonant, they form an open syllable of CVV.” (p.84)

Consider the last syllable of the final word in the verses under study:

/ʕadʒaba:/ عجا ; /raʕada:/ رثدا ; /ʕadada:/ عدا ; /ʔamada:/ أمدا ; /ʃatata:/ شططا ;
/kaðiba:/ كذبا ; /mirfaqa:/ مرفقا ; /murʕida:/ مرشدا ; /ruʕba:/ رعبا ; /ʔaħada:/ أحدا ;
/ʔabada:/ أبدا ; /masdʒida:/ مسجدا ; /ɣada:/ غدا ; /tisʕa:/ تسعا ; /ʔaħada:/ أحدا .

The above investigation shows that the whole story of “the Companions of the Cave” has a constant rhyme of a non-restricted type CVV. This recurring syllable with its long open vowel makes the Qur'anic verses musical and memorable. The repetition of the same syllable in successive verses help inculcating them.

7.1.2. Internal Rhyme:

Internal rhyme is defined by Wood and Bogus (1992, p.36) as “rhyme used within the line, to give added effectiveness by a closer repetition of the rhyming sounds.” This characteristic is traced in the concerned verses as follows:

(Rhyming syllables are written in bold)

Verse 10: /rabana:/ & /ʔa:tina:/ & /ʔamrana:/ [CVV]

Verse 14: /rabatna:/ & /rabbuna:/ & /qulna:/ [CVV]

Verse 16: /lakum/ & /rabbukum/ & lakum/ & /ʔamrikum/ [CVC]

Verse 21: /bajnahum/ & /ʔamrahum/ & /rabbuhum/ [CVC]

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Verse 22: /rabiʃuhum/ & /kalbuhum/ & /sa:disuhum/ & /kalbuhum/ & /θa:minuhum/ & /kalbuhum/ & /jaʃlamuhum/ & /minhum/ [CVC]

The above examples reveal that internal rhyme occurs in many instances of the verses of the story. This increases the harmony and beauty of the language.

7.1.3. Alliteration:

Another phonological feature that is remarked in the story is "alliteration". According to *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (2003), alliteration is "the repetition of usually initial consonant sounds in two or more neighbouring words or syllables." While *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2017), states that alliteration is the "appearance of the same sound or sounds at the beginning of two or more words that are next to or close to each other (as in "Round the rocks runs the river)". Similarly, Klarer (2004, p.48) defines alliteration as a special kind of 'internal rhyme' that is characterized by "the repetition of the same consonant at the beginning of words in a single line"

Leech (2001, p. 91) further states that:

to redefine alliteration and rhyme in their most widely used senses, we first divide the rhythmic measure into two parts A (the initial consonant cluster) and B (the whole of what follows A, prior to the inset of the next stressed syllable). ... Alliteration is then **the parallelism** which consists in keeping A constant while B varies, whereas rhyme in **the parallelism** consists in keeping B constant while A varies. (Bold font is mine)

What is most important is that both rhyme and alliteration are based on pronunciation not on spelling "where spelling and pronunciation diverge, alliteration and rhyme follow the latter: *great* rhymes with *mate*, not with *meat*; *city* alliterates with *sat*," (Leech, 2001, p. 92)

Similarly, Abrams and Harpham (2015, p. 9) define 'alliteration' as "the repetition of a speech sound in a sequence of nearby words. The term is usually applied only to consonants, and only when the recurrent sound begins a word or a stressed syllable within a word".

Alliteration plays an important role in rhetoric, language learning, and public speaking. This device is often used in speeches to engage the audience and grab their attention (Halmari, 2011). *The Rhetorician's Notebook* (2013) gives a closer look at the alliteration in Obama's inauguration speech. It explains that the use of alliteration between nearby words in the 'speech', made the language smooth and attractive to the audience. Similar to rhyme, as discussed above in Section (7.1.1), alliteration is an important device in the context of language learning. Egan *et al.* (2020) studied the psychological effect of alliteration to enhance "conceptual-attentional interactions in reading". The study found that alliteration "influences meaning integration and attentional engagement during reading". (p. 111)

Concerning alliteration in Arabic, Al-Sakaki (1987, p. 429) demonstrates that:

"اتفاق اللفظين في وجه من الوجوه مع الإختلاف في المعنى فللجناس وظيفتان من ناحية الشكل والمضمون فهو شكلاً يزيد من الناحية الإيقاعية والنغمية أما مضمونا فيزيد من الإنسجام بين المعانى وذلك عن طرق الأسلوب السلس والمحبب " ...ومما ورد منه في سورة يوسف قوله تعالى: "قال هل آمنكم عليه إلا كما أمنتكم على أخيه من قبل" (آية ٦٤) فقد ورد الجناس هنا بين الألفاظ "آمنكم" و"أمنتكم".

(The agreement between two words in two parallel syllables, however, these two words differ in their meanings. Alliteration has two functions: the first one is phonological, as alliteration gives rhythm and harmony between the words. Second, it gives the style a smooth and easy aspect that increases the interest in reading and facilitates grasping such piece of language. Al-Sakaki (1987, p. 429) gives an example of alliteration from Sura Yussuf in Qur'an, verse 64, where there is alliteration in the two words: /?a:manakum/, and /?a:mantakum/) (My translation)

Alliteration is traced between sounds of words in the following verses:
(alliterating sounds are written in bold)

-Verse 10: /**rabana:**/, /**rafada:**/ رَبَّنَا، رَشَدًا

-Verse 13: /**naħnu:**/, /**naquṣu:**/, /**naba?ahum:**/ نحن، نقص، نبأهم

-Verse 14: /**qa:mu:**/, /**qa:lu:**/ قالوا , قاموا

-Verse 17: /**tara:**/, /**taza:war:**/, /**taqriduhum:**/ ترى، تراور، تقرضهم

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- Verse 18: /law-italaʕta/, /lawalajta/, /lamuliʔta/ لوليت، لمأنت لو إطلعت،
- Verse 19: /labiθtum/, /labiθna:/, /labiθtum/, /falijanẓur/, /falijaʔtikum/,
/walijatalattaf/ لبتتم، لبتنا، لبتتم، فلينظر، فليأتكم، وليتأطف،
- Verse 20: /jazharu:/, /jardzumu:kum/, يظهروا، يرموكم،
- Verse 26: /ʔaʕlamu/, /ʔabʕsir/, /ʔasmiʕ/ أعلم، أبصر، أسمع

In the above examples, there is alliteration between nearby words in the same verse. Alliteration here attracts the attention of the reader, and makes language smoother. It also, as mentioned by Leech (2001), forms a type of phonological parallelism which foregrounds the alliterative words.

7.1.4. Consonance:

Consonance is defined by *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (2003) as "correspondence or recurrence of sounds especially in words; specifically: recurrence or repetition of consonants especially at the end of stressed syllables without the similar correspondence of vowels (as in the final sounds of "stroke" and "luck)". Similarly, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1980) defines 'consonance' as "recurrence of same or similar sounds (especially consonants) in words". Leech (2001) explains that alliteration, consonance, and assonance are types of "verbal repetition" (p.75). In alliteration the initial consonant(s) is repeated in consonance, the consonant(s)' repetition is in the middle; while in assonance, it is among vowels. Leech calls these types of repetition, "phonological echo" (p. 75).

Consonance is traced several times through the Qur'anic story under study as follows:

- Verse 12: the sound /θ/ in /baʕaθna:hum/, /labiθu:/ بعثناهم، لبثوا،
أحصي and also the sound /h/ in: /ʔalhizbajn/, /ʔaħʕa:/
- Verse 14: the sound /q/ in /qulu:buhum/, /qɑ:mu:/, /faqɑ:lu:/, /laqɑd/, /qulna:/
قلوبهم، قاموا، فقالوا، لقد قلنا
- Verse 16: the sound /ʕ/ in /ʔiʕtazaltumuhum/, /jaʕbudu:n/ اعتزلتموهم، يعبدون

مركم، أمركم، لكم، ركبكم، لكم، الكهف، & also the sound /k/ in: /ʔakkahf/, /lakum/, /rɔbakum/, /lakum/, /ʔamrɔkum/

-Verse 18: the sound /q/ in /ʔɑjqɑ:zan/, /ruqu:d/, /nuqalibuhum/, أيقاظا، رقود، نقلبهم

-Verse 19: the sound /θ/ in /baʕaθna:hum/, /labiθtum/, /labiθna:/, /labiθtum/, /fabʕaθu:/ بعثناهم، لبثتم، لبثنا، لبثتم، فابعثوا

The sound /l/ in: /labiθtum/, /labiθna:/, /labiθtum/, /falijanzur/, /falijaʔtikum/, /walijatalɔtaf/, /lijatasa:ʔalu:/

لبثتم، لبثنا، لبثتم، فليأنظروا، فليأتكم، وليتألفوا، ليتساءلوا

-Verse 21: the sound /ʕ/: /ʔaʕθarna:/, /lijaʕlamu:/, /waʕda/, /ʔassa:ʕata/, /jatana:zaʕu:n/, /ʔaʕlam/ أعتدنا، ليعلموا، وعد، الساعة، يتنازعون، أعلم

-Verse 22: and also the sound /ʕ/ in this verse /rabiʕuhum/, /sabʕa/, /ʔaʕlam/, /biʕidatihim/, /jaʕlamahum/ رابعهم، سبعة، أعلم، بعدتهم، يعلمهم

In the above examples, the repetition of the same consonantal sound(s) grabs the attention of the language receivers. It also helps make the language musical.

7.1.5. Assonance:

Assonance is defined by *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (2003) as "2.b: repetition of vowels without repetition of consonants (as in stony and holy) used as an alternative to rhyme in verse.". While the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1980) states that assonance is "rhyming of one word with another in accented vowel and these that follow, but not in consonants (sonnet, porridge)".

Assonance is much detected in the verses near the end of the story almost in juxtaposition with consonance and in some instances with both alliteration and consonance. Consider these verses where assonance is a prominent phenomenon:

- Verse 19: the repetition of the vowel sound(s) /a:/ and /ɑ:/ in: /baʕaθna:hum/, /lijatasa:ʔalu:/ بعثناهم، ليتساءلوا،

قال، قائل، قالوا، قالوا -- /qɑ:la/, /qɑ:ʔil/, /qɑ:lu:/, and another /qɑ:lu:/

-Verse 20: the vowel sound /u:/: /jazharu:/, /jardʒumu:kum/, /juʕi:du:kum/ يظهرُوا، يرجموكم، يعيدوكم

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-Verse 21: the vowel sound /u:/ in : ليعلموا، يتنازعون، فقالوا، ابنوا، غلبوا
/lijaʕlamu:/ /jatana:zaʕu:n/, /faqa:lu:/, /ʔibnu:/, /ʕalabu:/

- Verse 22: the vowel sound(s) /a:/, /ɑ:/, /i/ and /u/: رابعهم، سادسهم، ثامنهم
/rɑ:biʕuhum/, /sa:disuhum/, /θa:minuhum/.

- Verse 26: the glottis and vowel sound(s) /ʔ/ + /a/ or /ɑ/: أعلم، الأرض، أبصر، أسمع
/ʔaʕlam/, /ʔalʔard/, /ʔɑbʕir/, /ʔasmiʕ/

Assonance, traced in the above examples, in accented vowels act as a type of rhyme. It gives the successive words a special kind of music. It also draws the attention of the language receiver. When assonance is repeated in multi-syllables words, it appeals to the readers making the whole word(s) prominent, as the case in verse 22 above.

Regarding the previous four phonological features (i.e. rhyme, alliteration, consonance and assonance), Leech (2001) encompasses them under 'phonological parallelism'. He (p.89) provides his readers with the following table which easily clarifies these features as follows:

Parallelism exists wherever there is a partial, not full, correspondence between pieces of text. There is no parallelism if all three structural parts of the syllable vary at once, nor is there if, on the other hand, all three parts stay the same. ... the following six possible ways in which either one or two of the structural parts may vary. (The unvarying parts are in bold face; C symbolizes a consonant cluster, not a single consonant):

[a]	CVC	great/grow	send/sit	('alliteration')
[b]	CVC	great/fail	send/bell	(ASSONANCE)
[c]	CVC	great/meat	send/hand	(CONSONANCE)
[d]	CVC	great/grazed	send/sell	(REVERSE RHYME)
[e]	CVC	great/groat	send/sound	(PARARHYME)

[f] CVC **great/bait** **send/end** ('rhyme')
(Leech, 2001, p.89)

The analysis of the verses under study reveals that four of the six types of phonological parallelism mentioned above by Leech (2001) are traced. As I discussed above these four types are: rhyme, alliteration, consonance and assonance. The merging together of these four types of phonological parallelism is the main reason of making language musical, elegant, and memorable.

After investigating the distinguished phonological features traced in the parable under study, the following section is dedicated to the analysis of the lexical and morphological features.

7.2. Lexical and Morphological Features:

The reader of the story of "the companions of the cave" can easily observe some morphological features. The most prominent morphological aspects are highlighted in the following sub-sections:

7.2.1. Derivation and Derivational Morphemes:

Derivation is defined by Crystal (2008) as "a term used ... to refer to one of the two main categories or processes of WORD-FORMATION, the other being INFLECTION(AL). These terms also apply to the two types of AFFIX involved in WORD-FORMATION. The result of a derivational process is a new word."

Yule (2016, p.69) states that derivation is "the most common word-formation process to be found in production of ... words". He further explains that there are "**derivational morphemes**. These are used to make new words in the language and are often used to make words of a different grammatical category from the stem".

Meanwhile, Crystal (2008) also illustrates that the most important characteristic of derivational affixes is that they "change the grammatical CLASS" of the words that they are "attached to". The result, i.e. the outcoming new word, has an independent 'state-able LEXICAL MEANINGS'."

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Furthermore, Fromkin and Rodman (1983, p117) demonstrate that derivational morphemes “change the category, or grammatical class, of words. ... when they are conjoined to other morphemes (or words) a new word is derived or formed. ... the derived word may be in a different grammatical class”.

In this respect, Ryding (2005, p. 47) points out to the fact that:

the shifting of patterns around the consonantal root accomplishes a great deal in terms of word creation (derivation) and to some extent, word inflection (e.g., pluralization). The consonant root can be viewed as a nucleus or core around which are constellated a wide array of potential meanings, depending on which pattern is keyed into the root.

Derivational morphemes are tracked in this Qur'anic parable, in the following instances:

1- In verse (17), “المُهْتَدِيْنَ، يَهْدِيْ” /jahdi/, /?almuhtadi/. The first is a present tense verb derived from the stem “هـ د ي” /hada/ whereas the second is “nomen patientis” (i.e. participle) اسم مفعول derived from the same stem. (Wright, 1977, I, p.109)

2- In verse (19) one can easily observe the derivations of the trilateral verb “قول” /qawl/ in “قال قائل” /qa:la/, /qa:ʔil/, the first derivative is the singular past form of the verb while the second, according to Wright (1977) and also Hassan (2004), is the “nomen agentis” اسم الفاعل.

3- Similarly, in verse (21), there are the two words “ابنوا، بنيانا” /?ibnuu/, /bunja:nan/ which are derived from the trilateral verb “بنى” /bana:/. The first derivational morpheme is the imperative plural form of the verb + the inflectional morpheme /u:/ which indicates plurality الجمع, whereas the second means: ‘a building’ “بنيانا”.

4- In verse (22), I notice two derivatives of two different morphemes. The first one is “أعلم، يعلمهم” /?aʕlam/, /jaʕlamuhum/ which are derived from the trilateral verb “علم” /ʕalima/. Note that “أعلم” /?aʕlama/ is a present tense singular verb, whereas “يعلمهم” /jaʕlamuhum/ is a present tense plural verb which in addition to the morpheme prefixed to it /ja/, has also regained the inflectional morpheme /hum/ referring to the plural number of men hiding in the cave.

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The second derivatives in this verse (22) are “تمار، مرء” /tumɑ:r/, /mirɑ:ʔan/ that are derived from the trilateral verb “تمر” /tamɑrɑ/. “تمار” /tumɑ:r/ is a present singular verb, whereas “مرء” /mirɑ:ʔan/ is an infinitive.

The above examples clarify the large number of derivational morphemes tracked in this parable. I can notice the occurrence of many verbs, then followed by their derived nouns, or ‘nomen agentis’, or ‘nomen patientis’ or even an ‘infinitive’. This enriches the language with new derivations out of the same root.

7.2.2. Inflection and Inflectional Morphemes:

Inflection(al) is defined by Crystal (2008) as “ a term used ... to refer to one of the two main CATEGORIES or processes of WORD-FORMATION, ... Inflectional affixed signal GRAMMATICAL relationships, such as plural, past TENSE and possession, and do not change the grammatical CLASS of the STEMS to which they are attached;”

Yule (2016, p.77) explains that inflectional morphemes “are not used to produce new words ... but rather to indicate aspects of the grammatical function of a word.”

Similarly, Fromkin and Rodman (1983, p127) demonstrate that “there are ‘bound’ morphemes that ... are ... purely grammatical markers, representing such concepts as ‘tense’, ‘number’, ‘gender’, ‘case’, and so forth. Such ‘bound’ grammatical morphemes are called **inflectional** morphemes: they never change the syntactic category of the words or morphemes to which they are attached. They are always attached to complete words.”

The present short narrative is rich in inflectional morphemes, I have to refer to some of the examples as there are many:

1- In verses (10 &14), I notice the morpheme /rɑbbu/ “رَبُّ”, (God or Lord), then the inflectional suffix /nɑ:/ (our) is attached to it forming the word /rɑbbunɑ:/ “رَبُّنَا” that means “our Lord”. In verse (10), the morpheme /nɑ:/ indicating possessive plurality is annexed to several other morphemes to mean “our ...”.

In the same verse (14), I observe the attachment of the inflectional suffixes /u:/ and /nɑ:/ to the stem /qul/ “قُل” in /faqa:lu:/ and /qulnɑ:/ “فَقَالُوا، قُلْنَا”. Such affixation marks the grammatical category of the word making the verb plural. The first

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becomes: plural, past tense, (ضمير جمع غائب) (they said), while the latter is: plural, past, (ضمير جمع متكلم) (we said).

2- In verse (19), there is the /u:/ in /qa:lu:/ "قالوا" to indicate plural, past, (ضمير جمع غائب) (they said). In addition, there are the suffixes "نا", "تم", /tum/, /na:/ and /tum/ again, affixed to /labiθa/ "لبث". The first and third indicate plural, past, (you); whereas the second indicates plural, past, (we) (ضمير جمع متكلم). In this verse, there is also the inflectional affixes /a:/ in /qa:la/ "قال", /u:/ in /qa:lua/ "قالوا". The first is singular, past, (ضمير جمع غائب); and the second is plural, past, (ضمير جمع غائب). These two inflectional morphemes are attached to the stem /qul/ "قل".

3- In verse (21), the suffix /u:n/ "ون" is attached to the verb /jatanazaʕ/ "يتنازع" just indicating a plural form of this verb. Similar to Verse (19), the suffix /u:/ is also linked to the verbs /qɑ:lu:/, /ʔibnu:/, and /yalabu:/ (they ...). This suffix /u:/ "وا" indicates plural form.

It is well-known that the Arabic language is a highly inflectional language. The rules of Arabic allow the annexation of more than one morpheme to a root. In some cases in Arabic, one can find a complete grammatical sentence in just one word, formed by the addition of inflectional morphemes to the stem of a word. For instance, in the above examples, I can observe the two words "لبثتم", "لبثنا" which are formed from one stem "لبث" / labiθa/ plus two different inflectional morphemes "نا", "تم", /tum/, /na:/.

7.2.3. Collocation:

Crystal (2008, p.69) defines "collocation" as

a term used ... by some (especially FIRTHIAN) LINGUISTS to refer to the habitual co-occurrence of individual LEXICAL ITEMS. ... Lexical items which are 'collocated' are said to be 'collocates' of each other; the potential of items collocate is known as their 'collocability', or 'collocational range'.

In explaining collocation, Firth (1969) says that "you shall know the word by the company it keeps". Palmer (1976, p.94) states that "for Firth this keeping company, which he called COLLOCATION, was merely PART of the meaning of a word."

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Yule (2016, pp.122-23) demonstrates collocation saying that "One way we seem to organize our knowledge of words is simply in terms of **collocation**, or frequently occurring together. ... We know which words tend to occur with other words."

Hence, collocation is simply "the habitual association of a word in a language with other particular words in sentences" (Robins, 1981, p.53) What is most important concerning 'collocation', Robins (1981, p. 178) adds is that collocation points out "to groups of words considered as individual lexical items irrespective of their grammatical classes or relations".

Concerning the significance of collocation, El-Wakeel (2009, p.23) states that "Collocation is an important criterion in investigating the various meanings of lexical items. In many instances, the meaning of a certain word is not well comprehended except through its various collocations." She (2009, p. 10) also adds that "words gain specific meanings in particular collocations. Studies of collocations within texts proved that the meanings of these collocations are determined not only by the meaning of the individual words but also by the company they keep, i.e. by their co-occurrence together."

While scrutinizing the story of the cave, I notice a large number of collocations as revealed in the following instances:

- Verse (10): هَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَوْفَادًا /hajji? lana: min ?amrina: rɔʃada:/ (dispose for us rectitude in our affair)
- Verse (11): فَضْرَبْنَا عَلَى آذَانِهِمْ /faɖarɔbna: ʃala: ?a:ða:nihim/ (Then We struck upon their ears)
- Verse (14): وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ /warɔbatna: ʃala: qulu:bihim/ (And We braced (Literally: tied upon their hearts) their hearts).
- Verse (15): أَفْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا /?iftara: ʃala: ?allahi kaðiba:/ (fabricates against Allah a lie).
- Verse (17): وَمَنْ يَضَلَّ (يَضَلُّهُ اللَّهُ) فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا /walijjan murʃida:/ (a right-minded patron).

- Verse (21): **وعد الله حق** /waʕda ʔallaḥi ḥaqqu/ -- /ʔassa:ʕata la: rəjba fi:ha:/ (the promise of Allah is true) – (the Hour [i.e. the day of Resurrection], there is no suspicion about it).
- Verse (24): **يهديني ربي ... رشدا** /jahdijani rabbi: raʕada:/ (my Lord will guide me ... to rectitude).
- Verse (26): **له غيب السماوات والارض** (... الله) /lahu yaʕbu ʔassama:wa:ti wa-lʔarḍi/ (To Him (belongs) the Unseen of the heavens and the earth).

The above collocations help determine and identify the meanings of their individual lexical items. Moreover, as these collocations are mentioned in the Qur'an, their usages and link are increased. For instance, when one lexical item is mentioned, the Arab receiver can easily guess the other item. Whenever one says, for example, **الساعة** /ʔassa:ʕata/ (the Hour, or the day of Resurrection); it is immediately expected to hear **لا ريب فيها** / la: rəjba fi:ha:/ (there is no suspicion about it), and so on. The use of these collocations, mentioned in the above examples, intensifies and clarifies the meanings of these collocated lexical items.

7.2.4. Numeration:

A special feature is traced in this parable, which is 'numeration' or the numbering of certain persons and years. In this section, my own viewpoint of this feature is presented. I would even like to admit that most of the views regarding the numbers in these short narratives are all religious judgments whether of Arab scholars or exegetes. As for English, unfortunately, I was not able to find a linguistic reference that could provide a scientific comment on this feature.

"Numeration" is defined by *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (2003) as "1b: an act or instance of designating by a number". "Enumerate" "1: to ascertain the number of: COUNT". While *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1980) states that numeration is "method or process of numbering or computing". It also shows that "enumerate" is to "count; specify, mention one by one, (items)".

Sachkova (2012, p.54) considers enumeration as "a ... device by which separate things, objects, phenomena, properties, actions are named one by one so that they produce a chain, the links of which, being syntactically in the same position are forced to display some kind of semantic homogeneity,"

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The reader of this Qur'anic story will observe that in verses 22, and 25, there are different numbers. The first group of numbers in verse (22) concerns the hiding young companions of the cave. While, the second number in verse (25), clearly designates the number of years which the young men slept in the cave. In verse (21), Allah explains that the people found the "companions of the cave" and they argued what to do till they decided to set up a great building or a mosque by the opening of the cave. Then, the Qur'an started to reveal to the reader another dispute but this time with respect to the number of these young men.

I notice that the verse enumerates the 'companions of the cave' three times. In each time, the number of the men is an odd one followed by its successive even number to point out to their dog:

“ثلاثة رابعهم كلبهم ... خمسة سادسهم كلبهم ... سبعة وثمانهم كلبهم” /θala:θah ra:biʕuhum kalbuhum/, /xamsah sa:disuhum kalbuhum/, /sabʕah waθa:minuhum kalbuhum/.

As previously mentioned by Sachkova (2012), the recurring numbers are acting as “a chain”. They are presenting a type of “semantic homogeneity”.

Another instance of enumeration in this story is found in verse (25). The verse states the exact number of years that the young men slept in the cave. Again an odd number /θala:θa/ “ثلاث” is followed by an even one: /miʔatin/ “مائة”, and at last another odd number /tisʕan/ “تسعا” follows them. Note that in verse (11) the Qur'an generalized the period which the young men slept, by saying “سنين عددا” (a (great) number of years), then in verse (25) the Qur'an designates the number of years.

According to the exegeses of Assabouny, Al-Qortoby, and Ibn Kathir, the Jews of Mecca asked Prophet Mohammed to tell them the real story of the 'companions of the cave' as a sort of examination to his divine revelation. So the story was revealed to the Prophet as one of his miracles. Allah designated the exact period of sleeping by three-hundred- and nine years. This even helps reveal the unlimited ever-power of Allah. As for the number of the young men, according to the previously mentioned exegeses, Allah wants to tell the Prophet as well as people in general, that the specific number of men is not important. What is important is that they are three or more, and that they are accompanied by a dog.

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However, Ibn Al-Jawzy (1422H, 5, p.126) explains that, in his interpretation of verses of the Qur'an, Ibn Abbas said "I know the exact number of the young companions of the cave. By carefully studying the unique language and style of the Qur'an, these men were seven, and the dog is the eighth one". In this respect, Al-Jawzy (1422H, 5, p.126) explains that the Qur'an mentions the two first different numbers of the companions followed by the phrase: رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ /radzman bi-lyajbi/ (guessing at the unseen). Then, in specifying the third different number 'seven', there is no comment. So, it is the last number which is the correct one. Then, the Qur'an finally decides that it is better for people to stop arguing about the number of the young companions. Their exact number is well-known to Allah (Assabouny, 1981, 8, p.11).

7.3. Syntactic and Grammatical Features:

The following grammatical features are recognized in the present parable:

7.3.1. Back-shifting of object of a verb after a Prep. Phr.:

- Verse (10): "رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِن لَدُنكَ رَحْمَةً" /rabbna: ?a:tina: min ladunka raḥmah/

[V + S + Prep. Phr. + O (NP)] whereas the regular structure has to be [V + S + O (NP) + Prep. Phr.] (i.e. *("آتينا (رحمة) من لَدُنكَ").

- Verse (14): "لَن نَدْعُو مِن دُونِهِ إِلَهًا" /lan nadʕu: min du:nihi ?ila:han/

[V + S + Prep. Phr. + O]; the regular arrangement has to be: [V + S + O + Prep. Phr.] (i.e. *("لن ندعو (إلهًا) من دونه").

- Verse (15): "اتَّخِذُوا مِن دُونِي ءَالِهَةً" /?itaxaʕu: min du:nihi ?a:lihatan/

[V + S + Prep. Phr. + O] ; while the normal arrangement has to be: [V + S + O + Prep. Phr.] (i.e. *("اتَّخِذُوا (ءَالِهَةً) مِن دُونِي").

- Verse (15) also: "لَوْ لَا يَأْتُونَ عَلَيْهِم بِسُلْطَانٍ بَيِّنٍ" /lawla: ja?tu:na ʕalajhim bisultā:nin bajjn/

[cond. part. + V + Prep. Phr. + O (NP (N + adj))]; the regular arrangement has to be: [cond. part. + V + O (NP) + Prep. Phr.] (i.e. *("لولا يأتون (بسُلْطَانٍ بَيِّنٍ) عليهم").

- Verse (21): "إِذِ يَتَنَزَّعُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَمْرَهُمْ" /?ið jatanazaʕu:n bajnahum ?amrahum/

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[cond. part. + VP (V + S) + Adv. Phr. (adv. + pron.) + O (NP)]; the regular arrangement has to be [cond. part. + VP (V + S) + O (NP) + Adv Phr. (adv. + pron.)] (i.e. "إذ يتنازعون (أمرهم) بينهم"*)

- Verse (26): "ولا يشرك في حكمه أحداً" /wala: jufrik fi: hukmihi ?ahada: /

[coord. conj. + Neg. Part. + VP (V +S) + Prep. Phr. (prep. + NP) + O]; the regular arrangement has to be [co-ord. conj. + Neg. Part. + VP (V +S) + O + Prep. Phr. (prep. + NP)] (i.e. "ولا يشرك (أحداً) في حكمه")

In the above examples, the prepositional phrases are front-shifted over the objects of the verbs. This increases focus on these prepositional phrases, and grabs the attention of the readers to the meanings intended of these phrases. As for example in verses 14 and 15 above, the emphasis on the sin of adopting other gods rather than (i. e. the only One God) Allah is magnified by the front-shifting of the Prep. Phr.(s): من دُونِهِ /min du:nihi/.

7.3.2. Back-shifting of the Adverb to follow a Prep. Phr.:

- Verse (18): "لوليت منهم فراراً ولملئت منهم رعباً" /lawllajta minhum firar:ran wa lamuli?ta minhum ru?ba: /

[part + V + S + Prep. Phr. + adv.] and [part. + V + S + Prep. Phr. + Adv.]; the regular arrangement has to be [part + V + S + Adv. + Prep. Phr.]

(i.e. "لوليت (فراراً) منهم، ولملئت (رعباً) منهم"*)

The shifting of the prepositional phrases over the adverbs, highlights these phrases and emphasizes the meanings of both the verbs and the adverbs.

7.3.3. Front-shifting of the second-half of a conditional clause:

تقديم جواب الشرط على فعل الشرط وأداته:

The third type of deviation scrutinized in this short story is front-shifting of the second half of a conditional clause and the back-shifting of the first clause. The regular arrangement of such structure in Arabic is the occupation of the conditional clause to the initial position (i.e. أداة الشرط وفعل الشرط) then the second half of the clause (i.e. جواب الشرط) comes in the second or following position as for example:

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- Sura 94, Verse 7: "فإذا فرغت فأنصب" (سورة الشرح، الآية 7)

[co-ord. conj + Cond. Part + VP (V + S) + co-ord. conj. + VP (V + S)]

In **verse (24)** of the concerned narrative, I notice the following 'reversed' conditional sentence:

-Verse (24): "وأذكر ربك إذا نسيت" /wa-ðkur rābbaka ʔiða: nasi:ta/

[coord. conj + VP (V + S) + O + cond. Part /ʔiða:/ + VP (V + S)]

The regular order of the sentence has to be:

[cond. Part /ʔiða:/ + VP (V + S) + coord. conj + VP (V + S) + O]

(i.e. "إذا نسيت فأذكر ربك"*)

According to the grammatical rules of Arabic, the order of the conditional sentence is: [Cond. Part. + Cond. V. + V.] أداة الشرط + فعل الشرط + (فعل) جواب الشرط
The front-shifting of the second verb spots more light on it, gives it more prominence and emphasizes its meaning.

7.4. Semantic Features:

As with all verses of the Glorious Qur'an, semantic features are extremely abundant and rich. The reason behind this characteristic may be because the main goal of the Qur'an is addressing minds, so meanings are always emphasised through the various semantic aspects.

Among the important and prominent semantic features in the present Qur'anic short story, comes antonymy, synonymy, hyponymy, etc. The first semantic feature under study here is 'antonymy'. I prefer to begin my semantic investigation with it as this feature is abundant in the present parable.

7.4.1. Antonymy:

I preferred to start the semantic analysis with 'antonymy'. I think that the verses impose such priority on me. There are a good number of opposites that can be found in this parable. In this regard, Cruse (1986, p.197) emphasises that "Of all the relations of sense that semanticists propose, that of oppositeness is probably the more readily apprehended by ordinary speakers." An accurate

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observer would be attentive to the large number of antonyms used in this short story.

Concerning the term 'antonymy', Palmer (1976, p78) states that "ANTONYMY is used for 'oppositeness of meaning'; words that are opposite are ANTONYMS." Meanwhile, Palmer has a view on the clarity of antonymy, which was supported by Cruse (1986), that "Antonymy is a regular and very natural feature of language and can be defined precisely". (Palmer, 1976, p. 79)

Crystal (2008) also explains that antonymy:

refers collectively to all types of semantic oppositeness, with various sub-divisions then being made (e.g. between graded antonyms, such as *big ~ small*, where there are degrees of difference, and ungraded antonyms, such as *single ~ married*, where there is an either/or contrast).

There are various types of antonyms. Palmer (1976, p.79) demonstrates that there are some adjectives which have "degrees of the quality involved". These adjectives, "such as *deep/shallow; tall/short; beautiful/ugly*," he called "IMPLICITLY graded antonyms". While comparative adjectives, that end in "er" or "with more" are termed by Palmer as "EXPLICITLY graded" antonyms.

Moreover, Leech (2001, p.210) points out to the importance of using opposites or antonyms by stating that "one way to make a multiple meaning spring to notice is to use two words which are normally antonyms,"

The verses of the "Companions of the Cave" are abundant with antonyms. Consider the following examples:

- Verses (11 and 12) "فَضَرَبْنَا عَلَىٰ آذَانِهِمْ", "بَعَثْنَاهُمْ" /faḍarabna: ʕala: ?a:ða:nihim/, # /baʕaθna:hum/

- Verse (14): "السَّمَاوَاتِ", "وَالْأَرْضِ" /?assama:wa:ti/, # /wa-l?arḍi/

- Verse (17): "طَلَعَتْ", "غَرَبَتْ" /talaʕat/, # /ɣarabat/; "يُضِلُّ", "يَهْدِي" /jahdi/, # /judlil/; "الْيَمِينِ", "الشَّمَالِ" /?aljami:ni/, # /?aʕʕima:li/.

- Verse (18): "رُقُودٌ", "أَيْقَاطًا" /?ajqɑ:zan/, # /ruqu:d/; and again as in verse (17) "الْيَمِينِ", "الشَّمَالِ" /?aljami:ni/, # /?aʕʕima:li/.

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- Verse (24): “وَأَذْكُرُ”, “نَسِيَّتْ” /wa-ðkur/, # /nasi:ta/
- Verse 26: “السموات”, “والأرض” /?asama:wa:ti/, # /wa-l?arði/

The use of opposites draws the attention of the readers, makes them focus more on meanings and makes the verses easier to remember. The employment of antonyms in pairs as in the above mentioned examples, emphasizes the meaning of one of the antonymous words and denies the other. In this respect, Palmer (1976, p. 81) stresses the fact that “With the pairs we have introduced it is also the case that to say something is NOT the one is to say that it is the other.”

7.4.2. Synonymy:

The second outstanding semantic aspect observed in the present parable is ‘synonymy’. It is defined by Crystal as:

A term used in SEMANTICS to refer to a major type of SENSE-RELATION between LEXICAL ITEMS: lexical items which have the same MEANING are synonymy. ... Synonymy can be said to occur if items are close enough in their meaning to allow a choice to be made between them in some contexts, without there being any difference for the meaning of the sentence as a whole.”
(Crystal, 2008, pp.344-45)

Hence, ‘synonymy’ refers to sameness of meaning. Although Lyons (1991) considers synonymy to be “identity of meaning” as a characteristic of different lexical items, I disagree with him. There are no two different words that are ‘identical’ in meaning. Even in Arabic, Eliwa (2004) proves in his study that there are no two different lexemes that are typically identical in meaning. He concludes his study showing that in Arabic, there are only “near synonyms”, i.e. just partially similar in meaning.

In this respect, Palmer (1976, p.59) also states that “SYNONYMY is used to mean ‘sameness of meaning’. ... for the dictionary makers many sets of words have the same meaning; they are synonymous, or are synonyms of one another.” He further explains that sometimes in a certain context two words can be synonymous and substitute each other. However, this is not always the case with all synonyms in all contexts.

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There are a number of synonymous words in the Qur'anic story under investigation. They are:

- Verse (17): تَزَّاورُ، تَقْرَضُهُم /taza:war/, /taqriduhum/. The first word تَزَّاورُ /taza:war/ means "to tend away", and the second one تَقْرَضُهُم /taqriduhum/ means "to be far away". Concerning these two synonymous words, Assabouny is quoted to say:

"يقول الصابوني (1981, p.9): تزاور "الشمس اذا طلعت تميل عن كهفهم جهة اليمين ... واذا غربت تقطعهم وتبعد عنهم جهة الشمال والغرض ان الشمس لا تصبهم عند طلوعها ولا عند غروبها".

(Assabouny (1981, 8/ p.9) explains these two synonyms saying that: تَزَّاورُ /taza:war/ means that when sun rises, it "declines" from the cave towards the right position. Then, when the sun sets, it تَقْرَضُهُم /taqriduhum/ "goes past" them towards the left side. This means that the sun does not directly affect them.). (My translation)

Meanwhile, a careful investigation of this verse, shows that these synonymous words occur in the mid of two antonyms: /talaḡat/, # /ḡarabat/; and /ʔaljami:ni/, # /ʔaffima:li/ :

"إِذَا طَلَعَتْ تَزَّاورُ عن كهفهم ذات اليمين"

"وإذا غَرَبَتْ تَقْرَضُهُم ذات الشمال"

This produces the utmost impressive rhetorical effect. It also highlights both the antonymous words and the synonymous ones.

-Verses 20 & 21: يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ , أَعْرَفْنَا عَلَيْهِمَ /jazharu: ḡalajkum/, and /ʔaḡḡarna: ḡalajhim/ the two clauses are near synonyms, regardless of the pronouns suffixed to the preposition. According to Al-Ma'any on-line dictionary, the first one means "know your place" or "know you", while the second one means "people know them and their place". So, both verbs mean "to know or to discover".

7.4.3. Hyponymy:

Similar to synonymy and antonymy, hyponymy is one of the sense relations connecting lexical items to each other. Crystal (2008, p176) defines hyponymy as "the relationship which obtains between specific and general lexical items, such that the former is 'included' in the latter (i.e. 'is a hyponym of' the latter).

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For example, a *cat* is a hyponym of *animal*, *flute* of *instrument*, *chair* of *furniture*, and so on."

In his demonstration of hyponymy, Palmer (1976, p76) explains that 'hyponymy':

involves us in the notion of INCLUSION in the sense that *tulip* and *rose* are included in *flower*, and *lion* and *elephant* in *mammal* (or perhaps *animal* ...). Inclusion is thus a matter of class membership. Lyons' term for this relation is HYPONYMY. The 'upper' term is the SUPERORDINATE and the 'lower' term (is) the HYPONYM. (Lyons, 1963, p. 157, as quoted in Palmer, 1976, p.76)

Hyponymy is traced in the parable of the "Companions of the cave" in the following verses:

In **verse (11)**, I notice the phrase: /sini:n ʕadada:/ سنين عددا (a great number of years) which is a "superordinate", then comes the "hyponym" in **verse (25)** /θala:θa miʔa:tin wa-zda:du: tisʕan/ ثلاث مائة سنين وازدادوا تسعا (three hundreds and nine years) So, the hyponym here: "309 years" is included in the general superordinate of "a great number of years".

In **verse (16)**, /janʕur ... min raḥmatihi / "ينشر ... من رحمته" (your Lord will spread for you of His mercy) is the superordinate and /juhajji? lakum ... mirʔaqa:/ "يهيئ لكم ... مرفقا" (will dispose for you a convenient place) is the hyponym. Hence, the hyponym /juhajji? lakum ... mirʔaqa:/ "يهيئ لكم ... مرفقا" is entailed within the superordinate /janʕur ... min raḥmatihi / "ينشر ... من رحمته".

In **verse (21)**:

ابنوا عليهم بنيانا ← لنتخذن عليهم مسجدا

/ʔibnu: ʕalajhim bunja:nan/ → /lanattaxiðanna ʕalajhim masdʒida: /

(Build over them a structure → we will definitely build ... over them a mosque.)

Here /masdʒida:/ مسجدا is a hyponym of /bunja:nan/ بنيانا. So /masdʒida:/ مسجدا (mosque) is included in the term /bunja:nan/ بنيانا (building or structure).

According to Hassan (2004), in Arabic grammar, this is called "entailment" بدل /badal/.

In verse (22), I find the hyponyms mentioned at first: /θala:θatu rabiṣuhum kalbuhum ... xamsatu sa:disuhum kalbuhum ... sabṣatu wa θa:minuhum kalbuhum / "ثلاثة رابعهم كلبهم ... سبعة وثمانهم كلبهم" then comes the superordinate /ṣiddatihim/ "عدتهم". The numbers: "ثلاثة ... ثامنهم" (three, four, five, six, seven, eight) are entailed in the term / ṣiddatihim/ "عدتهم" (their number).

In this respect, Palmer (1976, p.78) states that:

Hyponymy involves the logical relationships of ENTAILMENT. This is a more precise characterisation of the relation of 'follow from'. ... To say that one sentence entails another is to say that if the first sentence is true, the second is (on logical grounds) also true. To say *This is a tulip* entails *This is a flower* ... *There are two boys* entails *There are two children*. In all such examples a sentence containing the hyponym entails a sentence containing the superordinate term.

7.4.4. Hyperbole:

According to *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (2003), 'hyperbole' is "extravagant exaggeration". While *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2017) states that hyperbole is "(the use of) a form of words which makes something sound big, small, loud, etc., by saying that it is like something even bigger, smaller, louder, etc.; EXAGGERATION". Palmer (1976, p.11) simply states that hyperbole is "stronger to weaker meaning (*astound* 'strike with thunder')".

While, Leech (1978: 166) defines 'hyperbole' or 'exaggeration' as a "figure of overstatement". He further states that it is used "for the sake not of deception, but of emphasis". (p.167)

Hyperbole is observed in the parable under study in the following examples:

Verse 18:

--"وتحسبهم ايقاظا وهم رقود" ... " لو اطلعت عليهم لوليت منهم فرارا ولملت منهم رعبا" (18)

/wataḥsabuhum ʔajqɑ:zɑn wahum ruqu:d ... lawi ʔittɑlɑʔta ʕalajhim lawallajta
minhum firɑ:rɑn walamuliʔta minhum ruʕba:/

(And you would have reckoned that they were awake (as) they were lying down,
... If you had viewed them, indeed you would have turned away from them in
flight and indeed been filled with horror of them.)

In the above example, there are three examples of exaggeration, in the
description of the state of the sleeping companions, to the extent of being
frightened from their appearance while they are sleeping, and filled with horror.

7.4.5. Rhetorical Questions:

Another important semantic feature that is tracked in this parable is
'rhetorical questions'. Rhetorical questions are special type of questions found in
both languages, English and Arabic. They appear to be positive questions,
although they indicate a negative meaning. One of the simplest definitions of
rhetorical questions is provided by Leech (1974) who states that:

A RHETORICAL QUESTION is ... a question which is abnormal,
in that it expects no answer ... More strictly defined, it is a positive
question which is understood as if equivalent to a negative
statement: 'Who cares?' is an emphatic way of saying 'Nobody
cares'; ... its dramatic effect arises from a feeling that the question
demands an answer and is not provided with one. (p.184)

Meanwhile, Abrams and Harpham (2015) describe a rhetorical question as
being "a sentence in the grammatical form of a question which is not asked in
order to request information or to invite a reply, but to achieve a greater
expressive force than a direct assertion." (p.271) In this respect, Crystal (2008)
explains that it is intuitive that any question needs an answer except rhetorical
questions. Semantically speaking, anyone who asks a rhetorical question is not
searching for an answer. He has other reasons for his question.

Many linguists agree with the previous view of Crystal (2008) with regard
to the unexpected answer of rhetorical questions. For instance, Huddleston
(2009), and Lyons (1995) agree with Crystal confirming that a rhetorical question

requires no answer. They even argue about its force as interrogative form of a sentence.

Concerning rhetorical questions in Arabic, Al-Mat'any (1998, pp.4-5) considers rhetorical questions to have a 'figurative indication' " دلالة مجازية ". Under this 'figurative function' comes many rhetorical types of questions. Al-Mat'any emphasises that the goal of the addresser is not mainly asking questions. But he is rather conveying specific meanings or delivering certain ideas to the receiver.

Furthermore, Iqbal (2013) refers to rhetorical questions in Qur'an. He considers them to be one of the literary genres. Iqbal declares (2013, pp.53-54) that:

Unanswered rhetorical questions make a very effective tool in the Qur'an by capturing the attention of the reader, and probing them to contemplate on their train of thought. Sometimes, these questions appear in the middle of a conversation to draw the attention towards a particular aspect of the issue at hand and then the discourse resumes as if a question had never been injected. The question is sometimes directly posed to the group whom the Qur'an is already addressing. The question nonetheless disrupts the reading and makes one contemplate on the question, without which the reading may not be engaging.

The following rhetorical questions are tracked in the parable under study:

- **Verse (9):** "أَمْ حَسِبْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا مِنْ آيَاتِنَا عَجَبًا"

/ʔam ʔasibta ʔana ʔaṣḥaba-l-kahfi war:mi ka:nu: min ʔa:ja:tina: ʔadʒaba: /

(Or even do you reckon that the Companions of the Cave and ᵀAr-Raqīm (It is the name of a leaden plate) were among Our signs a wonder?)

The above verse is a rhetorical question directed from Almighty Allah to the Prophet. The aim of this question is only emphasis of the piece of information delivered. Assabouny comments on this question saying that:

يقول الصابوني "لا تظننَّ يا محمد أن قصة أهل الكهف – علي غرابتها – هي أعجب آيات الله" ويقول مجاهد في زاد المسير (٥١٠٨) أحسبت أنهم كانوا أعجب آياتنا؟ قد كان في آياتنا ما هو أعجب منهم" (الصابوني: ٧٨)

("Don't believe that the story of 'the companions of the cave' is the strangest miracle of Allah? According to *Zaad Al-Musayar* (5/108) Allah is asking this question, and confirming by this rhetorical question that there are many other divine miracles stranger than the present one"). (8, p. 7) (My translation)

- **Verse (15):** "فمن أظلم ممن أفتري على الله كذبا"

/faman ?azlamu mimmani ?iftara: ʕala ?allahi kaḏiba:/

(So, who is more unjust than he who fabricates against Allah a lie?)

In verse (15), the rhetorical question has a negative meaning, and it is warning people of lying to Allah.

Assabouny also comments on this verse explaining that:

"استفهام بمعنى النفي أي لا أحد أظلم ممن كذب علي الله بنسبة الشريك إليه تعالى" (الصابوني: ٩٨)

(A negated rhetorical question which means: 'No one is more unjust than the one who makes a lie about Allah by claiming that there are other Gods with Him.) (8, p.9) (My translation).

Here the rhetorical question is a negated one while if it has an answer, it will be an affirmative one.

The above investigation of rhetorical questions shows their importance as a means of elevating the religious language. As Leech (2001, p.184) argues, it "can impart a heightened dramatic quality to the language, ... it is easy to understand an extension to the use of the rhetorical question as a means of expressing intense conviction of a certain view."

7.4.6. Figures of Speech:

The language of the Qur'an in general, and of the 'Companions of the cave' in particular, is rich in figures of speech. In the present parable, the most prominent figure of speech is metaphor, which I will start the next section by investigating it.

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7.4.6.1. Metaphor:

Metaphor is an important, yet fuzzy, figurative device that orchestrates the interaction between cognition and language (Cameron and Low, 1999). The investigation of metaphor has attracted the attention of many researchers to study various contexts such as political discourse (Charteris-Black, 2011) and even health and medical communication (Semino *et al.*, 2018).

The definition of metaphor can be traced back to Aristotle (*Poetics XXI*) who defined metaphor as "the transference of a name from genus to species, from species to genus, from species to species, or by analogy." (as quoted in O'Rourke, 2006, p. 156). Since then, a number of theories of metaphor have been developed. Perhaps the most prominent one is the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). In this theory, metaphor is viewed as conceptual mapping between two domains, which are the source and the target domains. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Bowdle and Gentner, 2005).

Metaphor is defined by *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (2003) as "1: a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them.". While *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2017) gives a similar but a clearer definition of metaphor: "(the use of) a phrase which describes one thing by stating another thing with which it can be compared (as in *the roses in her cheeks*) without using the words 'as' or 'like'."

Metaphors are traced in the following verses:

- **Verse (11):** "فَضْرَبْنَا عَلَىٰ آذَانِهِمْ".

/faḍarabna: ʕala: ʔa:ða:nihim/ (Then We struck upon their ears)

The metaphorical meaning of this sentence is that "they slept very deep". The Qur'an describes the very deep sleepiness of the men and the dog as if they were beaten on the ears and consequently became deaf.

- **Verse (14):** "وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ".

/warabatna: ʕala: qulu:bihim/ (And We braced (Literally: tied upon their hearts) their hearts).

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Here the Qur'an describes the fortifying of the heart that strengthens the person and makes him brave and self-controlled.

- Verse (16): "يُنشِرْ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ".

/janʃur lakum raʃbukum min raħmatihi/

(your Lord will spread for you of His mercy).

The vast extension of Allah's mercy over the companions of the cave. Mercy is here described as if it is something that can be spread or extended.

- Verse (17): "وَتَرَى الشَّمْسَ إِذَا طَلَعَتْ تَزُورُ عَنْ كَهْفِهِمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَإِذَا غَرَبَتْ تَقْرِضُهُمْ ذَاتَ الْشِّمَالِ"

(And you might have seen the sun when it rose, declining from their cave towards the right; and when it set, it went past them towards the left).

The sun is represented as a living thing that can move away (تميل و تعدل) from the opening of the cave when it rises and sets down.

The use of figures of speech in general, and metaphor in particular, embodies the meanings intended and gives a vivid image. The analogies drawn by the metaphors used in this parable are creative. They also drew wonderful images that are introduced to the Arabic language for the first time.

7.4.6.2. Implicit Meaning:

Another important semantic feature that is noted in the story is 'implicit meaning'. It is defined by *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (2003) as a meaning that is "capable of being understood from something else though unexpressed".

In verse (18) "لو اطلعت عليهم لوليت منهم فراراً ولملئت منهم رعباً"

/lawi ʔittalaʃta ʃalajhim lawalajta minhum firɑ:rɑn walamuliʔta minhum ruʃba:/

The above mentioned clauses indicate that the state and appearance of the young men were terrifying, and that such dreadful terrifying state will make

anyone flee away from horror. The use of the two strong adverbs: فراراً /fira:ran/, and رعباً /ruʕba:/ intensifies the indicated meaning in these clauses.

Having investigated the prominent semantic features in the story of the "Companions of the cave", it is time now to turn to the important stylistic aspects of this parable.

7.5. Stylistic Features:

Diverse stylistic features have been traced in the 18 verses of "the Companions of the cave" story. The most outstanding of these aspects are:

7.5.1. Foregrounding:

Foregrounding is a stylistic technique in which the writer intends to highlight some units of language against the rest of what is written which stays in the background. This technique is not confined to poetry, but could be applied to all types of literary works. (Leech, 1974) It is something similar to what is done in photography. A certain part of the photo is foregrounded while the rest is in the background. (Leech, 1974, Short, 1996) In comparing language to a 'photograph' or an artistic painting, Short (1996, p. 11-12) explains that in a painting (as in language) there are two types of items. One type in the background, and the other type in:

the centre and towards the bottom of the canvas. ... Note that the items which occur in the foreground of a painting will usually appear large in relation to the rest of the objects in the picture because of conventional perceptual 'rules' ... and will normally be thought of as constituting the subject matter of the painting. ... the background of the picture also contributes to the whole. Nothing in a work of art is insignificant. But the matter in the *foreground* is more important than the rest. ... the foregrounded parts can be regarded as the most important of all.

Moreover, "the use of the devices of the language in such a way that this use itself attracts attention and is perceived as uncommon" is what is considered by Havranek and other linguists of the Prague School of linguistics to be "foregrounding". (Havranek, 1964, p. 10).

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In the meantime, foregrounding is considered by linguists as Leech (1974), and Halliday (1973) to be a type of intended motivated linguistic prominence. In order to realize such prominence special linguistic methods are carried out by the writer. These linguistic methods are summed up by Leech (1974), Short (1996) and others, as being repetition, parallelism, and grammatical deviation (such as that intentionally made by poets).

However, El-Wakeel (2010) points out to an important remark concerning foregrounding. She states (p.5) that "not all ... units of a piece of language can be foregrounded. An overall foregrounding of linguistic units will put them all into the same level of focus". This resembles to a certain extent the mathematical rule of "two minuses make a plus", and also the grammatical rule of "two negations make an affirmative". Thus, too much foregrounding will result in 'nil'.

In an utterance or a written piece of work, foregrounding is realized by one or more of three methods: repetition, parallelism, and deviation. Interestingly enough, the three elements of foregrounding are observed in the verses under study.

7.5.1.1. Repetition:

Repetition is the simplest tool of foregrounding. However, it always attracts the hearer/reader and draws his attention. In this respect, Short (1996, p.64) declares that "repetition is a relatively restricted method of producing foregrounding ... Repetition of whole phrases or clauses is the limiting case of parallelism, where everything is paralleled, and nothing is varied."

Ibn Manzour (2009) states that: "The word '*at-takraar*' (i.e. repetition) is derived from the word '*al-karr*', which means going back to a thing." (5, p.135). While, As-Sayoutty (2008, p.280), explains that '*at-takraar*' is: "Repetition is more eloquent than merely emphasizing and it is a reflection of good style, contrary to what some people think." (My translation)

Repetition is noted in the parable under study in the following verses:

- In **verses (17) and (18)**, one finds the repetition of /ðɑ:t a-l-yami:n/ "ذات اليمين" (to the right), /ðɑ:ta-ʃ-ʃima:l/ "ذات الشمال" (to the left).

- In **verse (19)**, there is repetition of “لبثتم” /labiθtum/ (have lingered) in “كم لبثتم” /kam labiθtum/ (have lingered) and in “بما لبثتم” /bima: labiθtum/ (have lingered).
- In **verse (22)**, the word “كلبهم” /kalbuhum/ (their dog) is repeated three times, as well as the verb phrase “يقولون” /jaqu:lu:n/ (they say), which is also repeated three times.
- In **verses (25) and (26)**, there is repetition of “لبثوا” /labiθu:/ (they lingered) twice.

The above repeated lexical items are more prominent. They also draw the attention of the receiver to the main issue of the parable: the period that the young men ‘lingered’ in the cave. Repetition also helps make language memorable.

7.5.1.2. Parallelism:

The second main method of realizing foregrounding in language is parallelism. A good number of parallel linguistic structures is tracked in the present narrative. Leech (1974, p.62) explains that parallelism is “the possibility of segmenting a text into structurally equivalent units: for example, syllables (in phonology) and clauses (in grammar). Thus, a text can be analysed as a pattern, on different layers, of repeated similar structures.”

Leech (1974), as well as Short (1996) point out that parallelism is one of the mechanisms of linguistic foregrounding. Leech further points out to the fact that parallelism could be regarded “in a sense, the opposite of deviation, for it consists in the introduction of extra regularities, ‘not irregularities’ into the language.” (1974, p. 62)

As Leech (1974, p. 63) demonstrates: “analysed as a pattern, on different layers”, a reader/hearer can come along phonological, lexical, syntactic and semantic parallelism. The prominent types of parallelism in the parable under study are the phonological parallelism, and the syntactic one. The first type is represented in ‘alliteration’, previously discussed in section (7.1.3). While the latter is to be scrutinized in the following section:

Syntactic Parallelism:

The story of "the companions of the cave" is abundant in syntactic parallelism. By 'identical' syntactic parallelism I mean "the repetition of the same syntactic patterns with variant lexical item(s) or any other linguistic aspect." (El-Wakeel, 2010, p.26). So, the variant element can just be different lexical item(s). The following sub-sections will display the various types of syntactic parallelism traced in this Qur'anic parable.

I. Parallel Verbal Structures:

In these patterns, the verb may occupy initial position, or may be back-shifted to follow the subject.

1) Verse (10) "هى لنا من أمرنا رشداً & ربنا آتانا من لدنك رحمة،"

[V + (subj. + direct obj. + Prep. Phr. + indirect obj.)]

2) Verse (11, 14): "فضربنا على آذانهم، وربطنا على قلوبهم"

[coor. Conj. + VP (V + N (subj.)) + Prep. Phr. (Prep. + NP)]

3) Verse (16): "ينشر لكم ربكم من رحمته ... يهيئ لكم من أمركم مرفقا"

[V + Prep Phr. + NP (N (subj.)) + Prep. Phr. (Prep. + NP) + adj.]

4) Verse (18): "لوليت منهم فرارا ولملئت منهم رعبا"

[future marker /l/ + VP (V + N) + Prep Phr. (prep. + NP) + adv.)]

5) Verse (20): "يرجموكم أو يعيدوكم"

[VP (V + N (subj.) + N (obj.)]

6) Verse (21): "ابنوا عليهم بنيانا ... لتتخذن عليهم مسجدا"

[VP (V + N (subj.)) + Prep. Phr. (prep. + pron.) + NP (N)]

[future marker /l/ + VP + Prep Phr. + NP (N)]

7) Verse (22): "فلا تمار فيهم ... ولا تستفت فيهم"

[cord. Conj. + neg. part. + VP (V + N (subj.)) + Prep. Phr. (prep + pron.)]

8) Verse (22): "سيقولون ثلاثة رابعهم كلبهم ... ويقولون خمسة سادسهم كلبهم ... ويقولون سبعة ... وثامنهم كلبهم"

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[VP (V + N (subj.)) + NP (N + N + N + pron.)]

II. Parallel Conditional Structures:

1) Verses (10 and 14): "إذ قاموا (الفتية) فقالوا رَبَّنَا" and "إذ أوى الفتية ... فقالوا رَبَّنَا"

[cond. Particle /ʔið/ + VP + coord conj. + VP + NP]

2) Verse (17) "إذ طلعت تَزَاوَر ... وإذا عَرَبَت تَقْرَضُهُمْ"

[cond. Particle /ʔiðaa/ + VP (V + N (subj.)) + VP (V + N (subj.) + N (obj.)]

III. Parallel Nominal Structures:

1) Verses (17 and 18) "ذات اليمين وذات الشمال" and "ذات اليمين ... ذات الشمال"

[NP – NP] and [NP – NP]

All of the above syntactic parallel structures grab the attention of the readers, and help make the Qur'anic verses memorable.

7.5.1.3. Deviation:

The third aspect of foregrounding is 'deviation'. Deviation means any type of irregularity or departure from the norm. When deviation occurs, it achieves foregrounding and draws the attention of the reader/hearer.

In this regard, Leech (1974, p. 61) states "A linguistic deviation is a disruption of the normal processes of communication. It leaves a gap...the gap can be filled and the deviation rendered significant." While Childs and Fowler (2006, p.87), regard the purpose of deviation "is to awaken the reader, by freeing him from the grooves of cliché expression, to a new perceptivity".

In the narrative of "the companions of the cave", I notice the following 'disruptions from the norm'. The regular arrangement of the Arabic clause is not followed. Certain syntactic structure are either front-shifted or back-shifted to other positions, in order to spot light and emphasize other structures. This helps fulfil a specific semantic role, and stress an intended meaning. The following

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examples are to shed light on these disruptions from the natural norm of Arabic sentences:

- **Verse (22):** “ولا تستفت فيهم منهم أحداً” /wala: tastafti fi:him minhum ?ahada:/

-[coord. conj. + Neg. Part. + VP (V +S) + indirect O (Prep. Phr.) + Prep. Phr + direct O];

The regular arrangement has to be:

-[coord. conj. + Neg. Part. + VP (V +S) + direct O. + indirect O (Prep. Phr.) + Prep. Phr.]

*(i.e. *“(ولا تستفت(أحداً) فيهم منهم”*) (Darwish, (1989), 5, p.562)

According to Hassan (2004, I, p. 150) the Arabic verb can have more than one object. In the above sentence, the verb /tastafti/ has two objects: the word أحداً /?ahada:/ and the indirect O. (prep. phr.) فيهم /fi:him/. This prep. phr. منهم /minhum/ is front shifted to precede the direct object /?ahada:/. In the meantime, the prep. phr. is also front shifted over the direct object /?ahada:/ so as to be nearer to the verb for emphasis. The result is the succession of two prep. phr.(s) immediately following one another producing one of the eloquent styles of the language of the Qur'an and emphasizing the negation of the verb /la: tastafti/ (do not ask).

-Verse (26):

The front-shifting of prepositional phrase (predicate) of a sentence is also found in “مالهم من دونه من ولي” /ma: lahum min du:nihi min walij/

(In no way do they have any patron apart from Him)

In the above phrase, ‘لهم’ /lahum/ is a prepositional phrase functioning as ‘predicate’ of the sentence and “ولي” /walij/ is a noun phrase (NP) (مبتدأ) **subject** of a nominal clause. (See Darweesh, 1989, 5, p564).

[neg. part. + Prep. Phr. (predicate of a nominal clause) + Prep. Phr. /mindu:nihi/ (adv.) + prep. /min/ (a redundant preposition) + NP /walijj/ (مبتدأ)] (subject of a nominal clause)

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The order of nominal sentence here is deviated in order to spot light on the 'predicate' (i.e. the prep. phr. له /lahu/ 'to Allah').

Moreover, in the same verse (26), I notice:

-Front-shifting of the predicate of a nominal sentence to precede the subject NP (مبتدأ) :

“له غيب السموات والأرض” /lahu yajbu ?assamawa:ti wa-l?arḍi/

(To Him (belongs) the Unseen of the heavens and the earth.)

The prepositional phrase 'له' /lahu/, i.e. predicate of the sentence, is front-shifted to the beginning. While the NP “غيب السموات والأرض” / yajbu ?assamawa:ti wa-l?arḍi /, i.e. the subject of the nominal sentence, is back-shifted.

[Prep. Phr. /lahu/ (predicate of a nominal clause) + مبتدأ 'subj.' /yajbu ?assamawa:ti wa-l?arḍi / غيب السموات والأرض] (See Darweesh, 1989, 5, p564)

After reviewing the three elements of foregrounding, the next section will tackle the various methods used in narrating this parable. The unique style of the Qur'an is clear in this short story. Different modes of narration, direct and indirect speeches, and dialogue are all used.

7.5.2. Modes of Narration:

A narrative in the Qur'an is something different than any human-written one. However, the human being is the one who follows the divine method in many of its aspects.

According to the exegeses of Assabouny, Al-Qortoby, and Ibn Kathir, this parable is revealed in the Qur'an, together with the other two short narratives related in the same Sura "the Cave", as answers to questions directed to the Prophet from some of the Jews living in the neighbouring region at the beginning of Islam. The Jews know these divine narratives previously from their Torah. They wanted to examine Prophet Mohammed in them, in order to be sure that he had received the divine revelation as Prophet Moses. Few days after their inquiry, this Sura was revealed to the prophet in which the three short narratives were correctly related. The first narrative is the "Companions of the Cave", the second

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one is "Prophet Moses and the Righteous Servant 'Al-Khidr' ", and the third is that of "Thulqarnayn".

As for modes of narration, it is meant "whether the narrative is relayed in the first person, the third person or even the second person." (Simpson, 2004: p. 21) In this distinguished Qur'anic narrative, there is an authorial tone as Allah is the narrator of this real past story. Allah starts by addressing Prophet Mohammed, then the modes vary from authorial tone, to dialogues exchanged between the characters involved in the story. At the end of the story, there is an authorial tone again as Almighty Allah is directing a speech to Prophet Mohammed. A unique collection of narrating methods that reveal the 'grandeur' of the Qur'an's style.

The beginning of the narrative is related in an authorial tone. (Leech and Short, 2007) However, here the author or narrator is not one of the characters. He is Allah, as He is the Ever-Knowing and Ever-Witnessing of everything. Allah says to the Prophet: *نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُم بِالْحَقِّ* (We, Ever We, narrate to you their tidings with the truth.). Note that this sentence is told after relating two medium-length verses of the beginning of the story. As if Allah is confirming that the previous information, and also the rest of the story is the real truth because "We" (i.e. Allah) is the One Who is narrating.

Concerning the significance of relating in a first-person narrator, Leech and Short (2007, p. 265) state that "The choice of a first person narrator ... produces a personal relationship with the reader which inevitably tends to bias the reader in favour of the narrator." As a remarkable observation, most of this short story is related by Allah, in an authorial tone.

From verse (11) till the first clause of verse (14), then verses (17) & (18)), are all related in "Authorial Tone", where the addresser is Allah and the addressee is the prophet, is defined by Leech and Short (2007, p.242) as "the stance or attitude taken by an author towards his readers, and towards his message". One has to notice that when the addresser is Allah, all referring pronouns are used in a plural form, e.g. verse (13) "نحن نقص عليك"; the plural pronoun /na:/ "نا" attached to the verbs in verses (9, 11,12, 13, 14): "أياتنا"; "فضربنا"; "بعثناهم"; "وزدناهم"; "وربطنا".

However, the narration in the parable sometimes takes the form of dialogue, which will be discussed in section (6.5.3.2) below. In certain instances of the story, Allah is directly addressing the young men, in 1st person voice. Allah is giving them orders using imperative verbs. For example, in **verse (16)**, Allah directs His speech to the young men:

وَإِذْ أَعْتَرَلْتُمُوهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَأَوْأ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنْشُرْ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِّن رَّحْمَتِهِ وَيَهَيِّ لَكُمْ مِّنْ أَمْرِكُمْ
مَّرْفَقًا (16)

[And as you have kept apart from them and what they worship excepting Allah, so take (your) abode in the cave, (then) your Lord will spread for you of His mercy and will dispose for you a convenient (place) of your Command." (i.e., the command of Allah to you; or: your affair)]

In this verse, Allah orders them to take abode in the cave, as they have kept apart from their people and what they worship. The next section will deal with the methods used to present speech / thought in the parable.

7.5.3. Speech Presentation:

The following methods of 'speech presentation' are observed in the parable under investigation:

7.5.3.1. Direct and Indirect Speech:

The unique style of the Qur'an is embodied in this short narrative, which starts at its beginning with a direct address from Allah, i.e. the author, to Prophet Mohammed. Then a sudden shift occurs, as the reader finds the main characters of the story directing their speech to Allah: In **verse (10)** "فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ رَحْمَةً" [so they said, "Our Lord, bring us mercy from very close to You, and dispose for us rectitude in our Command."]. This is a direct speech between the young men and Allah. Other reported direct speeches are noticed in **verses (19 & 20)** below:

لَيْتَسَاءَلُوا بَيْنَهُمْ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ كَمْ لَبِئْتُمْ قَالُوا لَبِئْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالُوا رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِئْتُمْ فَابْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ
بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَذِهِ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَيُّهَا أَزْكَى طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُمْ بِرِزْقٍ مِّنْهُ وَلْيَتَلَطَّفْ وَلَا يُشْعِرَنَّ بِكُمْ أَحَدًا (19) إِنَّهُمْ
إِنْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ يَرْجُمُوكُمْ أَوْ يُعِيدُوكُمْ فِي مِلَّتِهِمْ وَلَنْ تُفْلِحُوا إِذًا أَبَدًا (20)

Direct speech is traced in these verses (19 & 20), where there is conversation between the young men themselves, when they woke up thinking that they only slept for a day or so. Consider also the following two verses:

-Verses (21 & 22):

إِذْ يَنْتَرِ عُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَمْرَهُمْ فَقَالُوا ابْنُوا عَلَيْهِم بُيُوتًا رَبُّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمَّ قَالَ الَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِم مَّسْجِدًا (21) سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلَاثَةً رَّابِعُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةً سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَبْعَةً وَتَأْمِنُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ قُل رَّبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِعَدَّتِهِمْ ...

Direct speech is also reported to the reader in verses 21 & 22 above, as the conversation that took place between the people of the town, and that between the people who will argue about the actual number of the young men.

Concerning the significance of reporting in direct speech, Leech and Short (2007, p. 320) states that "If he (the author) reports in direct speech he is claiming to report faithfully (a) what was stated and (b) the exact form of words which were used to utter that statement."

At the end of verse (22) till the end of verse (24), the narrator (i.e. Allah) addresses the Prophet again. Verse (25) is a stated fact in which Allah identifies the exact period of time that the young men stayed sleeping in the cave. Then, verse (26), is directed again to the Prophet. This verse, (26), is a concluding fact of the abilities of Allah as the speech is directed to Prophet Mohammed.

7.5.3.2. Dialogue:

Dialogue gives a live and dynamic tone to any narrative. In this regard, Simpson argues (2004, p. 34) that dialogue makes a kind of "interaction between an author and a reader." Hence, the reader has the opportunity of visualizing the narrative. Dialogue also activates the interaction between the characters of a story. The reader feels that he is sharing the situations with the characters. In this respect, Leech and Short (2007, p.253) state that "when people converse with one another they acknowledge a kind of tacit agreement to cooperate conversationally towards mutual ends."

Although the Glorious Qur'an is a divine Book, it is characterized by its unique style. Thus, the reader of the Qur'an finds, in some instances, conversation between some of the characters of a Qur'anic narrative. Dialogue is tracked in the

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present narrative between the young men on one hand, and also between the people of the town who discovered them and knew their story on the other hand.

Then, starting from the middle of **verse (14) & verse (15)**, a dialogue between the young men takes place, which demonstrates to the reader, the true reason behind the story of these young companions.

-Verses (14 & 15):

إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَنْ نَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِهَا لَقَدْ قُلْنَا إِذَا شَطَطًا (14) هُوَ لَاءِ قَوْمَنَا
أَنخَدُوا مِنْ دُونِهَا إِلَهَةٌ لَوْ لَا يَأْتُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِسُلْطَانٍ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِمْ فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا (15)

- Verses (19 & 20):

وَكَذَلِكَ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِيَتَسَاءَلُوا بَيْنَهُمْ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ كَمْ لَبِئْتُمْ قَالُوا لَبِئْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالُوا رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِئْتُمْ
فَابْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَذِهِ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَيُّهَا أَزْكَى طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُمْ بِرِزْقٍ مِنْهُ وَلْيَتَلَطَّفْ وَلَا يُسْعِرَنَّ
بِكُمْ أَحَدًا (19) إِنَّهُمْ إِنْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ يَرْجُمُوكُمْ أَوْ يُعِيدُوكُمْ فِي مِلَّتِهِمْ وَلَنْ تُفْلِحُوا إِذًا أَبَدًا (20)

[19. And thus We made them rise again that they might ask one another (Literally: among themselves). A **speaker** from among them **said**, "How long have you lingered?" **They said**, "We have lingered a day, or part (Literally: some "part" of a day) of a day." (**Others**) **said**, "Your Lord knows best how long you have lingered. So send one of you forth with this money to the city, then let him look for whichever of them has the purest (Literally: most cleansed) food, so let him come up to you with a provision thereof, and let him be courteous, and definitely let no man be aware of your (presence).]

In verses (19 and 20) above, there is a dialogue and an argumentation that took place among the young men in the cave when they woke up.

- Verses (21 & 22):

وَكَذَلِكَ أَعْتَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا إِذْ يَتَنَزَّ عُنْ بَيْنَهُمْ أَمْرُهُمْ فَقَالُوا ابْنُوا
عَلَيْهِمْ بُيُوتًا رَبُّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ قَالَ الَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ مَسْجِدًا (21) سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلَاثَةٌ رَّابِعُهُمْ
كَلْبُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةٌ سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَبْعَةٌ وَثَامِنُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ قُلْ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِعَدَّتِهِمْ مَا
يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ فَلَا تُمَارِ فِيهِمْ إِلَّا مِرَاءً ظَهْرًا وَلَا تَسْتَفْتِ فِيهِمْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا (22)

[21. And thus We made the (people of the city) discover them that they might know that the promise of Allah is true and that the Hour, there is no suspicion about it. As they were contending among themselves their Command, (The Command of Allah concerning Resurrection; or: their affair) (then) **they said, "Build over them a structure; their Lord knows them best."** (But) **the ones** who prevailed over their Command (Literally: overcame them in their Command; or: in their affair) **said, "Indeed we will definitely build (Literally: take to ourselves) over them a mosque."**]

In verse (21), there is a dialogue between the people who found the young men of the cave. While in verse (22), there is a 'reported' dialogue that took place, as exegeses explain, between the Jews who already know this narrative from their Holy Book. They argued about the actual number of the 'young men' hiding in the cave.

Dialogue is a stylistic aspect that attracts due attention of the reader. When a big part of the story is related in the very dialogues which took place among and between the characters, this provides the readers with a sense of liveliness, authenticity and verification.

7.5.4. Scene Description:

فَأَوْأُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنْشُرْ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَيُهَيِّئْ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مَرْفَاقًا ﴿١٦﴾ وَتَرَى الشَّمْسَ إِذَا طَلَعَتْ تَزُورُ عَنْ كَهْفِهِمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَإِذَا غَرَبَتْ تَقْرِضُهُمْ ذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ وَهُمْ فِي فَجْوَةٍ مِنْهُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلْ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا ﴿١٧﴾ وَتَحْسَبُهُمْ آيِقَاطًا وَهُمْ رُقُودٌ وَنُقِلُّهُمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ وَكَلْبُهُمْ بَاسِطٌ ذِرَاعَيْهِ بِالْوَصِيدِ لَوِ اطَّلَعْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَوَلَّيْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِرَارًا وَلَمُلِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ رُعبًا ﴿١٨﴾ وَكَذَلِكَ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِيَتَسَاءَلُوا بَيْنَهُمْ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِنْهُمْ كَمْ لَبِئْتُمْ قَالُوا لَبِئْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالُوا رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِئْتُمْ فَابْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَذِهِ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَيُّهَا أَزْكَى طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُمْ بِرِزْقٍ مِنْهُ وَلْيَتَلَطَّفْ وَلَا يُشْعِرَنَّ بِكُمْ أَحَدًا ﴿١٩﴾

(See Appendix for the interpretation of these verses)

Verses (17 and 18) form a vivid scene description of the place of the main incidents of the story, as well as the state of the main characters of the story, i.e. the young men and their dog. However, the unique style of the Qur'an offers all details in a very brief style. The verses provide the reader, in a unique concise

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description, with specific minute details that great authors could never succeed in matching.

The scene starts with verse (16), where it is only mentioned that the young men resorted to the cave. Then suddenly in verse (17) the theatre's curtain opens to show the men deeply sleeping in the cave, the sun rays avoiding them when the sun rises and sets. In verse (18), the readers are offered a vivid scene of the state of the sleeping men: their fully opened eyes, their movements on both sides and even the state and position of their accompanying dog. The whole scene is described in an animated method that draws the full attention of any reader.

In verse (19), the scene suddenly changes to a fully awake men, speaking to each other, enquiring about the time, even hungry and seeking to obtain food. All this detailed scene description is presented in 94 words. It is, in Arberry's words: the "*grandeur of the Koran*" (Arberry, 2003).

7.5.5. الإلتفات Shifting:

Shifting or /ʔalʔiltifa:t/ is a stylistic method that is used in Arabic, as well as in English. In writing, the author can shift from one mode of narration or speech and thought presentation to another in order to achieve certain effects. In Classical Arabic writings, this method is well known and the receiver has to be attentive to such shifting.

Arabic linguists and rhetoricians are fully aware of this stylistic phenomenon. For instance, Az-Zarkashi (1990, 3, p. 380) explains that:

-الإلتفات هو "نقل الكلام من أسلوب الى أسلوب آخر تطرية واستدراارا للسامع، وتجديدا لنشاطه وصيانة لخاطره من الملل والضجر بدوام الأسلوب الواحد على سمعه" (١٩٩٠، ص. ٣٨٠ / ٣)

(The shifting of style (speech or thought) from one mode to the other. This draws the attention of the receiver, avoid tiresome and weariness by sticking to one mode of narration only). (My translation)

While both Ibn Al-Mo'atz (1982,p. 15), and As-Sayoutty (2010, p. 731) agree that /ʔalʔiltifa:t/ (shifting) is:

-ابن المعتز : الإلتفات هو "إنصراف المتكلم عن المخاطبة إلى الإخبار، وعن الإخبار إلى المخاطبة، وما يشبه ذلك من الإلتفات والإنصراف عن معنى يكون فيه إلى معنى آخر." (١٩٨٢، ص ١٥)

-السيوطي : الإلتفات: نقل الكلام من أسلوب إلى آخر، أعنى من التكلم إلى الخطاب أو الغيبة إلى آخر منها بعد التعبير بالأول ، وهذا هو المشهور." (٢٠١٠، ص ٧٣١)

(Shifting is the change of speech from one mode to another, I mean from direct address to indirect speech or to narration and so on.). (As-Sayoutty, 2010, p. 731)
[My translation]

Meanwhile, Abdel Haleem (1992, p. 408) explains shifting as "(it) refers more frequently to what is defined as departure by the speaker from address to narration or from narration to address". He (p. 411) sub-divides shifting in Classical Arabic into the following sections:

Types of *iltifat* and related features

These can be of the following types:

I Change in person, between 1st, 2nd and 3rd person, which is the most common and is usually divided into six kinds.

II Change in number, between singular, dual and plural.

III Change in addressee.

IV Change in the tense of the verb.

V Change in case marker.

VI Using noun in place of pronoun.

No. I is the most commonly known and was called *iltifat* before other types were labelled as such or as related to *iltifat*.

In the narrative under study, shifting /ʔiltifa:t/ is traced. The modes of narration in this short story vary from direct address in verse (9) and beginning of verse (10), to sudden shift to direct speech of the main characters, then back again to direct address from Allah (the narrator) to the main addressee (Prophet Mohammed). In verse (14), the reader finds another shift from narration, to direct speech. In verse (16), the same verse witness a shift from narration to direct address. Then, an authorial tone is resumed in verses (17), (18), and the beginning

of (19). In the rest of verse (19) and (20), a shift happens as the reader is given the dialogue that took place between the young men themselves.

Verse (21), there is shift from narration to dialogue between the people of the city who discovered the place of the young men. In (22) the argumentation of those who previously knew this story from their Holy Book, is reported to the reader. Then, the address is turned once again to the Prophet in verses (23 & 24). Verse (25) is a fact stated by the narrator, and finally the last shift is again a direct address to the Prophet, and facts stated by Allah.

The shifting from address, to narration, to dialogue, and so on, gives variation in the narrative's style, as Az-Zarkashi (1990, 3, p. 380) says "for the sake of freshness and variety for the listener, to renew his interest, and to keep his mind from boredom and frustration". (as quoted in Abdel Haleem, 1992, p. 410)

7.5.6. Brevity:

The concise brief style is a mark of good writing. Unnecessary and too much details are a sign of bad weak style. Brevity is required and is a characteristic of eloquent style in all languages. In Arabic, brevity is an essential feature of good style. Classical Arabic literature is characterized by its brief style, which is a feature known by الإيجاز /ʔalʔi:dʒa:z/ (brevity). One of the prominent feature of the parable under study is "brevity". A complete short story with all its basic elements, is related in 383 words (including the coordinator conjunction "و" /wa:w/).

In this respect, Ar-Romani (1986, p. 76) defines 'brevity' in Classical Arabic as:

تعريف الإيجاز عند الرمانى هو "الإيجاز تقليل الكلام من غير إخلال بالمعنى ، وإذا كان المعنى يمكن أن يعبر عنه بألفاظ كثيرة ويمكن أن يعبر عنه بألفاظ قليلة ، فالألفاظ القليلة إيجاز" (ص ٧٦، 1986)

(Brevity is shortening speech or narration without causing breach in meaning. If the meaning can be expressed in many words, and this same meaning can also be expressed in few words, thus these few words are what is termed 'brevity' /ʔalʔi:dʒa:z/) (My translation)

As-Sakaki also agrees with Ar-Romani in his definition of 'brevity' and he (2000, p. 388) states that:

تعريف الإيجاز عند السكاكي "الإيجاز هو أداء المقصود من الكلام بأقل من عبارات متعارف الناس" (ص ٣٨٨، 2000).

(Brevity is presenting speech in the least number of words known to people) (My translation)

In this regard, Leech and Short (2007) consider a brief story preferred by some authors to be more interesting and memorable than long detailed ones. They stress that brief style neither hinders the required development of the story nor disrupts the understanding of the readers.

8. Summary and Conclusion:

After investigating all the concerned Qur'anic verses, which represent this short parable, on all linguistic levels, the following concluding remarks have been deduced:

First, the story is rich in phonological characteristics, as expected in any phonological study of the Qur'an. Rhyme and internal rhyme, alliteration, consonance, and assonance are the outstanding phonological features. Rhyme and internal rhyme make the story musical and to be recited so as to enjoy these magnificent acoustic features. As a general remark, the Qur'an is to be read or to be recited.

Second, a good number of morphological and lexical aspects are also traced in the present short story. On top of them, there are derivational and inflectional morphemes in addition to collocations.

Third, grammatical features are distinguishable as the flexible grammatical rules of the Arabic language allows the front-shifting / back-shifting of certain phrases. This is performed mainly for emphasizing a specific meaning or highlighting a certain important syntactic structure.

Fourth, semantic characteristics are numerous and recognizable in the present short story. On top of them come antonymy, hyponymy, hyperbole, rhetorical questions, and figures of speech. The study reveals the great number of metaphors used in the story. These provide the readers with vivid images. All these semantic aspects help shed light on the religious and divine message of this story. They also highlight the implied meanings of the Qur'anic verses under study.

Fifth, the present paper reviews the abundant stylistic features of the story. It shows that these features are more numerous than the other characteristics. Though the story is a brief one, the study points out to the use of repetition, parallelism, stylistic deviation, variation in modes of narration, and in speech presentation, shifting, as well as live scene description. What is of great importance, from my own point of view, is that the stylistic features of this parable are the most prominent of all other aspects.

Finally, all of the above tracked linguistic features are combined together producing a whole unit of language called the parable of "the Companions of the Cave". It is also worth mentioning that in most of the verses of this story, many of the above mentioned linguistic features are traced all together. This reveals the magnificence and "grandeur" of the language of the Qur'an.

Appendix:

The following is a version of the Qur'anic verses under investigation as cited from the Glorious Qur'an. The Arabic version is followed by its English interpretation as quoted from Ghali's interpretation (2003).

Verses 9-26 of Sura Cave and its Interpretation:

أَمْ حَسِبْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا مِنْ آيَاتِنَا عَجَبًا (٩) إِذْ أَوْى الْفَرِيقَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا (١٠) فَضَرَبْنَا عَلَى آذَانِهِمْ فِي الْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا (١١) ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِنَعْلَمَ أَيُّ الْحِزْبَيْنِ أَحْصَى لِمَا لَبِئُوا أَمَدًا (١٢) نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُم بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ آمَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَرَدَدْنَاهُمْ هُدًى (١٣) وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَنْ نَدْعُوَ مِنْ دُونِهَا لَقَدْ فَلْنَا إِذَا شَطَطًا (١٤) هُوَ الَّذِي قَوْمُنَا اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهَا آلِهَةً لَوْلَا يَأْتُونَ عَلَيْهِم بِسُلْطَنٍ بَيِّنٍ فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا (١٥) وَإِذْ اعْتَزَلْتُمُوهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ فَأَوَّاؤَ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنْشُرُ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَيَهَيِّئُ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مَرْفَعًا ﴿١٦﴾ وَتَرَى السَّمَاسَ إِذَا طَلَعَتْ تَوْرُوقَ عَنْ كَهْفِهِمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَإِذَا عَرَبَتْ تَقَرَّبَتْهُمْ ذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ وَهُمْ فِي فَجْوَةٍ مِنْهُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَنْ يُضَلِّلْ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًا مُرْسِدًا (١٧) وَتَحْسَبُهُمْ أَيْقَاظًا وَهُمْ رُقُودٌ وَنُقَلِّبُهُمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ وَكَلْبُهُمْ بَاسِطٌ ذِرَاعِيهِ بِالْوَصِيدِ لَوِ اطَّلَعْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَوَلَّيْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِرَارًا وَلَمَلِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ رُعبًا (١٨) وَكَذَلِكَ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِيَتَسَاءَلُوا بَيْنَهُمْ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِنْهُمْ كَمْ لَبِئْتُمْ قَالُوا لَبِئْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالُوا رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِئْتُمْ فَابْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَذِهِ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَيُّهَا أَزْكَى طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُمْ بِرِزْقٍ مِنْهُ وَلْيَتَلَطَّفْ وَلَا يُشْعِرَنَّ بِكُمْ أَحَدًا (١٩) إِنَّهُمْ إِنْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ يَرْجُمُوكُمْ أَوْ يُعِيدُوكُمْ فِي مِلَّتِهِمْ وَلَنْ تُفْلِحُوا إِذًا أَبَدًا (٢٠) وَكَذَلِكَ أَعْتَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا إِذْ يَتَنَزَّلُ عَنَ بَيْنِهِمْ أَمْرٌهُمْ فَقَالُوا ابْنُوا عَلَيْهِم بُيُوتًا رَبُّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ قَالَ الَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا عَلَى أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ مَسْجِدًا (٢١) سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلَاثَةٌ رَابِعُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةٌ سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَبْعَةٌ وَثَامُنُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ قُلْ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِعِدَّتِهِمْ مَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ فَلَا تُمَارِ فِيهِمْ إِلَّا مِرَاءً ظَهْرًا وَلَا تَسْتَفْتِ فِيهِمْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا (٢٢) وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَايٍ إِيَّيْ فَاعِلٌ ذَلِكَ عَدَا (٢٣) إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ وَادْكُرْ رَبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ وَقُلْ عَسَى أَنْ يَهْدِيَنَا رَبِّي لِأَقْرَبَ مِنْ هَذَا رَشَدًا (٢٤) وَلَبِئُوا فِي كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلَاثَ مِائَةٍ سِنِينَ وَازْدَادُوا تِسْعًا (٢٥) قُلِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِئُوا لَهُ غِيبَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَبْصَرَ بِهِ وَاسْمِعَ مَا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا يُشْرِكُ فِي حُكْمِهِ أَحَدًا (٢٦)

[9. Or even do you reckon that the Companions of the Cave and \supset Ar-Raqîm (It is the name of a leaden plate, on which were written the names of the seven sleepers) were among Our signs a wonder?

10. As the young men (Literally: the pages) took (their) abode in the cave, (and) so they said, "Our Lord, bring us mercy from very close to You, and dispose for us rectitude in our Command." (i.e., in Your Command to us; our: in our affair)

11. Then We struck upon their ears for a (great) number of years in the cave.

12. Thereafter We made them to rise again that We might know whichever of the two parties would best enumerate the span they had lingered.

13. We, Ever We, narrate to you their tidings with the truth. Surely they were young men who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance.

14. And We braced (Literally: tied upon their hearts) their hearts as they rose up and said, "Our Lord is The Lord of the heavens and the earth; we will never invoke any god, apart from Him, for indeed, we had already spoken injudiciously.

15. These our people have taken to themselves (other) gods apart from Him. Had they come up with a most evident all-binding authority concerning their belief in them? So, who is more unjust than he who fabricates against Allah a lie?

16. And as you have kept apart from them and what they worship excepting Allah, so take (your) abode in the cave, (then) your Lord will spread for you of His mercy and will dispose for you a convenient (place) of your Command." (i.e., the command of Allah to you; or: your affair)

17. And you might have seen the sun when it rose, declining from their cave towards the right; and when it set, it went past them towards the left while they were in a broad fissure of (the cave). That was one of the signs of Allah. Whomever Allah guides, then he is right-guided, and whomever He leads away into error, then you will never find for him a right-minded patron.

18. And you would have reckoned that they were awake (as) they were lying down, and We turned them about towards the right and towards the left, and their dog stretching out his two fore-legs (Literally: his two arms) on the threshold. If

you had viewed them, indeed you would have turned away from them in flight and indeed been filled with horror of them.

19. And thus We made them rise again that they might ask one another (Literally: among themselves). A speaker from among them said, "How long have you lingered?" They said, "We have lingered a day, or part (Literally: some "part" of a day) of a day." (Others) said, "Your Lord knows best how long you have lingered. So send one of you forth with this money to the city, then let him look for whichever of them has the purest (Literally: most cleansed) food, so let him come up to you with a provision thereof, and let him be courteous, and definitely let no man be aware of your (presence).

20. Surely in case they get the better of you, they will stone you or bring you back to their creed, and (then) you will never prosper at all."

21. And thus We made the (people of the city) discover them that they might know that the promise of Allah is true and that the Hour, there is no suspicion about it. As they were contending among themselves their Command, (The Command of Allah concerning Resurrection; or: their affair) (then) they said, "Build over them a structure; their Lord knows them best." (But) the ones who prevailed over their Command (Literally: overcame them in their Command; or: in their affair) said, "Indeed we will definitely build (Literally: take to ourselves) over them a mosque."

22. They will say, "Three, their dog (was) the fourth of them." And (others) will say, "Five, their dog (was) the sixth of them," guessing at the Unseen. (Some others) will say, "Seven, and their dog (was) the eighth of them." Say, "My Lord knows best their right number; none knows them, except a few." So do not wrangle about them, except in outward wrangling, and do not ask any of them for a pronouncement on them.

23. And definitely do not say, regarding anything, "Surely I am performing that tomorrow, "

24. Except (if you add), If Allah (so) decides." (i.e., say: insha " ﷻ " Allah) And remember your Lord when you forget, and say, "It may be that my Lord will guide me to something nearer to rectitude than this."

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25. And they lingered in their cave three hundred years, and to that they increased nine (more).

26. Say, " Allah knows best how long they lingered. To Him (belongs) the Unseen of the heavens and the earth. How well He beholds, and how well He hears!" In no way do they have any patron apart from Him, and He does not associate in His judgment anyone.

List of Abbreviations:

S	Subject
V	Verb
O	Object
Prep. Phr.	Prepositional phrase
Adv.	Adverb
Adv. Phr.	Adverbial Phrase
C	Clause
N	Noun
NP	Noun Phrase
VP	Verb Phrase
V	Verb
Adj.	Adjective
Adj. Phr.	Adjectival Phrase
Subj.	Subject of a nominal sentence
Pred.	Predicate of a nominal sentence
Cond. Part.	Conditional Particle
Cond. V.	Conditional Verb
CMT	Conceptual Metaphor Theory
(*)	Incorrect order of words in a sentence rather than the one in the Qur'an.

Reading Conventions:

Reading conventions for transcribed Classical Arabic forms are cited from the International Phonetic Association (1970) with slight modifications for typing facilities.

I-Consonants:

Classical Arabic consonants can be defined as follows:

1-Plosives:

- /b/ voiced bilabial plosive, as in /ba:b/ (door)
- /t/ voiceless denti-alveolar non-emphatic plosive, as in /tɑmr/ (dried dates),
or /ta:mir/ (a person working in dates)
- /t̤/ voiceless denti-alveolar emphatic plosive, as in /t̤abl/ (drums)
- /d/ voiced denti-alveolar non-emphatic plosive, as in /dawa:ʔ/ (medicine)
- /d̤/ voiced denti-alveolar emphatic plosive, as in /d̤amma/ (he held)
- /k/ voiceless velar plosive, as in /katab/ (he wrote)
- /q/ voiceless uvular emphatic plosive, as in /qɑ:la/ (he said)
- /ʔ/ voiceless glottal plosive, as in /ʔamal/ (hope)

2-Fricatives:

- /f/ voiceless labio-dental fricative, as in /faqr/ (poverty)
- /s/ voiceless denti-alveolar sulcal non-emphatic fricative, as in /sama:ʔ/
(sky)
- /s̤/ voiceless denti-alveolar sulcal emphatic fricative, as in /s̤ubḥ/ (morning)

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- /z/ voiced denti-alveolar sulcal non-emphatic fricative, as in /zara/ (visited)
- /z̤/ voiced interdental sulcal emphatic fricative, as in /z̤uhr/ (noon)
- /θ/ voiceless interdental fricative, as in /θa:ni:/ (second)
- /ð/ voiced interdental fricative, as in /ðikr/ (mentioning)
- /ʃ/ voiceless palate-alveolar fricative, as in /ʃams/ (sun)
- /dʒ/ voiced palate-alveolar fricative, as in /dʒara:/ (ran)
- /x/ voiceless uvular fricative, as in /xaradʒa/ (went out)
- /ɣ/ voiced uvular fricative, as in /ɣina:ʔ/ (singing)
- /ħ/ voiceless pharyngeal fricative, as in /ħamal/ (lamb)
- /ʕ/ voiced pharyngeal fricative, as in /ʕajn/ (eye)
- /h/ voiced/voiceless glottal fricative, as in /hawa:ʔ/ (air)

3-Nasals:

- /m/ voiced bilabial nasal (may be voiceless after a voiceless consonant), as in
 /ma:ʔ/ (water)
- /n/ voiced denti-alveolar nasal, as in /nawm/ (sleep)

4-Laterals:

- /l/ voiced alveolar lateral (may be voiceless after a voiceless consonant), as
 in /lawm/ (blaming)

5-Flaps:

- /r/ voiced alveolar flap, may be trill when geminated, (may be voiceless

after a voiceless consonant), as in /rɑma:/ (he threw).

6-Glydes (Semi-Vowels):

/w/ voiced bilabial gliding consonant, as in /ward/ (flowers)

/j/ voiced palatal gliding consonant, as in /jat̪u:f/ (to move around)

7-Emphatic Consonants:

/ṣ, ṭ, ḍ, ḏ/ are emphatic consonants which correspond to non-emphatic /s, t, d, z/ respectively. In pronouncing them the tongue is laterally expanded throughout its length and flattened in rear of the tip, while lips-position is neutral. For /ṣ, ṭ, ḍ, ḏ/ the tongue is laterally contracted and the front is raised towards the hard palate, and the lips are spread.

II-Vowels:

Vowels may be long or short. A long vowel is pronounced, approximately twice as long as the corresponding short vowel.

1-Front Vowels:

/i/ a short half close spread vowel, close when final or long.

/i:/ a long close front spread vowel.

/a/ a short half open to open front unrounded vowel.

/a:/ a long half open to open front unrounded vowel.

2-Back Vowels:

/ɑ/ a short back open vowel.

/ɑ:/ a long back open vowel.

/u/ a short half-close back to central vowel, rounded, or close rounded

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when final or long.

/u:/ a long half-close back rounded vowel.

Vowel Symbols:

Long vowels are indicated by adding /:/ immediately after the vowel letter-symbol. When pronouncing a long vowel, it is given at least twice the length given to its single counterpart.

Gemination (Doubled Consonants):

Any Arabic consonant may be doubled. A doubled consonant must be pronounced at least twice as long as its single counterpart and is characterized by greater muscular tension in the articulatory organs. Geminate consonants do not occur initially but they occur medially or finally.

Elision:

Elision here is concerned with the omission under certain conditions of the short vowels /i/ and /u/ on the one hand, and of /ʔ/ (with or without an accompanying vowel), on the other hand, where elision of a vowel with or without /ʔ/ occurs at the junction of words or of a particle and a word. This feature is marked in writing by hyphen. e.g. /ʔalḥarbu wa ʔassala:m/ = /ʔalḥarbu wa-ssala:m/.

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تحليل لغوي للقصة القرآنية "أصحاب الكهف" في سورة الكهف (سورة رقم ١٨: الآيات ٩-٣٦)

مستخلص

تلعب القصة بشكل عام دورا هاما في التواصل الإنساني. وتعتبر القصة سواء القصة القصيرة أو الرواية الطويلة أداة قوية تؤثر على أفكار ومعتقدات وحتى سلوكيات الناس. ويمتلئ القرآن الكريم بالكثير من القصص مختلفة الأنواع. فنجد قصص ومعجزات الأنبياء عليهم السلام، وقصص للعظة والاعتبار، وقصص تاريخية كان العرب قديما لا يعلمون عنها شيئا، وكذلك قصص مذكورة في الكتب السماوية الأخرى يعرفها أهل الكتاب الموجودين وقت نزول القرآن، وسردها القرآن لتكون معجزة من معجزات الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم، وكذلك تكون دليلا قاطعا على أن القرآن ينزل من عند الله كما نزلت التوراة. وقصة أصحاب الكهف تنتمي إلى هذا النوع الأخير من القصص القرآني. فقد طلب بعض اليهود في بداية رسالة الرسول ودعوته للإسلام منه أن يخبرهم بقصة أصحاب الكهف حتى يتأكدوا أنه يوحى إليه من عند الله كما كان يوحى إلى نبيهم موسى عليه السلام. فنزلت قصة أصحاب الكهف في القرآن ردا على اليهود ولم يكن للعرب أدنى معرفة بهذه القصة قبل نزولها في القرآن. فكان ذلك دليلا على صدق الرسول ونزول القرآن من عند الله. وتتميز هذه القصة بعدة سمات فريدة كما هو الحال مع لغة القرآن. أوضح التحليل اللغوي للقصة اشتمالها على سمات صوتية، وكلامية، ونحوية، ودلالية، وبلاغية، وأسلوبية فريدة قلما تجتمع جميعها مرة واحدة في نوع واحد من الكتابة. خاصة وأن القصة تتميز أيضا بالإيجاز الشديد حتى أنها تقع في ٣٥٤ كلمة فقط. وبالرغم من ذلك تكتمل فيها الجوانب القصصية، وتشتمل على كنوز لغوية رائعة. وتستخلص الدراسة أهم السمات اللغوية التي تميز تلك القصة القصيرة، وتبين أن أكثر ما يميز هذه القصة لغويا هو السمات الأسلوبية الخاصة التي تجتمع كلها في هذه القصة.

كلمات مفتاحية:

سمات لغوية - تحليل لغوي - قصة قرآنية قصيرة-سمات بلاغية ودلالية-السمات الأسلوبية-السمات الصوتية والنحوية.