

The Causes of the Qur'anic Fasilah Between Verbal Structure and Shari'ah Wisdom: An Analytical Foundational Study in the Light of Rhetoric and Usul al-Fiqh

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Abstract:

This study aims to take an integrative approach to the causes of the Qur'anic fasilah, moving beyond the traditional rhetorical treatment which confined the interpretation of this phenomenon to its phonetic and rhythmic dimensions. Instead, it discloses a network of interrelated causes in which verbal, semantic, contextual and purposive dimensions overlap. The study is based on the hypothesis that the Qur'an's selection of the fasilah is governed by a precise system that strikes a balance between the requirements of Qur'anic expressive arrangement and the demands of the Shari'ah objective, resulting in the aesthetic and legislative functions converging in the production of meaning.

The research employs an inductive approach to trace selected models from verses concerning legal rulings, narratives and jihad. The rhetorical-analytical method is also employed to examine the phonological and morphological structures, while the purposive method clarifies the relationship between the fasilah and the Shari'ah ruling. Modern discourse analysis tools are also employed.

The study concludes that the Qur'anic fasilah constitutes a mechanism of semantic framing that plays a decisive role in establishing meaning and linking it to its doctrinal referent. It also concludes that restricting interpretation to a rhythmic explanation is incomplete and does not capture the phenomenon's full dimensions.

The study proposes the concept of 'rhetorical Shari'ah causation' as an inclusive theoretical framework for explaining the interplay between eloquent expression and Shari'ah purpose. This framework enables a renewed, integrative reading of the Qur'anic fasilah, bringing together the sciences of rhetoric, Usul al-Fiqh (Principles/Jurisprudential Foundations of Islamic Law) and purposive theory.

Keywords: Qur'anic fasilah , Rhetorical inimitability, Causes of Legal Rulings, Purposes of Islamic Law, Qur'anic Discourse Analysis

Introduction

All praise is due to Allah, who revealed the Book, setting out its verses in detail and establishing its objectives. May peace and blessings be upon our master Muhammad, who was granted the concise comprehensiveness of speech. As for what follows:

The Qur'anic fasilah constitutes one of the most prominent manifestations of the distinct style of Qur'anic discourse. It concludes the verses to form an integrated rhythmic and semantic unity that captivates the intellect and encompasses subtle meanings with precision.

Scholarly approaches to studying these fawasil have varied since the earliest centuries. In the classical approach, scholars of rhetoric and Qur'anic sciences were concerned with their phonetic

appropriateness, counting them and examining their relation to *saj'* (rhymed prose) and the arrangement of the verse. However, it is noticeable that, even when they alluded to meaning, most of these studies did not undertake a deep, systematic investigation into the causes governing the selection of the *fasilah*, particularly in terms of its precise connection to the legislative objective.

Contemporary studies addressing phono-rhetorical or sonic inimitability have focused on cadence and rhythm without formulating an integrated theory explaining the organic interweaving of verbal structure and *Shari'ah* wisdom. By contrast, an Orientalist tendency has emerged, as seen in the work of scholars such as Noldeke, Bell and Neuwirth. This tendency attempts to reduce the Qur'an to patterns of pre-Islamic *saj'*, thereby stripping the text of its two dimensions: its divine aspect and its legislative dimension.

Research Problem/Statement of the Problem

In light of the diverging approaches, there is an urgent need to read the Qur'anic *fāsilah* in a way that goes beyond form to meaning. This can be achieved by presenting applied Qur'anic examples that demonstrate the conclusion of the verse is not merely a verbal ornament or an obligatory rhythmic necessity, but an essential pillar that contributes to guiding meaning, constructing legal judgements and building arguments.

Accordingly, in light of the preceding discussion, this study attempts to answer the following central question:

Is the choice of the Qur'anic *fasilah* purely a phonetic matter, or is it governed by a system of intertwining causes, where eloquent expression and clarity intertwine with purpose, verbal form intertwines with legal rulings, and rhythm intertwines with legislation?

Sub-questions (branching from the central problem):

1. What are the limits of sonic/phonetic interpretation of the Qur'anic *fasilah*?
2. How does concluding a verse with the name of a specific divine attribute contribute to establishing a *Shari'ah* legal ruling?
3. Can a comprehensive theoretical framework be formulated that systematises the causes of the Qur'anic *fasilah* within an integrative conception?

Research Objectives:

1. Review the various views on the Qur'anic *fasilah* and critique them.
2. Address both excess and deficiency in approaches to the *fasilah*, whether by those who deny its verbal/linguistic cause or those who confine it solely to the sonic dimension.
3. To establish a theory entitled "The Rhetorical *Shari'ah* Cause of the Qur'anic *Fasilah*", integrating the aesthetics of rhythm with the rigour of legal rulings and the theory of *maqasid*.

Research Methodology

The researcher adopted an inductive-analytical approach, accompanied by critical analysis, to trace and dissect scholars' statements. Additionally, the study uses the 'comparative textual analysis' method.

Research Plan

The research plan includes:

- Introduction
- A preliminary section

Section One: Approaches to the Qur'anic *Fasilah*

Chapter/Topic One: The First Approach: The Phonetic-Rhythmic Trend

- Chapter/topic two: the second approach, the semantic-meaning trend

- Chapter/Topic Three: The Third Approach: The Usuli-Rhetorical Trend

Section Two: The Applied Analytical Study

Chapter/Topic One: Correspondence Between Verbal Structure and Purpose

- Chapter/Topic Two: The Fasilah in Verses of Legal Rulings and Its Connection to the Most Beautiful Names of Allah
- Chapter/Topic Three: Compatibility between command/request verbs and fasilah endings
- Chapter/Topic Four: Refuting Doubts Regarding the Qur'anic Fasilah and Affirming Inimitability
- Conclusion

Introductory section: The Conceptual Framework

First: Defining the fasilah (separating/end-verse word).

Linguistically, fasilah comes from al-fasl (separation), meaning cutting/cleaving¹.

Technically, in Qur'anic studies/rhetoric, fasilah is the word that ends the Qur'anic verse, functioning as a separating limit between it and what follows².

It is also distinguished from saj' (rhymed prose), in which the wording may be artificially forced to achieve rhyme. In contrast, the fasilah is subordinate to meaning, serving it rather than overriding it³.

Secondly, the concept of 'illah' (effective/reason-cause) in Usul al-Fiqh.

In Arabic studies, the term 'illah' draws on multiple fields of knowledge:

A. In rhetoric, an 'illah' refers to the description that determines whether one wording or construction is chosen over another, such as choosing to forward or delay, or mention or omit.

According to rhetoricians such as Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani, the 'illah' of the fasilah lies in 'the harmony and coherence among the components of the arrangement/composition'¹.

In Usul al-Fiqh (Islamic Legal Theory), an 'illah is the evident, regulated description by which the Lawgiver attaches a ruling. For example, intoxication is the 'illah for prohibiting wine.

The objective of usuli 'illah is to realise the Shariah purpose, namely: preserving religion, life, lineage, intellect and wealth⁴.

Combining the Two 'Illahs (Rhetorical and Shariah-Based 'Illah)

A methodological defect lies in separating the Qur'anic text and breaking it into parts: the rhetorician focuses on formulation (composition/wording), whereas the jurist-theorist focuses on the legal ruling.

¹- Ibn Manzur, Lisan al-Arab, Dar Sadir, Beirut, Lebanon, 3rd edition, 1414 AH – 1994 CE, entry '(f s l)', vol. 11, p. 521. Al-Jawhari, Al-Sahah: The Crown of the Language and the Correct Arabic, edited by Ahmad Abd al-Ghafur Attar, Dar al-Ilm lil-Malayin, Beirut, Lebanon, 4th edition, 1410 AH – 1990 CE, entry 'fasl', vol. 5, p. 1792. Ibn Faris, The Dictionary of Language Standards, edited by Abd al-Salam Mohamed Harun, Dar al-Fikr, Damascus, Syria, 1399 AH – 1979 CE, entry 'fasl', vol. 4, p. 504.

²- Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, 'The Perfection in the Sciences of the Qur'an', edited by Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim, al-Hay'ah al-Misriyyah al-Ammah lil-Kitab, Cairo, Egypt, 8th edition, 1394 AH – 1974 CE, vol. 3, p. 316. Badr al-Din al-Zarkashi, The Proof in the Sciences of the Qur'an, edited by Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim, Dar al-Turath, Cairo, Egypt, 3rd edition, 1404 AH – 1984 CE, vol. 1, p. 53. Manaa bin Khalil al-Qattan, Discussions in the Sciences of the Qur'an, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 3rd edition, 1421 AH – 2000 CE, p. 150. Muhammad al-Husnawi, Al-Fasilah fi al-Qur'an al-Karim, Dar Ammar, Amman, Jordan, 2nd edition, 2000, p. 21.

³- See the distinction between contrived rhyming prose and meaning-based pauses. Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, Al-Itqan fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an, edited by Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim, al-Hay'ah al-Misriyyah al-Ammah lil-Kitab, Cairo, Egypt, 8th edition, 1394 AH – 1974 CE, vol. 3, p. 317. Al-Suyuti quotes this rule from Imam al-Rammani, who states on this page: 'Rhyming prose is a defect because its purpose is the wording, with meaning subordinate to it.' Pauses are rhetorical because their purpose is the meaning, with wording subordinate to it.' Abu Hilal al-Askari (d. 395 AH), Kitab al-Sina'atayn: al-Kitabah wa al-Shi'r, edited by Ali Muhammad al-Bajawi and Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim, al-Maktabah al-'Asriyyah, Sidon, Lebanon (1406 AH – 1986 CE), p. 261.

⁴- See the connection of the jurisprudential rationale to preserving the five necessities (considering them the goal of the rationale): Al-Amidi, Al-Ihkam fi Usul al-Ahkam (3/274). Also see the contemporary maqasid-oriented formulation of this meaning: Ahmad al-Raysuni, Nazariyyat al-Maqasid 'ind al-Imam al-Shatibi, pp. 40–42.

However, the researcher argues for the need to integrate the two ‘illahs in order to generate a ‘rhetorical-shariah ‘illah’, which is:

‘methodological justification for the Qur’an’s selection of a specific *fasilah*, based on the compatibility of its phonetic rhythm and morphological structure with the legislative purpose intended by the verse’⁵.

Furthermore, Allah—Glorified and Exalted is He—does not end verses containing legal rulings (such as those concerning penalties, inheritance, and retaliation) with *fasilah* words that do not reflect the awe or mercy of the ruling. Rather, the *fasilah* functions as a teleological/explanatory ‘illah that frames the *usuli* legal ruling.

Third: Maqasid al-Shari‘ah (Shariah Purposes):

The *maqasid* are the purposes for which Shariah was established, with the preservation of religion, life, intellect, lineage and wealth at their core⁶.

Accordingly, linking the *fasilah* to the *maqasid* means viewing it as part of the directive construction of the ruling.

First Chapter: Directions/Trends in Qur’anic Fasilah

First Request/Section: The First Direction: The Phonetic-Rhythmic Trend (Justification for Saj‘ (Prose Rhyme))

Advocates of this approach argue that the Qur’anic *fasilah* does not deviate from the phenomenon of prose rhyme found in Arabic prose. They further argue that the phonetic and rhythmic beauty in it is intended for its own sake, as part of rhetorical/miraculous expression that attracts listeners⁷.

First: Key scholars and researchers of the phonetic-rhythmic trend

A. Earlier scholars (classical):

- Abu Hilal al-Askari (The Book of the Two Arts: Writing and Poetry)⁸
- Diya al-Din Ibn al-Athir (the well-known model), who fiercely defended the presence of prose rhyme in the Qur’an and considered denying it to be a stubborn refusal⁹.
- Abu al-Hasan al-Rommani (The Points of Inimitability in the Qur’an)¹⁰.

B. Modern scholars and orientalists:

Orientalists such as Theodor Nöldeke (The History of the Qur’an)¹¹ and Angelika Neuwirth¹².

⁵- Muhammad al-Husnawi, *Al-Fasilah in al-Qur’an al-Karim*, Dar Ammar, Amman, Jordan, 2nd edition (1421 AH – 2000 CE), p. 135 and following. Fadl Salih al-Samarra’i, *The Quranic Expression*, Dar Ammar, Amman, Jordan, 4th edition, 1427 AH – 2006 CE, pp. 180–182. Munir Sultan, *The Phonetic Inimitability of the Holy Qur’an*, Munsha’at al-Ma’arif, Alexandria, Egypt, 1997, pp. 73–75.

⁶- See: Allal al-Fasi, *The Objectives of Islamic Law and Its Noble*, Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, Beirut, Lebanon, 5th edition, 1993 CE, p. 3. Ibn ‘Ashur, *Muhammad al-Tahir, The Objectives of Islamic Law and Its Noble*, edited by Muhammad al-Tahir al-Maysawi, Dar al-Nafa’is, Amman, Jordan, 2nd edition, 2001, p. 251. Al-Khadimi, Nur al-Din, ‘The Science of the Higher Objectives of Islam’, *Maktabat al-Ubaykan*, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 1st edition, 2001, p. 17.

⁷- See the following for a detailed explanation of this school of thought: Al-Husnawi, Muhammad, *Al-Fasilah in al-Qur’an al-Karim*, Dar Ammar, Amman, 2nd edition, 2000 CE, pp. 25–26.

⁸- Also see Al-Askari, Abu Hilal al-Hasan bin Abd Allah, *The Book of the Two Crafts: Writing and Poetry*, edited by Ali Muhammad al-Bajawi and Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim, al-Maktabah al-‘Asriyyah, Sidon, 1986 CE, p. 259.

⁹- Ibn al-Athir, Diya’ al-Din Nasr Allah bin Muhammad. ‘The Current Model for the Literary Discipline of the Scribe and Poet’. Edited by Ahmad al-Hawfi and Badawi Tabanah. *Dar Nahdat Misr*, Cairo. No date. Vol. 1, p. 337.

¹⁰- Al-Rammani, Ali bin Isa (within Three Treatises on the Inimitability of the Qur’an), edited by Muhammad Khalaf Allah and Muhammad Zaghlul Salam, Dar al-Ma’arif, Cairo, 3rd edition, 1976 CE, p. 97.

¹¹- Theodor Nöldeke, *The History of the Qur’an*, translated by Dr George Tamer, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, George Olms Publishing House, 1st edition, 2000 CE, pp. 53–55.

¹²- Neuwirth, Angelika, ‘The Qur’an and Late Antiquity: A Shared Heritage’, Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 120–130.

Some contemporary Arab researchers have focused on phonetic stylistics, considering the *fasilah* to be purely a musical rhythmic structure.

- Taha Hocine¹³
- Adounis¹⁴
- Mohamed al-Hasanawi¹⁵
- Mounir Sultan¹⁶

Secondly, evidence of the phonetic-rhythmic trend.

After tracing and examining the discourse, the evidence offered by the proponents of this trend can be summarised as follows:

A. Textual reality: the Qur'an contains many verses whose end-segments are equal and whose final letters match the Arabic definition of prose rhyme precisely, for example Surat al-Qamar, Surat al-Rahman and Surat al-Muddaththir.

An inductive reading of the Qur'anic text reveals the existence of parallel and rhyming segments that cannot be denied. Supporters of this trend argue that stripping the Qur'an of this phenomenon would be akin to denying a tangible reality present in the text¹⁷.

B. Linguistic evidence: In Arabic usage, prose rhyme means: 'the consecutive alignment of speech upon a single rhyming consonant/sound', which is realised in the Qur'an¹⁸.

Those who deny it, such as al-Baqillani and al-Romani, claimed that calling it prose rhyme is not fitting for the Qur'an and instead used the term *fasilah*. The phonetic-rhythmic advocates replied: The change in terminology is merely a difference in naming (nominal dispute), and there is no objection concerning terminology (there is no contention in terminology) as long as the reality and essence are one and the same.

- Blameworthy prose rhyme is artificial/forced, whereas natural/instinctive prose rhyme represents the highest degree of eloquence¹⁹.

C. Psychological Impact and Musical Rhythm: The Qur'anic *jaras* (musical sound/sonic resonance) is intended in itself as a powerful instrument of psychological influence that penetrates hearts before minds. Thus, Qur'anic rhythm is not merely a verbal ornament, but rather a deliberately designed sound architecture that prepares the self to receive meaning. The sounds harmonise to produce a resonance that delights the ear and stirs the emotions²⁰.

¹³- Taha Hussein, *From the Discourse on Poetry and Prose*, Dar al-Ma'arif, Cairo, Egypt, 10th edition (no date), pp. 25–28. In this work, he analyses Surah al-Rahman and al-Duha purely from a musical perspective.

¹⁴- Adonis, *The Static and the Changing: A Study of Conformity and Innovation among the Arabs*, Dar al-Saqi, Beirut, Lebanon, 8th edition, 2002, vol. 1, pp. 180–182.

¹⁵- Muhammad al-Husnawi, *Al-Fasilah in al-Qur'an al-Karim*, Dar Ammar, Amman, Jordan, 2nd edition, 1421 AH – 2000 CE, pp. 38–40.

¹⁶- Munir Sultan, 'The Phonetic Inimitability of the Holy Qur'an', *Munsha'at al-Ma'arif*, Alexandria, Egypt (1997), pp. 15–18.

¹⁷- Al-Salih, Subhi. *Discussions in the Sciences of the Qur'an*, Beirut: Dar al-Ilm lil-Malayin, 24th edition, 2000 CE, pp. 316–318. Beirut: Dar al-Ilm lil-Malayin, 24th edition, 2000 CE, pp. 316–318. (where the author discusses the intersection of Qur'anic pauses with rhyming prose metrics and textual reality).

¹⁸- See: Al-Jawhari, *Al-Sahah* (3/1221) and Ibn Manzur, *Lisan al-Arab* (8/151), entry 'rhyme prose'.

¹⁹- Ibn al-Athir, *Diya' al-Din*. 'The Current Model for the Literary Discipline of the Scribe and Poet'. Edited by: Ahmad al-Hawfi and Badawi Tabanah, Cairo: Cairo: Dar Nahdat Misr lil-Tiba'ah wa al-Nashr (n.d.), Vol. 1, pp. 344–345. He is one of the most prominent advocates for the presence of rhyming prose in the Qur'an, and is credited with the saying, 'No objection to terminology if the meaning is one'. See also: Ibn Sinan al-Khafaji: *The Secret of Eloquence*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1st edition, 1982 CE, p. 170.

²⁰- Qutb, Sayyid. *Artistic Imagery in the Qur'an*. Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 16th edition, 2004, pp. 85–88 (in the chapter 'Musical Rhythm'). Also see: Al-Rafi'i, Mustafa Sadiq. *The Inimitability of the Qur'an and Rhetoric* al-Nabawiyah. Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi, 8th edition, 2005 CE, pp. 198–202.

D. Semantic Evidence (The Relationship Between Rhythm and Psychological State)

Supporters of this theory argue that the rhythm of the Qur'anic sound changes according to the scene and psychological context (i.e. the harmony between sound and meaning).

In scenes of threat and warning (e.g. Surat al-Muddaththir or Surat al-Qamar), the fawasil (verse-final segments) become shorter, and the letters become more forceful, such as ra' and qaf, to match the rapid intensity of emotional agitation and terror.

In scenes of blessing (comfort/joy) and mercy (e.g. Surat Maryam), the segments become longer and the delivery is characterised by looseness, gentleness and vocal extension, suited to the atmosphere of tranquility and calm²¹.

E. Prophetic Evidence and Arabic Custom: Since prose rhyme represented the pinnacle of artistic expression in Arabic, and since the Qur'an was revealed in the language of the Arabs to challenge them in the highest ranks of eloquence, it would be illogical for the Qur'an to be devoid of one of the most prominent tools of artistic beauty in their language.

Furthermore, the Prophet — peace and blessings be upon him — used natural prose rhyme in his supplications and speeches, free of artificial affectation:

'O Allah, grant to the one who spends (in charity) a replacement, and grant to the one who withholds (hoards) a loss.'²²

This indicates that prose rhyme in itself is not a linguistic deficiency, but rather a praiseworthy feature so long as it is free from artificiality and remains subject to meaning²³.

Third: Discussion of the First Trend (Refuting/Assessing It).

The first trend is discussed from two angles.

A. Points of strength:

It was correct to establish the aesthetic and sonic dimensions of the Qur'an.

It also acknowledged the verbal nature of the text without denying it outright.

B. Points of weakness and response:

This trend erred, especially the orientalist, by reducing Qur'anic inimitability to 'verbal/literal musicality', while overlooking a fundamental point:

Human prose rhyme leads meaning; the saj' -maker sacrifices meaning to preserve the rhyme.

By contrast, the Qur'anic fasilah is led by meaning.

The decisive proof is that the Qur'an breaks the rhythmic pattern abruptly whenever the meaning requires it. For example, in Surat al-Masad, whose rhythm is based on the 'ba' sound (as represented in your text), the Qur'an interrupts the rhythm at the end to use the letter 'dal', because it is more forceful/explosive in conveying the intensity of choking/constraint. Here, meaning prevails over rhythm²⁴.

²¹- Aicha Abd al-Rahman, Bint al-Shati'. *The Rhetorical Exegesis of the Holy Qur'an*. Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, 7th edition, 1990, vol. 1, pp. 120–125. (She applied it practically to the short surahs). Also see: Qutb, Sayyid. *Artistic Imagery in the Qur'an*. Previous reference, p. 92.

²²- Agreed upon in *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Dar Taq al-Najat edition (numbered by Muhammad Fu'ad Abd al-Baqi), 1st edition, 1422 AH, vol. 2, Book of Zakat, chapter: Chapter on the saying of Allah Almighty: [Qur'anic verse from Surah al-Layl: 5–7], no. 1442, p. 115. *Sahih Muslim*, edited by Muhammad Fu'ad Abd al-Baqi, Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi (no date), vol. 2, Book of Zakat, Chapter: The Spender and the Withholder', no. 1010, p. 700.

²³- Badr al-Din al-Zarkashi. *The Proof in the Sciences of the Qur'an*. Edited by: Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim. Cairo: Dar Ihya' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyyah (Isa al-Babi al-Halabi), 1st edition, 1957, vol. 1, pp. 53–55. (In which al-Zarkashi cites the views of those who permit rhyming prose in the Qur'an, along with their evidence from the prophetic hadith).

²⁴- See a phonetic analysis of Surah al-Masad in: Fadl Hasan Abbas, *The Inimitability of the Qur'an and Rhetoric*, Dar al-Nafa'is, Jordan, 4th edition, 2004 CE, p. 215.

Second Request/Section: The second trend: the semantic-meaning trend (denying prose rhyme).

Supporters of this trend assert an absolute distinction between the Qur'anic *fasilah* and prose rhyme. They argue that applying the word 'saj' to the Qur'an diminishes its sanctity. They also claim that the Qur'anic *fasilah* is subordinate to meaning in an absolute sense²⁵.

First: The most prominent scholars of the semantic-meaning trend and their research.

A. Among the classical scholars:

- Qadi Abu Bakr al-Baqillani (leader of this trend, as discussed in his book *Inimitability of the Quran*)²⁶.

- Imam al-Khatibi (in *Bayan Inimitability of the Quran*)²⁷;

- Yahia b. Hamza al-Alawi (in *al-Tiraz*)²⁸.

B. Among the modern scholars:

- Mustafa Sadiq al-Rafii (*Inimitability of the Qur'an and Prophetic Eloquence*)²⁹.

Sayid Qutb (in *Art of Qur'anic Depiction*, where he made rhythm subservient to depiction)³⁰.

- Dr Aicha Abd al-Rahman "Bint al-Shati"³¹.

Second: Evidence of the Most Prominent Scholars of the Semantic-Meaning Trend

A. Textual evidence: The Prophet forbade prose rhyme that is repelling and artificially contrived, as evidenced by his statement to a man: 'Are you doing prose rhyme like the *saj'* of the soothsayers?'³²

B. Rational evidence: Prose rhyme is a human craft that depends on contriving and assembling words to fill a sonic gap (*hashw* — verbal stuffing). By contrast, the Speech of Allah is free from affectation and filler.

C. Inductive evidence: The Qur'an varies the *fasilas* (final segments of verses) within the same *surah*, moving from one letter to another and from longer to shorter segments in accordance with shifts in meaning and scenes. This indicates that meaning is sovereign.

Third: discussing the supporters of the second trend.

This discussion will be presented from two angles:

A. Points of Strength: This group succeeded in protecting the Qur'anic text from resembling the speech of soothsayers and their fantasies.

- They also demonstrated the overwhelming superiority of Qur'anic meaning over verbal form.

²⁵- Abu Musa, Muhammad Hasanin. *The Characteristics of Grammatical Structures: An Analytical Study of the Issues of the Science of Meanings*, Maktabat Wahbah, Cairo, 8th edition, 2009, p. 315.

²⁶- Al-Baqillani, Abu Bakr Muhammad bin al-Tayyib. *The Inimitability of the Qur'an and Rhetoric*, edited by al-Sayyid Ahmad Saqr. Dar al-Ma'arif, Cairo. 5th edition. 1997 CE. pp. 86-. (A full chapter is dedicated to denying rhyming prose in the Qur'an).

²⁷- Al-Khatibi, Hamd ibn Muhammad, *The Clarification of the Qur'an's Inimitability* (within *Three Treatises on the Inimitability of the Qur'an*), p. 52.

²⁸- Al-Alawi, Yahya bin Hamzah, 'The Standard for the Secrets of Eloquence and the Disciplines of the Realities of Inimitability', *al-Maktabah al-'Asriyyah*, Beirut, 2002 CE, vol. 2, p. 342.

²⁹- Mustafa Sadiq al-Rafii, *The Inimitability of the Qur'an and Prophetic*, Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi, Beirut, 9th edition, 1973 CE, pp. 216-218.

³⁰- Sayyid Qutb, *Artistic Imagery in the Qur'an*, Dar al-Shuruq, Cairo, 17th edition, 2004, p. 85.

³¹- Aisha Abd al-Rahman (Bint al-Shati), 'The Rhetorical Exegesis of the Holy Qur'an' or 'The Illustrative Commentary of the Holy Qur'an', Dar al-Ma'arif, Cairo, 7th edition, no date, vol. 1, p. 15.

³²- Narrated by Muslim in his *Sahih*, Book of Qisas and Muharibin and Qasas and Diyat, Chapter on the Diyah of the Fetus, Hadith No. 1681.

B. Points of weakness (and the response):

- The exaggerated denial of prose rhyme led some of them to deny clear verbal phenomena as evident as daylight.
- The Prophet's hadith did not condemn absolute prose rhyme; rather, it condemned the *saj'* of soothsayers, which is based on falsehood, obscurity and affectation.
- Additionally, the assertion that the *fasilah* is subordinate to meaning only overlooks an important fact: the Qur'an often selects a particular word over its synonyms specifically to consider the *fasilah*. For example, the word 'Mount'³³ is chosen and placed with 'written/inscribed' instead of 'written'.

Thus, the truth is that wording and meaning in the Qur'an complement one another; neither annuls the other.

Third Request Section: The Third Trend: The Rhetorical-Usūli (Integrative) Trend

Supporters of this trend argue that the Qur'anic *fasilah* is not merely verbal ornamentation or subordinate to a general meaning. Rather, it is an independent structural unit in its own right: it seals the sentence, completes its rhetorical meaning and establishes its Shariah ruling, whether legal or creed/doctrinal³⁴.

First: Prominent scholars of the usul-oriented rhetorical-grammatical trend and their researchers:

A. Among the early scholars are Badr al-Din al-Zarkashi (in *The Irrefutable Proof*)³⁵, Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (in *The Perfection*)³⁶, al-Zamakhshari (in *The Revealer*, where he analysed the meaning of the *fasilah* (the verse-ending clause) and its connection to the beginning of the verse)³⁷, and Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi (who took a purposive perspective)³⁸.

B. Among the later scholars are Imam Mohamed al-Tahir ibn Ashur (*The Liberation and Enlightenment*)³⁹, Mohamed Abu Musa (*Qur'anic Rhetoric*)⁴⁰, Fadhl Hasan Abbas and Sayid Khider (on the *fawasil*/verse-endings of the Qur'anic verses)⁴¹.

Second: evidence cited by scholars of the rhetorical-grammatical (The Irrefutable Proof) usul-oriented trend.

A. Evidence of appropriateness: 'Rebutting the tail by the head'

The *fasilah* always relates to the opening of the verse in a cause-and-effect relationship. Thus, verses of mercy conclude with *fasilahs* of mercy, as in the Almighty's saying:

Verses of threat/warning conclude with *fasilahs* of warning.

Secondly: Evidence of the scholars of the fundamentalist-literalist school:

³³- Zaydan, Muhammad, 'Qur'anic Pauses: A Renewed Reading Between Rhetoricians and Interpreters: A Phonetic-Semantic Study', *Majallat al-Sawtiyyat*, Vol. 18, No. 1, 2022 CE, pp. 73–75.

³⁴- Al-Sayyid Khudr, 'The Fasila of the Quranic Verses: Dirasa Balaghiyya Dalaliyya, Maktaba al-Adab, Cairo, 1st edition, 2000 CE, p. 40.

³⁵- Badr al-Din Muhammad bin Abd Allah al-Zarkashi, *The Proof in the Sciences of the Qur'an*, edited by Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim, Dar Ihya' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyyah, Cairo, 1st edition, 1957 CE, vol. 1, pp. 53–54.

³⁶- Al-Suyuti, Jalal al-Din Abd al-Rahman, *The Perfection in the Sciences of the Qur'an*, edited by: Markaz al-Dirasat al-Qur'aniyyah; *Majma' al-Malik Fahd lil-Tiba'ah al-Mushaf al-Sharif*, Saudi Arabia; vol. 4, p. 1421.

³⁷- Mahmud ben Omar al-Zamakhshari, *The Revealer of the Realities of the Hidden Depths of Revelation*, Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi, Beirut, 3rd edition, 1987 CE (see, for example, his interpretation of the ending of verses in Surah al-Baqarah).

³⁸- Ibn al-Shatibi, Ibrahim bin Musa, *The Congruences in the Foundations of Islamic Law*, edited by Mashhur Hasan al-Salman, Dar Ibn 'Affan, Saudi Arabia, 1st edition, 1997 CE, vol. 2, p. 302.

³⁹- Ibn Ashour, Mohamed al-Tahir, *Al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir*, Dar al-Tunisiyya lil Nashr, Tunis, 1984, vol. 1, p. 76.

⁴⁰- Muhammad Hasanin Abu Musa, 'Qur'anic Rhetoric in the Exegesis of al-Zamakhshari and Its Impact on Rhetorical Studies', 2nd edition, Maktabat Wahbah, Cairo, 1988 CE.

⁴¹- Al-Sayyid Khudr, 'The Fasilah in the Quranic Verses' (previous reference), pp. 16–20.

A. The argument of proportionality (returning the end to the beginning): The verse ending is always linked to the beginning of the verse in the same way that cause and effect are linked. Verses of mercy end with verses of mercy.

B- The fundamentalist argument (final cause): In verses of rulings, the verse ending serves as the "cause of the ruling."; Because the position is one of imposing punishment and discipline, and pride requires cutting off, and wisdom requires punishment⁴².

C. Evidence of Independence: The pause sometimes represents in itself a "general rule" or "divine law" that can be separated from the verse and cited independently.

Third: Discussion of the Third Approach (Summary and Preference): This approach is considered the most mature, established, and profound. It transcends the superficiality of the first approach (which limited the matter to sound) and the exaggerated defense of the second approach (which neglected phonetic formation).

This middle approach establishes the theory of "legal rhetorical rationale." Here, the pause is the point of ingenious balance between:

- Rhythmic phonetic harmony (to attract the ear).
- Semantic sequence (to inform the mind).
- Legislative purpose (to cultivate character and regulate behavior). Therefore, for this group, Qur'anic rhetoric is "legislative rhetoric," and the comma is not merely ink used to seal the line, but rather it is a "sweet seal" that establishes the pillars of the verse and protects its meaning from any corrupt interpretation⁴³.

Chapter Two: The Applied Analytical Study (Towards Building a Theory)

First requirement: Concord between the verbal structure (phonetic and morphological) and the intended purpose.

The Qur'anic *fasilah* depends on a purposeful morphological and phonetic structure that cannot simply be replaced. Among the secrets of its rhythm are the following:

First: The phenomenon of enabling (i.e. setting up the *fasilah*). This means that the context prepares for the *fasilah* so that it appears steady and untroubled. For example, in the words of the Almighty: [Qur'an 23:12–14]⁴⁴

The gradual creation — from essence to a drop, then a clot, then a morsel — prepares the intellect and conscience to receive the *fasilah*.

as the inevitable outcome of God's power.

Secondly, the phenomenon of deletion for the sake of the *fasilah* (and the purposive indication): the Noble Qur'an removes certain letters, such as the *ya* of the defective verb or the letter used with the speaker, in order to achieve phonetic correspondence. However, this deletion has a facet of semantic miraculousness. For example: [Qur'an 89:4]

The *ya* was deleted from **yasri** to match the verse endings of the *sūrah* (al-Fajr, 'Ashr, al-Shaf' and al-Watr). However, rhetoricians and exegetes, such as Ibn Ashur, have suggested that this deletion adds the meaning of 'hastening': the deletion of the letter indicates the swift passing of the night and its progression. This aligns with the *surah's* legislative and admonitory meaning, which speaks of the swift demise of the world and the imminent arrival of punishment for the disbelievers.

⁴²- Al-Razi, Fakhr al-Din. *The Keys to the Unseen or The Grand Exegesis*. It. Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, Beirut, 3rd edition, 1420 AH, vol. 11, p. 348.

⁴³- See the establishment of the *maqasid*-based cohesion theory for the pause in: Burhalah, Fatima, 'The Qur'anic Pause: Concept and Function', published paper, Faculty of Arts, Sidi Bel Abbas University, pp. 8–10.

⁴⁴- Al-Sayyid Khudr, 'The *Fasilah* in the Quranic Verses' (previous reference), p. 16.

- Usuli evidence: the teleological cause

In verses of legal rulings, the *fasilah* comes to function as the reason/cause of the ruling. For example, in the Almighty's saying: [Qur'an 5:38], the *fasilah* here is:

This is because the context is establishing a punishment and discipline: might requires cutting off and wisdom requires retribution.

- Evidence of independence

Sometimes the *fasilah* represents a 'universal rule' or 'divine law' in itself that can be separated from the verse and cited independently. Examples include: { 56:1-2 } and { 5:1-2 }⁴⁵.

Third: discussion of the proponents of the third trend (summary and preference).

This trend is considered the most mature, well-established and deeply grounded of all. It goes beyond the superficiality that the first trend fell into, which limited the matter to sound/phonetics, and it goes beyond the overly defensive stance that the second trend fell into, which neglected the phonetic vocalisation pattern⁴⁶.

This middle approach establishes the theory of the legislative rhetorical cause. Here, the *fasilah* is the ingenious point of balance between:

- Rhythmic phonetic harmony (to attract the ears);
- Semantic sequence (to make minds understand);
- Legislative purpose (to cultivate souls and regulate conduct).

Therefore, according to this group, Qur'anic rhetoric is "legislative rhetoric". The *fasilah* is not merely the ink with which the line is concluded; rather, it is the 'sealing' or 'finishing' of musk that anchors the verse's pillars and guards its meaning against corrupt interpretation.

Thirdly, the phenomenon of addition and phonetic lengthening (i.e. lengthening) is used to express psychological states and the intention to depict.

Just as deletion suggests speed and transience, phonetic addition and the satiation/extension of vowels (lengthening) indicate duration, expansion, and disturbance. This is evident, for example, in the addition of the 'alif of release (*alif al-itlaq*) at the end of verses in Surat al-Ahzab.

Scholars have systematised this phenomenon by combining two ideas from two distinguished scholars who were among the pioneers of Qur'anic bayan studies in the modern era.

Example: The Qur'an describes the state of the believers during the Battle of the Trench:

[Qur'an 33:10]

The following *fasilahs* then came with: (*al-rasul*) and (*al-sabil*).

Purposeful indication: The original grammar is 'al-dhunun, al-rasul, al-sabil', but an 'alif' was added to match the surah's verse endings. This phonetic addition (lengthening by means of the alif) corresponds perfectly to the Qur'an's pictorial intent in the verse: lengthening the sound embodies the extension of the state of fear, the long duration of the siege, and the trembling of hearts, as well

⁴⁵- Ibn 'Ashur, *The Liberation and Enlightenment*, previous reference, vol. 30, p. 319. See also: Shima'a Abd al-Rahim Tawfiq, 'On the Rhetoric of the Qur'anic Pause', *Majallat Kulliyat al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah bi-Mansurah*, no. 39, 2020 CE, p. 546.

⁴⁶- See also: Fadl Salih al-Samarra'i, *The Quranic Expression*, Dar Ammar, Jordan, 4th edition, 2006 CE, pp. 38-45. In the section on mention and omission, al-Samarra'i establishes the rhetorical rule that omission suits speed and conclusion, while addition (mention) suits length and extension. Sayyid Qutb, *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an*, previous reference, vol. 5, p. 2830. Qutb was the first to draw attention to the psychological implications of prolonging the sound (*madd*) in the pauses of Surat al-Ahzab (*Assumptions, the Messenger, the Path*) and to link this to the objective of 'artistic imagery'.

as the disquiet of thoughts and conjectures at that grave moment. Therefore, the extension of the sound reflects the psychological and temporal extension of the ordeal⁴⁷.

Fourth: Syntactic transposition (advancing and delaying) to preserve the *fāsilah* and direct the focus of attention.

Often, the Qur'an changes the familiar order of words through fronting or postposing so that the *fāsilah* settles correctly. However, this change carries enormous purposive meaning related to directing the listener's attention⁴⁸.

Example: In the story of Pharaoh's magicians in *Sūrat al-Araf*:

[Qur'an 7:122] (with Moses introduced first),

In contrast, in *Sūrat taHa*:

[Qur'an 20:70] (with Aaron introduced first), Moses is introduced first.

Purposive indication: in *Sūrat taHa*, 'Aaron' was brought forward so that the verse ends with 'Moses', thereby achieving phonetic compatibility with the *sūrah*'s *fasilahs*, which conclude with the *alif maqsurah* (e.g. *yukhfa*, *al-husna*, *yarda*...).

However, the deeper purpose is this: *Surat Ta-Ha* is the 'surah of Moses' — it was constructed from the outset to recount the details of his life. Therefore, eloquence required postponing his name so that it would become the *fasilah*, the closing element that strikes the ear and settles within the soul. This postponement thus yields enticement and focused attention on the *surah*'s central figure, making the final word the most important⁴⁹.

Fifthly, there is concord between the 'character of the final letter' (the *rawi*) and the nature of the intended meaning (auditory suggestion)⁵⁰.

⁴⁷- See: Muhammad al-Tahir Ibn 'Ashur, *Enlightenment*, previous reference, vol. 21, p. 267. He states that this *alif* is called the *alif* of release and is used to match the *surah*'s pauses. Also see al-Zamakhshari, *Al-Kashshaf 'an Haqa'iq Ghawamidh al-Tanzil*, Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi, 3rd edition, 1407 AH, vol. 3, p. 526.

⁴⁸- See: Al-Zarkashi, *The Proof in the Sciences of the Qur'an*, previously cited source, p. 53. Under the heading 'knowing pauses', he states that: It is mentioned that the Qur'an may advance or delay in order to preserve the pause, but this comes with 'added meaning' and 'alerts the listener' to a more important matter. Al-Samarra'i, Fadl Salih, *The Quranic Expression*, previous reference, pp. 14–37. Tammam Husayn, *Al-Bayan fi Rawi' al-Qur'an*, 'Alam al-Kutub, Cairo, 2nd edition, 2000 CE, p. 245.

⁴⁹- See: Ibn al-Zubayr al-Gharnati, *The Essence of Decisive Interpretation for Refuting Atheism and Negation: On the Explanation of Verbal Similarities in the*, edited by Said al-Fallah, Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st edition, 1983 CE, vol. 1, pp. 411–412. Researcher's note: This is one of the most important heritage sources in this field; the author compares the verse of *al-A'raf* and the verse of *Ta Ha*, explaining that the context of *Surat Ta Ha* is entirely built on the story of Moses and his dialogue, so delaying his name suited it to be the goal and focus of attention. And al-Khatib al-Iskafi (d. 420 AH), *The Pearl of Revelation and the Forehead of Interpretation: On the Exposition of Mutashabih Verses in the Noble Book of Allah*, edited by Muhammad Mustafa Aydin, Umm al-Qura University, Mecca, Saudi Arabia, 1st edition, 1422 AH - 2001 CE, vol. 2, p. 881. Note: Al-Iskafi explicitly states that the advancement and delay here was to preserve the *surah*'s segments (pauses) built on the short *alif*, achieving phonetic harmony. And Muhammad al-Tahir Ibn Ashour, *The Interpretation of Liberation and Enlightenment*, previous reference, p. 270. Note: In interpreting verse 70 of *Surat Ta Ha*, Ibn 'Ashur combines the two reasons; he refers to preserving the pause for rhyming, and points to the rhetorical objective in emphasizing Moses and delaying it for greater impact on the listener. And Fadl Salih al-Samarra'i, *Rhetorical Touches in Texts of the Revelation*, Dar Ammar, Amman, Jordan, 3rd edition, 1423 AH - 2003 CE, pp. 215–217. Note: Al-Samarra'i is one of the foremost to formulate this analysis in contemporary terms, elaborating on how *Surat Ta Ha* is distinctly "the *surah* of Moses," so one of the secrets of inimitability is delaying his name to the conclusion and the word that lingers in the ear.

⁵⁰- See: Abu al-Fath Uthman bin Janni, 'Characteristics', in *Al-Hay'ah al-Misriyyah al-Ammah lil-Kitab*, Cairo, edited by Muhammad Ali al-Najjar, 4th edition, 1999 CE, vol. 2, pp. 152–155. Sayyid Qutb, *The Artistic Representation in the Qur'an*, previous reference, pp. 122–126. Mustafa Sadiq al-Rafi'i, *The Inimitability of the Qur'an and Prophetic Eloquence*, previous reference, pp. 202–205 and 210–213. Munir Sultan, *Al-Fasilah al-Qur'aniyyah: Dirasa Balaghiyya*, *Munsha'at al-Ma'arif*, Alexandria, Egypt, 1st edition, 1978 CE, pp. 82–87 and 115–120. Fadl Hasan Abbas, *A Study of the Inimitability and Eloquence of the Qur'an*, Dar al-Furqan, Amman, Jordan, 4th edition, 2004, pp. 250–254. Abd al-Fattah Lashin, *'Secrets of Expression in the Quran': The Quranic Fasilah*, Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, Cairo, 1st edition,

The selection of the letter upon which the Qur'anic *fasilah* is built is not arbitrary. Rather, the phonetic qualities of this letter — such as voicing vs. whispering, repetition, and softness/relaxation (e.g. *tarkir*, *shiddah*, *rakhawah*) — fully harmonise with the overall atmosphere of the surah and its general purpose⁵¹.

First example: softness and gentleness for the purpose of mercy

Surat Maryam: its *fasilahs* are built on the letter *ya'* and extended alif vowels (e.g. *Zakariya*, *Khafiya*, *Shaqiya*, *Radhiya*).

This phonetic configuration is characterised by whispering, lengthening and softness — and it matches the surah's objective and themes precisely, which revolve around mercy (mentioning 'the mercy of your Lord'), supplication by the weak, humility and weeping.

Second example: repetition and intensity for the purpose of admonition and threat

In Surat al-Qamar, the *fasilahs* are built on the letter *rā*, with *kasrah* or *dammah* (e.g. *mustamir*, *manhir*, *muqtadir*, *mudhakkir*...).

In the science of *Tajwid* and phonetics, the letter *ra* is characterised by repetition. This strong, repeated sound harmonises with the purpose of warning and stern admonition of the surah, portraying the repetition of punishment and its sequential infliction on the deniers, sounding like a steady hammer striking hearts⁵².

Sixth: morphological deviation (alteration of form) to accommodate the rhyme and intensify meaning. The Qur'an may shift from one morphological form to another (e.g. from the active participle to a superlative or intensifying form, or from singular to plural) to regulate the rhyme, which also serves to deepen the meaning⁵³.

Example: The Almighty says: "...عَظِيمًا...مَغْفُورَةً..." [Al-Ahzab: 35].

1999, pp. 42–46. Bint al-Shati', Aisha Abd al-Rahman, *The Rhetorical Inimitability of the Qur'an and the Questions of Ibn al-Azraq*, Dar al-Ma'arif, Cairo, 3rd edition, 1999, pp. 140–144.

⁵¹- See: Abu al-Fath Uthman bin Janni, 'Characteristics', in *Al-Hay'ah al-Misriyyah al-Ammah lil-Kitab*, Cairo, edited by Muhammad Ali al-Najjar, 4th edition, 1999 CE, vol. 2, pp. 152–155. Sayyid Qutb, *The Artistic Representation in the Qur'an*, previous reference, pp. 122–126. Mustafa Sadiq al-Rafi'i, *The Inimitability of the Qur'an and Prophetic Eloquence*, previous reference, pp. 202–205 and 210–213. Munir Sultan, *Al-Fasilah al-Qur'aniyyah: Dirasa Balaghiyya*, Munsha'at al-Ma'arif, Alexandria, Egypt, 1st edition, 1978 CE, pp. 82–87 and 115–120. Fadl Hasan Abbas, *A Study of the Inimitability and Eloquence of the Qur'an*, Dar al-Furqan, Amman, Jordan, 4th edition, 2004, pp. 250–254. Abd al-Fattah Lashin, 'Secrets of Expression in the Quran': *The Quranic Fasilah*, Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, Cairo, 1st edition, 1999, pp. 42–46. Bint al-Shati', Aisha Abd al-Rahman, *The Rhetorical Inimitability of the Qur'an and the Questions of Ibn al-Azraq*, Dar al-Ma'arif, Cairo, 3rd edition, 1999, pp. 140–144.

⁵²- Muhammad al-Tahir ibn 'Ashur, *The Interpretation of Liberation and Enlightenment*, al-Dar al-Tunisiyya lil-Nashr, Tunis (1984 CE), vol. 27, pp. 171–172. In the introduction to *Surah al-Qamar*, he states that its pauses are built on the letter *ra*. In phonetics, *ra* has the quality of repetition, which suits the repetition of warning and admonition in the surah, as well as the repeated scenes of torment. Sayyid Qutb, *In the Shade of the Qur'an*, Dar al-Shuruq, Cairo, Egypt, 32nd edition (1423 AH – 2003 CE), vol. 6, pp. 3421–3422. He describes the surah's phonetic rhythm as having 'violent beats', which are successive and terrifying, and which match the scenes of destructive torment mentioned in it. Mustafa Sadiq al-Rafi'i discusses the Qur'an's phonetic inimitability and how the sounds of the 'striking' surahs (like *Surah al-Qamar* and *al-Haqqa*) descend on the ear like hammers due to the intensity of their ring and the explosion of their segments. Al-Rafi'i discusses the Qur'an's phonetic inimitability and how the sounds of the 'striking' surahs (such as *Surah al-Qamar* and *al-Haqqa*) hit the ear with the force of hammers due to the intensity of their sound and the explosive nature of their segments.

⁵³- Al-Zarkashi, *The Proof in the Sciences of the Qur'an*, previously cited, pp. 69–73. Al-Suyuti, *The Perfect Guide to the Sciences of the Qur'an*, previous reference, pp. 315–320. Fadl Hasan Abbas, *The Inimitability of the Qur'an: Dirasa fi I'jaz al-Qur'an wa Bayanihi*, 4th edition, Dar al-Furqan, Amman, Jordan, 2004, pp. 262–264. Muhammad Muhammad Abu Musa, 'Characteristics of Syntactic Structures': *Dirasa tahiliyyah li-masa'il 'ilm al-ma'ani*, Maktabat Wahbah, Cairo, 7th edition, 2006, pp. 318–322.

The rhyming endings in the sūrah are open (i.e. they end with an open extension, akin to the 'release' of the vowel). Therefore, the words 'occur in their place. But why were 'مَغْفِرَةً' and 'عَظِيمًا' ?the descriptions of reward and forgiveness delayed so that they became the extended rhyme

Purposive implication (maqṣadī signification): The rhyme was constructed using the intensifying pattern and the adjectival resemblance form ('rather than leaving it tied to the context of the 'عَظِيمًا' bare verbal form. This was done to achieve the aforementioned extended sonic effect, as well as to realise the legislative and doctrinal intention that whoever completes all the attributes mentioned in the verse (Muslims, Muslim women, believers, and believing women) will not merely receive a passing reward from God, but an immense reward that never ends. Thus, the morphological pattern (fa'īl) was used to indicate permanence and continuity, while the extended rhyme ('aẓīmā) was⁵⁴ selected to confirm this continuity aurally and perceptually.

Summary of the point: The structure of Qur'anic rhymes shows that the Noble Qur'an is not governed by the necessities of rhyme as human poetry is. Rather, 'sound serves meaning and morphology serves purpose'. Therefore, every sound or morphological alteration — whether by omission, addition, precedence or the selection of a specific letter — is a strategic tool for achieving a rhetorical, legislative or psychological aim. This constitutes the highest degree of Qur'anic rhetorical and purposive inimitability.

Second requirement: The rhyme (fasilah) in verses of legal rulings and its connection to the Beautiful Names of God.

The rhetorical, purposive miraculousness of the fasilah is at its most evident when verses dealing with legal rulings conclude with the Beautiful Names of God. The selection of these noble names at the end of the verse represents the 'legal rationale' for the aforementioned ruling.

Model One: The Verse of Theft — The Purport of Justice and Might

The Almighty says: "...وَالسَّارِقِ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمَا]" (Al-Ma'idah: 38).

Applying an 'alternate-substitution test' to perceive the miraculousness and assuming that the fasilah ended with something like 'and God is Forgiving, Merciful' would disrupt the verse's fundamental doctrinal and purposive meaning entirely.

This is a context of deterrence, discipline and severing a limb as punishment (a severe retribution, i.e. *nakal*). Such a context requires the display of power and dominance, and the proper ordering of matters (hakim).

It is also reported that al-Asma'i used to recite this verse in the presence of an Arab Bedouin. Al-Aṣma'ī incorrectly ended the verse, saying: 'And God is Forgiving, Merciful.' The Bedouin then said: 'Is this the kind of speech this is?' Al-Asma'i replied: 'It is the speech of God.' The Bedouin said: 'No — this is not the speech of God!'

⁵⁴ Fadh al-Samarra'i, *Meanings of Morphological Structures in Arabic*, Dar Ammar, Amman, Jordan, 2nd edition, 1428 AH – 2007 CE, pp. 118–120. Al-Samarra'i establishes the basis for transitioning from the verb to the simile adjective or intensive form in the Qur'an, indicating that the quality or wage has transformed from a transient event into a permanent, enduring and stable one. Muhammad al-Tahir Ibn 'Ashur, *The Interpretation of Liberation and Enlightenment*, previous reference, vol. 22, pp. 15–17. When interpreting verse 35 of Surah al-Ahzab, Ibn 'Ashur reveals the rhetorical secret of concluding the verse after listing the ten qualities of believers. He also explains how the word 'great' crowns this journey with an unbounded reward, in line with the pauses at the end of the surah. Munir Sultan, *The Phonetic Inimitability of the Holy Quran*, Munsha'at al-Ma'arif, Alexandria, Egypt (1997), pp. 93–95. The author explains the phonetic harmony in Surah al-Ahzab and how the 'alif of release' in the surah's pauses suggests temporal and psychological extension, matching the extension of 'the great reward'. Muhammad Muhammad Abu Musa, *Significations of Syntactic Structures: Dirasa Balaghiyya*, Maktabat Wahbah, Cairo, Egypt, 2nd edition (1408 AH – 1988 CE), pp. 245–247.

When Al-Asma'i reviewed and corrected his recitation, he read: '... 'aziz ... Hakim ...' (the intended ending of the verse), the Bedouin said: "You were right: 'Mighty' ('aziz)—so it commands, and therefore it cuts; if it were 'forgiving' and 'merciful', it would not cut."⁵⁵

Whether or not this report's chain is sound, it confirms the innate nature of the 'rhetorical legal rationale': the Bedouin discerned the intuition that rejects combining a harsh punishment of severing with a direct attribute of forgiveness at the conclusion of the same deterrent context.

Second model: The Verse of Retaliation and the Purpose of Preserving Life

The Almighty says, "...وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَاةٌ..." [Al-Baqarah: 179].

The fasilah — "connects an intense legal command (retaliation, i.e. exacting retribution through ending a life in truth and justice) to a higher, purposive objective: taqwa and the preservation of life

- Phonetic-morphological analysis: The word 'It contains strong' تَنْقُوتُونَ follows the pattern 'emphasis from theta with stress' (mushaddada) and the 'voiced qaf' (qaf majhura), which harmonises with the severity of the retaliation ruling.

- Purposive legal-rhetorical analysis: It was concluded with ' or 'تعقلون' rather than with ' , تَنْقُوتُونَ' perhaps you will) "أَعَلَّكُمْ تَنْقُوتُونَ" :even though the opening of the verse calls for intellect , 'تتفكرون' .guard yourselves), signalling the role of reason

The researcher explains that pure, abstract intellect might view retaliation as killing and destroying lives, as the Arabs allegedly did in the pre-Islamic period. Killing prevents killing. However, taqwa i.e. an inner religious restraint — restrains the intellect so that it recognises that killing the killer acts as a deterrent to killing and sustains life (i.e. preserving the self). Thus, the fasilah transforms the material legal ruling into a heart-based commitment that achieves the objectives of the Sharia⁵⁶.

Third Model: Compatibility between imperative (requestive) verbs and fasilahs (indicating the verb of command).

Researchers have paid attention to linking grammatical structures with the fasilah. One of the most notable aspects of this is the conformity of imperative verbs with the endings of verses.

In Surat al-Mujadila, the question arises:

Why was the verse concluded with a fasilah such as }... و... { and not alternatives such as (ترجعون) ("you will return") or (تعملون خبير) ("you act, being fully aware/knowing")?

If we return to the linguistic dictionary, we find that 'originates from concealment and النجوى' " meaning) "اتقوا" hiding. The verbavoid/guard yourselves"; an imperative) is a command that requires strong internal restraint so that it can be carried out in secret.

Accordingly, the fasilah came as: {...} namely "gathering" (الحشر)—which means gathering, making visible/declaring, resurrection, and driving forth—in order to create a profound semantic counterpoint (a hidden antithesis) between:

- " and 'النجوى' the secret and hiding'; and

- 'and publicity, and the exposure/undoing of secrets in the presence of people/among الحشر' .onlookers

⁵⁵- Al-Fakhr al-Razi, The Keys of the Unseen, Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, Beirut, 3rd edition, 1420 AH, vol. 11, p. 348. See also: Al-Muhayjiri, Sa'd, 'The Imperative Verb and Harmony with the Qur'anic Pause', Majallat al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah wa Adabiha, 2023 CE, p. 93.

⁵⁶- Khader, Al-Sayed, Quranic Verse Breaks, previous reference, p. 35.

This rhetorical selection serves the legal-prescriptive cause of severe deterrence against plotting in private because what you conceal will be gathered and revealed. Thus, the *fāsilah* functions as a creedal framework that ensures compliance with the command⁵⁷.

Model Four: The Pause of Reflection and the Station of Invocation of Reason — Activation of the Mind

The Qur'an often ends its verses with a rhyming pause (a specific 'end phrase'), such as: چ س چ . I have studied this particular pause in depth. From this comes the saying of Allah, Exalted is He: [Al-Baqarah: 266].

This verse follows verses about spending in charity, as well as reminding (or 'doing a favour') and harm, and showing off (*riyā'*). The verse provides an example of a man who built a garden, but it burned due to old age and ruin. Why, then, does it conclude with: Why not conclude with (لعلكم تعلمون) 'so that you may use reason', or (لعلكم تبصرون) 'so that you may perceive'?

The juristic-rhetorical cause here is this: the context deals with subtle matters, namely *riyā'* and reminding others of one's favours, which nullify charity. *Ri'a* is a hidden disease of the heart; it is neither perceived by the senses nor grasped by mere superficial reasoning. Instead, it requires prolonged reflection and deep self-examination and consideration of the consequences. What if my good deeds were to be consumed by fire while I am in dire need of them on the Day of Judgement, just as an elderly, weak man needs his garden?

The verb (يتفكرون) comes in the imperfect tense (present), indicating renewal and continuation, and the morphological form (التفعل) conveys self-conscious striving, exertion and affectation. Together, these features require the person giving charity to make continuous psychological and intellectual efforts to purify their intentions of the impurities of ostentation and harm.

Therefore, the pause here is not just for the sake of rhyming. Rather, it functions as a kind of therapeutic prescription for applying the Shari'a ruling: Sincerity in charity⁵⁸.

Model Five: Exaggeration/'Overreach' in the *fasilah*

One rhetorical art connected with the pause is 'overreach': concluding with a word that conveys additional meaning. If this word were omitted, the meaning would still be conveyed, but with it, the meaning reaches its utmost peak. For example: [Hud: 51].

The *fasilah*: The pause *Hud: 51] appears after the full meaning is conveyed, when the reward is entrusted to God. However, this overreach has a juristic-prophetic cause: it is intended to remove the accusation of greed from the Prophet and awaken the minds of uncomprehending unbelievers.

The form of the rhetorical negative interrogative stirs the emotions and unsettles customary assumptions⁵⁹.

Section Four: Refuting the Doubts Concerning the Pausal End-Phrase and Affirming Miraculous Inimitability

Based on what has been presented, the researcher comprehensively addresses the Orientalist claims (e.g. those by Theodor Nöldeke in *The History of the Qur'an* and Richard Bell). These scholars argued that the Noble Qur'an, particularly in the short Meccan surahs, compromised grammatical or semantic precision to maintain the *saj'* and *qafiyah* systems (the pausal end-phrase, *fasilah*).

⁵⁷- Sa'ad bin Fayiz al-Muhayjiri, 'The Imperative Verb and Harmony with the Qur'anic Pause', *Majallat al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah wa Adabiha (JALSL)*, Vol. 2, No. 5, 2023 CE, p. 97. (Adapted and expanded by the researcher).

⁵⁸- Tawfiq, Shima'a Abd al-Rahim, 'On the Rhetoric of the Qur'anic Pause: The Pause of Reflection as a Model', previous reference, pp. 551–552.

⁵⁹- Al-Askari, Abu Hilal. *The Book of the Two Arts*. Edited by Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim and Ali al-Bajawi. Al-Maktabah al-'Asriyyah. Sidon, Lebanon. 1986 CE. p. 263. And see: Khudr, al-Sayyid, *Fawasil al-Ayat al-Qur'aniyyah*, previous reference, p. 46.

The critical rebuttal to this claim establishes an independent theory in itself, as will become clear.

Firstly, breaking the rhythmic pattern for the sake of meaning: if the Qur'an were bound to rhythm as a necessary constraint, it would have adhered to it in every surah. Yet we find that the Qur'an breaks the rhythm abruptly whenever the doctrinal purpose requires it.

In Surat al-Masad, which ends with the emphatic clashing letter ba (with iqlaq, i.e. glottal/strong recoil articulation in its phonetic character).

It concludes with dal—which is iqlaq-adjacent and stronger in a disruptive rhythmic sense—instead of ba. The verbal and semantic rationale here is that al-masad refers to coarse fibre that is tightly bound, and the letter dāl is more rhythmically forceful and explosive than ba, in order to depict the intensity of being choked in the Fire. Thus, the meaning adapted the rhythm; it did not submit to it⁶⁰.

Second: Phonetic alternation

Changes in end phrases, such as the transition from waw and nun to ya and nun, or the transformation of a surah from short, rapid segments (e.g. al-Qiyamah or al-Adiyat) to long, elaborate segments (e.g. al-Baqarah and al-Nisa'), are attributable to variation in the discourse setting.

The depiction of warning, rebuke, and the Hereafter requires striking the ears with short, dense end phrases (imitating the speed of events and the rapidness of breath). By contrast, the setting of legislation and building society in the Medinan period requires calm extension, appended with the most beautiful names of God—so that taqwa is established in people's hearts⁶¹.

Third: fronting and postposing for the purposes of restriction and contextual coherence

Orientalists have claimed that the Qur'an may reverse the order of a sentence (by presenting the object before the subject or delaying the prepositional phrase) merely to regulate the rhythm of the pausal end phrase.

However, every instance of fronting or postposing at the end of a verse serves an authentic rhetorical purpose, such as restriction/limitation, exclusive focus, or emphasis on what is important. One of the most famous examples, raised by Nöldeke, is the difference in ordering within the story of Pharaoh's magicians. He pointed to the end-phrase in Surat al-A'raf: (al-A'raf: 122), whereas in Surat Taha, Harun is presented earlier: (Taha: 70).

He claimed that this was done so that Surat taha would harmonise with the alif al-maqsura

However, the Fronting in Surat taha was not merely rhythmic. Rather, it was required by the context of the surah itself. Surat taha mentions harun before this point in several verses, emphasising Moses' request for his assistance: 'associate him with me in my task' (وَأَشْرِكُهُ فِي أَمْرِي). Therefore, presenting his name here was rhetorically appropriate, matching the surah's focus on his role.

By contrast, Surat al-A'raf focused on Moses and his confrontations, which is why he was presented here⁶².

Fourth: Double Morphological Deviation (Phonetic Harmony and Deepening Meaning)

⁶⁰- Zaydan, Muhammad. 'Qur'anic Pauses: A Renewed Reading', previous reference, p. 79.

⁶¹- Burhalah, Fatimah. 'The Qur'anic Pause: Concept and Function', Muqalid Magazine, Qasdi Merbah University, Algeria, no. 3, p. 16. Also see: Abd al-Qahar al-Ani, Studies in the Sciences of the Qur'an, Matba'at al-Ma'arif, 1972 CE, p. 122.

⁶²- Fadl Hasan Abbas, The Inimitability of the Holy Quran: A Study on the Inimitability and Eloquence of the Quran, Dar al-Furqan, Amman, 4th edition, 2004, pp. 260–261.

This is one of the most powerful responses to Orientalists' claims that the Qur'an may alter the structure of words, for example by shifting from an active participle to an intensive form, in order to fit the rhyme at the expense of grammatical precision.

In reality, morphological deviation in the Qur'an serves two purposes: it sets the rhythm and brings about a deliberate intensification that cannot be sacrificed.

An example is His saying, Exalted is He: (Fussilat: 46).

Why did the Qur'an shift from using (بِظَالِمٍ) ('with a wrongdoer') to the intensive form (بِظَلَّامٍ) ('with an extreme wrongdoer') to correspond with the mīm and the kasrah nun in the surah's end-phrases?

The secret is that the negated intensification negates the abundance of (ظلم) ('overwhelming/continuous wrong') and also negates the very root of (ظلم) ('any wrong at all'). If this is distributed across many slaves over time, saying (بِظَالِمٍ) would negate wrongs committed by a single servant, whereas (بِظَلَّامٍ) in reference to all the servants negates wrongs committed by even the weight of a single atom by billions of human beings across the ages.

Thus, the final phrase was the most precise expression of divine absolute justice: rather than sacrificing meaning, it intensified it⁶³.

Fifth: lexical precision in selection (the unique word in its closing position).

Orientalists assume that the Qur'an chooses a particular word solely because of its musical quality, ignoring the possibility of more precise semantic objectives.

The rebuttal is the theory of 'lexical selection': the selected word is the only one capable of conveying the exact psychological and legislative meaning, while its musical harmony is an additional miraculous aspect, not the sole cause.

An example is: (At-Takwir: 17–18).

Why was 'عَسْعَسَ' (which matches the letter 'س') used here instead of 'أَدْبَرَ' ("departed/backed away") or 'أَقْبَلَ' ("approached/entered")?

The answer: In Arabic, 'عَسْعَسَ' is a word that carries antonyms (it functions as a word with opposite meanings). It can mean "he advanced with his darkness" and "he turned away and withdrew".

In this cosmic scene, night passes through a transitional stage in which its withdrawal becomes intermingled with the dawn concealed within it coming forth. This double cosmic motion cannot be conveyed by any other word except عَسْعَسَ

Meaning strongly demanded this word, and the rhythm of the s reinforces the connotations of hush, whispering and subtle breath, which are consistent with the arrival of dawn⁶⁴.

Sixth: Completely discarding rhyme and prose in order to establish firm, concrete facts.

If the Qur'an were a text based on rhyming prose, as Richard Bell claimed, it would be consistent in its rhyming throughout. Yet the Qur'an abandons a similar matching end-phrase entirely and uses musically varied end-phrases within the same surah whenever the context requires the establishment of a 'strict, uncompromising legislative and rational fact' that does not tolerate emotional musical colouring.

In the inheritance verses in Surat al-Nisa': [Surat an-Nisa': 11–13], we observe that the end-phrases vary according to the legislative meaning, using letters that cannot be gathered into a single, continuous musical pattern. This alerts the human intellect to the fact that this 'law, a firm and perfected ordinance' must be attended to in its precise, detailed order, and not treated as mere poetic

⁶³- Al-Zarkashi, The Proof in the Sciences of the Qur'an, edited by Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim, Dar Ihya' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyyah, Cairo, 1st edition, 1957 CE, vol. 1, pp. 70–71.

⁶⁴- Mustafa Sadiq al-Rafi'i, The Inimitability of the Qur'an and Prophetic Eloquence, Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi, Beirut, 8th edition, 2005, p. 204.

segments to be enjoyed for their sound. Here, rhythm takes a back seat so that legislation takes the lead⁶⁵.

Through the following dimensions — breaking rhythm for purpose, the discourse setting, contextual ordering (fronting and postposing), morphological shifts used for emphasis, lexical selection, and prioritising rational legislation — the theory of rebuttal is formed, and Orientalist doubt is transformed into an argument that confirms the inimitable arrangement of Qur’anic composition.

According to this integrated rationale, the researcher proposes his theory, stating:

‘The Qur’anic end-phrase is governed by the law of total balance. In it, the aspect of verbal rhythm does not overpower meaning and legislation (as happens in forced rhyming prose), and its vocal aesthetic beauty does not disappear to the extent that it becomes merely a dry legal text. Rather, it is a text that enacts rulings and addresses minds, enveloped in a vocal rhythm that penetrates the heart.’

Conclusion

After this inductive analysis of the Qur’an and the purpose of its end phrases, the researcher presents a set of findings and recommendations that define the precise contours of the topic of the Qur’anic end phrase.

First: Results

1. Qur’anic *fasilah* (concluding clause/end rhyme): It represents the pinnacle of rhetorical and legislative inimitability. It differs fundamentally from the *saj’* of soothsayers and pre-Islamic Arabic poetry because it is an organic structure in which letters and words interlock to serve the meaning and comprehensive intent of the verse.
2. Limitations of Orientalist and Certain Modern Approaches: The study demonstrated the shortcomings of Orientalist perspectives and some modern approaches that treat the Qur’an as literary heritage and evaluate its *fawāsil* (end clauses) according to an abstract metric of *saj’*. Such approaches disregard the ‘legally grounded rhetorical cause’, which explains why the *fasilah* may sometimes depart from the purely rhythmic pattern in favour of more precise articulation of rulings at the level of *usul* (jurisprudential methodology) and doctrine .
3. Concluding legal verses with the Divine Names: The sealing of The Legal Rulings verses — especially with the Beautiful Names of God — is not merely a vocal or sonic addendum. Rather, it serves as guidance for the intended purpose. The Beautiful Names operate as an underlying rationale , (specifically a final/teleological rationale) for the specific *shari’a* ruling stated in the verse, such as the verse on theft concluded with ‘‘Azuz hakim’ and the verse on repentance concluded with ‘Ghafur Rahim’.
4. Implications of the ‘Possible Substitute Test’: Applying the ‘Possible Substitute Test’ (the hypothetical substitution of the *fasilah*) shows that the verbal structure of the *fasilah*—both morphologically and phonetically—imposes constraints that prevent any other lexical item in Arabic from taking its place without producing a defect in the intended meaning or disrupting the rhythmic balance.
5. Variation of *fasil* as evidence of precision: The diversity of *fawasil* (e.g. ‘so that you may understand’, ‘so that you may reflect’, ‘so that you may perceive’) indicates the Qur’an’s exactness

⁶⁵- Munir Sultan, 'The Quranic Fasilah: A Rhetorical Study, Munsha'at al-Ma'arif, Alexandria, 1st edition, 1978 CE, pp. 118–119.

in addressing human levels of comprehension according to context and situation. This refutes the accusation that the Qur'anic text involves senseless, purposeless repetition.

Second: recommendations

The researcher recommends the following:

1. Coordinate the efforts of rhetoric and language scholars with Usul al-Fiqh scholars to produce an 'Encyclopedia of Qur'anic Pauses in Verses of Legal Rulings', focusing on linking linguistic inimitability to the derivation of Shari'a rulings.
2. Guide postgraduate students in the departments of Qur'anic exegesis and language to adopt an integrated analytical approach (phonetics, morphology, pragmatics and higher objectives) to move beyond traditional descriptive studies.
3. Translate in-depth studies of the *fasilah* (the meaningful pause in Qur'anic recitation and structure) into modern languages to provide a systematic academic response to Orientalist suspicions about the order and coherence of the Qur'an.

And our final invocation is that all praise is due to God, Lord of all worlds. May peace and blessings be upon our master Muḥammad, and upon his family and companions, all together.

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