

الدلالة الصوتية في الحديث النبوي الشريف-حديث بيت المقدس نموذجًا-

The phonetic significance in the Prophet’s hadith- hadith of Bayte al-
Maqdis a model

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Abstract	الملخص	
During this chapter , we intend to study the phonetic significance in the noble Prophet’s hadith , which conveyed to us the sayings , actions , and reports of the Messenger , may God bless him and grant him peace .We have devoted ourselves to tracking the noble hadiths related to the Holy House for the purpose of introducing these hadiths and their authenticity , explaining the importance of the Holy House to Muslims , and clarifying how the phonetic significance plays a role . A role in clarifying the meaning of the hadith, and therefore the problem from which we started is : How did the phonetic significance clarifying the meaning of the hadith in Bayt al-Maqdis ?	نروم من خلال هذه المقالة لدراسة الدلالة الصوتية في الحديث النبوي الشريف، الذي نقل إلينا أقوال وأفعال وتقريرات الرسول صل الله عليه وسلم، وقد خصصنا تتبع الحديث الشريف المتعلق ببيت المقدس لهدف التعريف بهذه الأحاديث وصحتها، وبيان أهمية بيت المقدس عند المسلمين، وتوضيح كيف أن المعنى الصوتي يلعب دورا في بيان معنى الحديث النبوي الشريف، وعلية فالاشكالية التي انطلقنا منها هي : كيف / ساهمت الدلالة الصوتية في توضيح وبيان معنى الحديث المدروس؟	
Keywords: The phonetic significance ; the noble Prophet’s hadith ; Bayt al-Maqdis ; the meaning.	كلمات مفتاحية: الدلالة الصوتية؛ الحديث النبوي؛ بيت المقدس؛ المعنى.	

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1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of phonetic meaning has been extensively explored by both classical and modern scholars under various terms such as "phonetic signification," "sonic effect," or "phonetic meaning." Among the classical scholars, Ibn Jinni is notable for his emphasis on the significance of phonetic signification in his book **Al-Khasa'is**, where he assigns it paramount importance among other forms of signification. However, it was the Arab scholars, particularly Al-Khalil ibn Ahmad **Al-Farahidi**, who pioneered this field, as acknowledged by many Western scholars. Al-Khalil is credited with the first reference to phonetic signification, which Ibn Jinni mentions in his **Al-Khasa'is** under the chapter "The Sensation of Words Similar to Meanings." Ibn Jinni quotes Al-Khalil as saying, "It seems they imagined length and extension in the sound of the cricket, so they said **sirr**, and they imagined cutting in the sound of the falcon, so they said **sirrsirr**."¹

This illustrates that despite their primitive surroundings, the Arabs were aware of the relationship between sound and meaning in their environment.

Similarly, **Sibawayh** addressed this topic in his book by incorporating it into the science of morphology. He discussed forms like **fa'alaan**, which he associated with disturbance and movement, such as **naqaraan** (ringing), **ghaliyaan** (boiling), and **ghathiyaan** (nausea), noting that these forms correspond to the sequence of movements in actions.

Ibn Jinni also dedicated a chapter titled "**The Conjunction of Words with the Conjunction of Meanings**," where he provides examples of phonetic signification, including the Quranic verse "Have you not seen that We have sent the devils upon the disbelievers, inciting them with incitement?" (Surah Maryam, 83). He elucidates that the employment of the hamza (ء) in **azza** (to disturb) is more akin to **hazza** (to shake), as the hamza possesses greater intensity than the ha', resulting in a more profound psychological implication ².

Among modern scholars, **Ahmad Faris Al-Shidyaq** posited a relationship between sound and meaning, discussing how letters symbolize certain meanings. For instance, he noted that the letter **ha'** signifies spaciousness and expansion, as seen in words like **baraah** (open spaces), **abdaah** (wide areas), and **abtaah** (vast plains). The letter **meem**, he contended, signifies cutting, severing, or breaking, as exemplified by **hasama** (to sever), **hatama** (to

demolish), *halqama* (to cut off), *kharama* (to destroy), and *khadama* (to serve) ³.

Jurji Zaydan followed a similar path, suggesting that the third letter in a word often directs the signification and indicates the meaning. He built this theory on a binary principle, where words sharing two letters with other words have those letters as the origin and bear the original meaning, while additional letters diversify the signification. He illustrates this with examples like *qatara* (to cut), *qutb* (axis), and *qatfa* (to pick), all of which convey the idea of cutting but with different nuances⁴.

- Another scholar, Al-'Alayli, was meticulous in his approach to phonetic signification, arguing that each letter has a meaning and stands alone in its isolated sound. He posits that the hamza indicates interiority, the ba' signifies complete attainment of meaning in something, the jeem represents greatness, the kha' denotes compliance and spread, the dhal signifies singularity, The ra' signifies sovereignty and a general description, the seen denotes extension and spaciousness ⁵, and the shine connotes dispersal.
- **Mustafa 'Aqqad** also recognized the significance of sound within context, noting that the signification of sound changes according to its position in a word. For example, he observed that the letter *ha'* conveys spaciousness when used in words like *samah* (forgiveness), *falah* (success), and *najah* (achievement), all of which relate to comfort and ease⁶.

In summary, phonetic signification has captured the attention of both classical and modern scholars, with some supporting its existence and others denying it. The essence of phonetic signification is its role in highlighting human capacity for expression by serving as a powerful tool for conveying meaning through sound.

2- Concept of the Hadith

2-1 Definition of Hadith

The term "Hadith" denotes any narration ascribed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), although it may also pertain to statements attributed to his companions or followers, albeit less frequently⁷.

The word "Hadith" itself means something new, as opposed to something old, and it is often used to describe news or reports that emerge gradually.

Ibn Hajar, in his commentary on Bukhari's book, asserts that a prophetic hadith refers to any speech or deed ascribed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

A hadith is a narration of the Prophet's words or actions.

2. A Phonological Study of the Hadith Regarding Jerusalem:

The studied hadith has been narrated in three forms as follows:

- The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is reported to have said: **"A group of my community will remain on the truth, visible and dominant over their enemies. They will not be harmed by those who oppose them except for the trials they face until God's command comes, and they will remain so. They asked, 'O Messenger of God, where are they?' He replied, 'In Jerusalem and its surroundings.'"**
- Another narration from the Prophet (peace be upon him) states: **"A band of my community will continue to fight at the gates of Damascus and its environs. They will not be harmed by the abandonment of those who abandon them, remaining visible on the truth until the end of time."**

The initial hadith in the reliable versions does not contain the line "in Jerusalem and its environs."

- Another version of the hadith from the Prophet states: **"A group of my community will remain visible on the truth, dominant over their enemies. They will not be harmed by those who oppose them except for the trials they face. They are like a vessel among eaters until God's command comes, and they will remain so. They asked, 'O Messenger of God, where are they?' He replied, 'In Jerusalem and its surroundings.'"**

We have three forms of this prophetic hadith in the books, differing in terms of additions and omissions in the vocabulary. We will choose the first form for study, which includes:

Abu Abd al-Rahman reported finding in a book written by his father: "Mahdi ibn Ja'far al-Ramli narrated to me, who was narrated to by Dhamra, from al-Saybani—whose name is Yahya ibn Abi Amr—from Amr ibn Abd Allah al-Hadrami, from Abu Umama al-Bahili, who reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he said: **'A group of my community will remain on the truth, visible and dominant over their enemies. They will not be harmed by those who oppose them except for the trials they face until God's command comes, and they will remain so. They asked, 'O Messenger of God, where are they?'**

He replied, 'In Jerusalem and its surroundings.'" (Musnad Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Sunni Hadith Sources, Jurisprudence Section, Vol. 2, p. 742).

2.2 Definition of the Narrator

The narrator is Abu Umama al-Bahili, a friend of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and an inhabitant of Homs. He narrated much knowledge and reported from Umar, Muadh, and Abu Ubaidah. He was narrated from by Khalid ibn Ma'dan and many others...

Khallaf said he was from Qays Aylan, then from Banu A'sur, Sudayy ibn Ajlan ibn Wahb ibn Arbab ibn Wahb ibn Rabah ibn al-Harith ibn Ma'n ibn Malik ibn A'sur."

Al-Madani and others stated that Abu Umama died in the year 86 AH, while Ismail ibn Ayyash said he died in the year 81 AH⁸.

3- 3 Explanation of the Hadith

The group referenced in the hadith has been subject to many interpretations by scholars. Some identify as the people of knowledge, others as the people of hadith, some as the adherents of Sunnah and community, while others consider themselves believers, encompassing valiant warriors, the impoverished, hadith narrators, ascetics, and those who promote virtue and prohibit vice—essentially, anyone who performs good deeds. The expression "those who abandon them" denotes those who forsake them, while "until God's command comes" signifies the Day of Judgment.

This hadith is highly significant, underscoring Jerusalem's importance in safeguarding Islam and defending it from adversaries seeking to seize it. The hadith venerates the group by linking them to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and implies that the reclamation of Jerusalem would alone be achieved by adherents of the Islamic religion. The mentioned hadith is authentic and widely narrated to the highest degree of authenticity, having been reported by Bukhari and Muslim, though without the mention of "Jerusalem and its surroundings." It is among the most famous and possibly mutawatir hadiths, as it was narrated by nearly twenty companions, may God be pleased with them, promising the continuation and presence of a group from this community on the truth until God's command comes, unaffected by those who oppose or abandon them. Reflecting on these hadiths, one finds that some specify this group as being in Jerusalem, others in Syria, and some do not specify, with no contradiction among them, as it is

possible to direct and specify the group as being in Syria and Jerusalem before the end of time.

- The Hadith contains seven verbs: (to be removed), (to harm them), (to oppose them), (to afflict them), (to come to them), (they said), and (he said).
- The Hadith includes numerous nouns, such as (group), (my community), (religion), (apparent), (dominant), (severity), (command of God), (messenger), (God), (house), (sacred), (surroundings), (what), and the demonstrative pronoun (thus).
- The prepositions and particles in the Hadith include (no) for negation, five prepositions (mentioned twice, also mentioned twice), the conjunction (and), the particle of exception (except), and the pronoun (them) mentioned twice⁹.

3.4 Explanation of Some Lexical Terms in the Hadith:

- **Sect** طائفة : Refers to a "group" or "sect." In the Quranic verse: *"If two groups of believers fight each other, reconcile between them"* (Quran 49:9). The term *tā'ifah* denotes a community of people united by a distinct doctrine or ideology that sets them apart¹⁰.
- **Right** الحق: One of the divine names of God, meaning "The Absolute Truth." It signifies that which is indisputably established and certain. It is used descriptively, as in "a truthful statement" (*qawlun ḥaqq*). Its plurals are *ḥuqūq* (rights) and *ḥaqā'iq* (truths/realities)¹¹.
- **Seems to** ظاهرين : Derived from the root *zahara* (to appear, emerge). It denotes clarity, prominence, or manifestation, as in something becoming evident or rising to prominence.
- **Hardship** لأواء : A term meaning "hardship" or "calamity," with the plural form *la'wāwāt*. It conveys the idea of severe trials or adversities¹².
- **Protection** أكناف : The plural of *kanf* (side, vicinity). It refers to the surrounding areas or aspects of something. For example, the phrase *"lā taknifuhu min Allāhi kanfatan"* describes a forsaken person who is not shielded or encompassed by God's protection from any direction¹³.

3- 5 Study of the Articulation and Characteristics of Dominant Sounds:

Total Sounds	Voiced Sounds	Voiceless Sounds
147	122	25

Table 2: Number of Voiced and Voiceless Sounds in the Hadith of Jerusalem

From Table 2, it is evident that voiced sounds outnumber voiceless sounds significantly. This can be attributed to the severity and injustice faced by the inhabitants of Jerusalem, as well as their strong resilience. This is reflected in the Prophet's statement, "Hardship," meaning severity or affliction. The preponderance of spoken noises signifies the apathy of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and its vicinity towards those who have forsaken them, as emphasized in the Hadith. The presence of voiceless sounds is due to their soft and calming nature, which encourages focus and contemplation. These sounds do not cause the vocal cords to vibrate or produce a ringing sound when spoken.

Letter	(Lām) L voiced	(Mīm) M voiced	(Hā') H
Frequency	16	13	11

Table 3: Frequency of Certain Letters

The predominant sound in the Hadith is the letter Lām (L), which appears sixteen times, followed by Mīm (M) thirteen times, and then Hā' (H) eleven times. Therefore, we will study the articulation and characteristics of each to uncover their phonetic significance.

3-5-1 Characteristics and Articulation of the Letter (Lām) L:

The letter (Lām) L is distinguished by its moderation, deviation, voicing, expansiveness, and openness.

It is neither too strong nor too weak but rather a middle state between perfect strength and weakness due to its articulation. The sound is initially blocked and then released, resulting in a slight retention of the sound before it flows slightly.

When sound is obstructed by the closure of the articulatory organs, it transitions from the anterior edges to the posterior edges (akin to the articulation of ض (Dād)), where it subsequently flows. This is the attribute of deviation. Observe that the posterior margins do not intersect with the superior section of the

pharynx, as is the case with ض (Dād), resulting in an open articulation that promotes the passage of sound.

The letter (Lām) L is also voiced because it relies heavily on the articulatory organs, causing the vocal cords to vibrate strongly. The air used for articulation adapts to produce the sound of (Lām) L.

(Lām) L is expansive in that the tongue does not rise to its highest point intentionally during articulation.

It is an open letter because most of the tongue is distant from the upper pharynx, so the sound is not compressed or confined between them.

The articulation point of the phoneme (Lām) L extends from the bottom borders of the tongue to its apex, in conjunction with the neighboring upper teeth from one canine to the other.

– **Articulation and Characteristics of the Letter Mīm (م) M:**

The letter Mīm (م) M is a bilabial consonant, articulated by "the complete closure of the lips against each other in a deliberate manner,¹⁴" followed by the release of air as the lips open. According to Ibrahim Anis, its articulation involves "The airflow across the larynx induces vibration of the voice cords. Upon reaching the mouth, the soft palate descends, obstructing the oral cavity." Its characteristics include being voiced and occupying an intermediate position between **strength** (*shiddah*) and **softness** (*rakhāwah*). This is because, during the articulation of Mīm, the lips fully close, and the minimal audible friction places it midway between strong and soft sounds. Soft sounds are typically characterized by the presence of audible friction accompanying the sound¹⁵.

Semantic Significance:

The fundamental significance of the letter Mīm originates from its pronunciation, particularly the closing of the lips, which expresses concepts of softness, flexibility, cohesiveness, and unification ¹⁶. In his work, *Characteristics of Arabic Letters and Their Meanings*, Hasan Abbas elucidates.

"The occlusion of the lips during the articulation of Mīm parallels natural occurrences of closure and obstruction. The strong yet intentional pushing of the lips before to sound production signifies the initiation of movements related to cutting, gathering, or joining with the lips. The separation of the lips during sound production signifies occurrences of expansion and extension. Thus, the characteristics of this letter's sound are distributed across tactile, visual, and

gestural associations, with a notable contrast between closure and openness in its suggestive qualities."

Referring to *Al-Mu'jam al-Wasīṭ* (The Intermediate Dictionary), which lists 253 roots beginning with the letter Mīm, we find the following semantic patterns: Softness, Flexibility, and Cohesion (46 roots): These meanings align with the sound of Mīm, as seen in examples such as: *Mā'id* (مائد): The soft part of something. *Majmāḥ* (مجماح): Something elevated or raised. *Amūkh al-'ajīn* (أموخ العجين): Dough that has become soft due to excess water. *Maran* (مرن): To become soft after being hard. *Ma'a al-sham* (مع الشمح): To melt or dissolve.

Gathering, Joining, and Acquiring (17 roots): These meanings correspond to the firm pressing of the lips, as in: *Mataḥ al-dalw* (متاح الدلو): To pull a bucket. *Mataṣ al-shay'* (متش الشيء): To gather something. *Masha'* (مشع): To earn or collect. *Ma'a* (مع): A preposition denoting accompaniment.

Suckling, Milking, and Extracting (33 roots): These meanings align with the motion of pressing the lips together, as in: *Radā'* (رضاع): Suckling. *Ḥalb* (حلب): Milking. *Maṣṣ* (مص): Sucking or extracting.

Expansion, Extension, and Opening (24 roots): These meanings correspond to the parting of the lips and jaws during the articulation of Mīm, as in: *Ma's al-jurḥ* (مأس الجرح): The widening of a wound. *Ma'ā al-siqā'* (مأى السقاء): The expansion of a water skin. *Marar al-ḥabl* (مر الحبل): The stretching of a rope.

When Mīm appears at the end of roots, it often conveys meanings related to softness, tenderness, heat, expansion, openness, closure, strength, coarseness, cutting, or breaking. This duality reflects the interplay between the letter's articulatory features and its semantic associations¹⁷.

– The Attribute and Pronunciation of the Letter (Hā') H

The letter (Hā') H derives from the throat. During pronunciation, the larynx stays in a flat position without the movement of the vocal cords; yet, the airflow generates a whisper that is perceptible at the back of the throat or within the larynx. The mouth adopts the same posture for articulating (Hā') H as it does for softer phonemes.¹⁸. Therefore, its pronunciation is from the back of the throat, characterized by whispering, softness, relaxation, openness, and silence.

3-6 The Phonetic Significance of Letters in the Studied Hadith:

The most prominent letter in this discourse is Lām L. This letter highlights the meaning of openness inherent in its nature, signifying the openness of this group to truth and their adherence to God's command. A characteristic of Lām L

is deviation; before its pronunciation, one encounters obstacles and difficulties, such as the enemies of Jerusalem or the righteous group, as mentioned in the Prophet's statement Peace be upon him, "And their enemies will be subjugated." Similarly, the phrase "except what afflicted them from hardship" indicates that there is no war without hardship and fatigue, which is reinforced by the letter (Hā') H, which evokes feelings of sorrow, despair, misery, psychological turmoil, and weakness. As Hasan Abbas states, "The sound of (Hā') H has deep vibrations in the throat, suggesting psychological disturbances. Therefore, it is likely that the Arabic speaker intuitively associated this sound with expressing a specific psychological disturbance, either experienced personally or observed in others. However, there are many types of psychological disturbances; Which option corresponds with the meanings of the sound of (Hā') H? An emotionally affected person entering a state of despair, misery, sorrow, or loss—perhaps due to an unexpected event—will inevitably experience a contraction of their being, reflected in their nervous system and, consequently, their body, including the chest and throat tissues. Thus, when an emotional breath charged with such psychological states emerges from the chest to the throat, where (Hā') H is pronounced, It must resonate with vibrations that indicate the speaker's psychological condition. The Arabs seemingly developed the phoneme (Hā') H from this tumultuous, resonant sound to articulate the psychological problems and emotions they encountered or observed."¹⁹

Then, the letter Lām L reiterates its role in instilling openness, reassurance, and serenity in their hearts. It does not carry a single meaning but multiple meanings, each in a specific context, as seen in the statement, "until God's command comes." This implies that God is aware of their actions and will reward each accordingly, thus instilling reassurance and serenity in their hearts.

The recurrence of the letter Mīm M significantly contributes to elucidating the meanings of the speech. The primary significance of Mīm M is cohesiveness and unity, which corresponds with the meaning of the discourse. Subjugating the adversary and confronting the adversities of battle is unattainable without unity and collaboration among allies. The versatility of Mīm M also signifies the commendable behavior and resilience of the inhabitants of Jerusalem in confronting diverse manifestations of colonialism, oppression, and injustice.

The gentleness of Mīm M signifies the Prophet's (Peace be upon him) position towards the inhabitants of Jerusalem or the virtuous community,

demonstrating compassion and encouraging them to exercise patience until the divine decree is revealed. The articulation of the lips while pronouncing Mīm denotes expansion and elongation, reflected in the discourse's meaning, which pertains to the extended duration of conflict with adversaries, as articulated by the Prophet's Peace be upon him declaration, "This will persist... until God's command arrives." This period is lengthy, and he did not indicate when divine instruction will arrive, so leaving the duration of the fight ambiguous.

Furthermore, the concepts of blockage and closure are articulated by delineating a particular region where the conflict endures, specifically Jerusalem and its vicinity. It also identifies a particular group from among the Prophet's Peace be upon him community, which is the group located in Jerusalem and its environs. There has been disagreement about who is meant by the group in the prophetic hadith. Some say they are scholars and jurists, others say they are the narrators of hadiths, and some say they are those who strive in the path of God. According to al-Bukhari, they are in Syria, while Ahmad reports they are in Jerusalem and its environs, which is part of the Syrian region. It has also been said that the last of them will be in Jerusalem. The most appropriate approach is to combine all these views, suggesting that this group could be scattered among various factions of the community, sometimes gathered in one place or dispersed across different countries, possibly in Syria and Jerusalem. The crucial point is the necessity of adhering to this group because they are divinely supported and suffering.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we assert that sound is the foundational element in linguistic construction, serving as its basis. A structure whose foundation is unstable cannot be robust, and in this context, the material in question is sound. The sounds, with their attributes, articulations, and meanings, have a profound connection to the signification and deep meaning of words. This concept was grasped by ancient linguists such as **al-Khalil** and **Sibawayh**, and it was more thoroughly explored by **Ibn Jinni**. Modern scholars like **al-Shidyaq**, **al-Alayili**, and **al-Aqqad** have supported their ideas.

Furthermore, the Al-Aqsa Mosque and Jerusalem hold a high status in the eyes of God and His Messenger, peace be upon him. As the Almighty states, "Exalted is He who took His servant by night from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, that We might show him

of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing" (Quran 17:1). If this verse were the only virtue of Jerusalem, it would be sufficient. Here are some of the conclusions we have reached:

1. Linguistic Sound Characteristics: Linguistic sounds have distinct attributes and articulations that differentiate them from other sounds. This is evident in how changes in the meanings of letters demonstrate that linguistic sounds contribute to the construction of meaning.
2. Phonetic Significance: The artistic role of phonetic signification is crucial in revealing diverse aspects of meaning.
3. Selective Use of Letters: The research emphasizes the remarkable selection of appropriate letters to convey intended messages. Strong letters are employed for significant events, while weaker letters are used for less significant ones.

Finally, we hope that our presentation has been accurate, and we ask God to make this effort beneficial and purely for His sake, Glory be to him.

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Footnotes

¹ See: Al-Khasa'is, Ibn Jinni, edited by Muhammad Ali al-Najjar, Vol. 3, Dar al-Turath al-Islami, Al-Maktaba al-Ilmiyah, p. 255.

² The same source, p. 260.

³ Al-Saq 'ala al-Saq, Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq, p. 15.

- ⁴ Linguistic Philosophy and Arabic Terms, Jurji Zaydan, translated by Murad Kamel, Dar al-Hilal, p. 230.
- ⁵ *ahdhib al-Muqaddima al-Lughawiya*, Ali al-Alayili, Dar al-Nu'man, Beirut, 1968, p. 115.
- ⁶ Linguistic Analysis in the Light of Semiotics, Mahmoud Akkasha, Dar al-Nashr lil-Jami'at, 2005, p. 87.
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- ⁹ Applications in Rhetorical Analysis of the Prophetic Sunnah, Khalid Fahmi Ibrahim, pp. 185-186.
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- ¹³ The same reference, p. 53.
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