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«مقاله پژوهشی»

واکاوی معنای واژه «شهر» در قرآن کریم

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چکیده

واژه «شهر» یکی از مهمترین واژه‌ها در نظام تقویمی قرآن است. واژه‌ها به عنوان عنصر اصلی کتاب قرآن جایگاه ویژه‌ای در آن دارند؛ لذا واکاوی معنای واژگان قرآنی از مهمترین روش‌های فهم و تفسیر صحیح آیات قرآن است. این مقاله با روش توصیفی-تحلیلی درصدد بررسی معنای واژه «شهر» در قرآن برآمده است؛ لذا پس از تبیین معنای لغوی و اصطلاحی، موارد کاربرد این واژه در قرآن عبارتند از: ظرف زمان برای انجام یا ترک کار خاص؛ ابزار اندازه‌گیری با هدف ارزش گذاری پدیده‌ای خاص؛ یکی از ارکان اصلی تقویم؛ بیان قانون تکوینی خداوند در تعداد ماه‌های سال. در موارد نام برده شده، برخی از مصادیق «شهر» در قرآن مشخص و به معنای ماه هلالی است و در مواردی که مصداق معینی ندارد، در ظاهر عرفی و لغوی به معنای ماه هلالی است که به جهت رعایت احتیاط و محاسبه آسان‌تر در عرف، به معنای ماه عددی (۳۰ روزه) نیز به کار رفته است. از آنجا که خداوند هدایت و رشد انسان‌ها را وابسته به زمان قرار داده است؛ در پایان برخی از آیات مورد بحث، از تقوا و لزوم توجه به حدود الهی مانند رعایت حدود برخی ماه‌ها و احکام آن، سخن گفته شده است.

واژه‌های کلیدی

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Study of the Meaning of the Word “Shahr” in the Holy Qur’an

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ABSTRACT

The word “Shahr” is an important word in the calendar system of the Qur'an. As the main element of the Qur'an, words have a special place within its text. Therefore, studying and analyzing the meaning of Qur'anic words is a necessary method of understanding and correct interpretation of verses. This article aims to investigate the meaning of the word shahr in the Qur'an based on a descriptive-analytical method; Explaining the literal and idiomatic meaning, the application of this word in the Qur'an are as follows: the time to do or leave a certain task, measurement tool for valuing a specific phenomenon, one of the main bases of the calendar, and expressing God's genesis law in the number of months of the year. Some of the examples of shahr in the Qur'an are specific, meaning the crescent moon. In the cases where there is no specific example, it means the crescent moon in the customary and literal sense, which in order to observe caution and make calculations easier in custom, it is also used to mean a numerical month (30 days). Since God has based the guidance and development of humans on time, at the end of some of the discussed verses, God speaks about the piety and the need to pay attention to Divine limits, such as observing the limits of certain months and their rules

KEYWORDS

Meaning, Shahr, Holy Qur'an, Month.

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1. Introduction

Muslim thinkers use sciences such as vocabulary, meanings, expression, interpretation, principles of jurisprudence, theology, Qur'anic sciences, etc. as the bases for understanding the Qur'an, so that they can provide a better understanding of the Qur'anic verses through such sciences. Meanwhile, the use of different methods and attitudes to the Qur'an can be possible. Since the Arabic language of the Qur'an is an advanced language, and considering the breadth of the Qur'an in expressing the content, as well as the multilevel and divine nature of its text, researchers need to use various methods and tools to understand the meaning of the verses, among which semantic analysis of Qur'anic words may be noted. As the main element of the Qur'an, words have a special place; Therefore, knowing the meaning of Qur'anic words is an important method of understanding and correct interpretation of the Qur'an.

One of the most important words in the calendar system of the Qur'an is the word "shahr", which scholars and commentators have explained its meaning based on their researches. Since this word is used as a "time unit" in some jurisprudential rulings such as Hajj, menstruation period, expiation, etc., some jurists have also briefly mentioned its meaning; Therefore, in explaining the meaning of this word, we can use lexical, interpretive, and jurisprudential sources. Through studying the basic verses of the Holy Qur'an, we find that God Almighty bases some social, jurisprudential, religious, worshiping, scientific, etc. teachings on the time unit of "moon" and invite the audience to think about these verses.

Therefore, considering the importance of examining the meaning of the word "shahr" in the field of chronology and as one of the main units in chronology, as well as in order to explain some ambiguities raised in the meaning

of this word and also to determine the usage of this word in the Holy Qur'an, this research considers the meaning of the word "shahr" through various evidences. Since some translate it only to the lunar month and base Islamic rules and chronology on the lunar month, to such an extent that the use of other types of chronology such as solar or numerical chronology in Islam is impermissible, it should be studied whether the word shahr, in addition to the meaning of the lunar month, can accept another meaning or not? Regarding the background of examining the meaning of the words of the Qur'an, it should be mentioned that several researches have been conducted in the last few years; However, with the focus on explaining the meaning of the word "shahr", there has not been a comprehensive and independent research on it.

2- The meaning of "shahr" in lexicons

The main meaning of the root "sh-h-r" is to reveal, emerge, and spread (Ibn Fāris, 1404 AH, 3: 222; Fayūmī, 1414 AH, 2: 325; Jawharī, 1402 AH, 2: 705). Different meanings have been said for the word shahr, which are often shared with each other in this root; These meanings are as follows:

- The crescent of the first month. This name is because it appears on the first of the month. When the Arab says, "I saw the shahr" it means "I saw the crescent moon" (Ibn Fāris, 1404 AH, 3: 222; Himyarī, 1420 AH, 6: 3561; Zamakhsharī, 1417 AH, 2: 223).

- The moon or the sphere of the moon. This name is because of its appearance and the appearance of the lunar month (Ibn Manzoor, 1414 AH, 4: 432; Zubaidī, 1414 AH, 7: 66).

- The period known as the crescent moon, between the crescent moons or the lunar month, the beginning and end of which is marked by the sighting of the crescent moon. Since the

sighting of the crescent moon reveals the entrance to the new moon, it is called a shahr. The lunar month is sometimes 29 and sometimes 30 days (Rāghib Isfahānī, 1412 AH: 468; Ibn Manzoor, 1404 AH, 4: 432; Turayhī, 1416 AH, 3: 356; Qurashī, 1412 AH, 4: 86).

- The duration of thirty days that the word "shahr" means thirty days if it is not a crescent (Ibn Fāris, 1404 AH, 3: 222; Turayhī, 1416 AH, 3: 35).

- The solar month or the same period that appears from one point to the same point as part of the 12 components of the year and the solar cycle (Rāghib Isfahānī, 1412 AH: 468).

Some have also considered the word "al-shahr" as not originally Arab (Ibn Fāris, 1404 AH, 3: 222). Since "shahr" was thirty days in other nations, its entry into the Arabic language for the meaning of "between the moons" was due to the fact that "between the moons" was sometimes thirty days long (although sometimes it was 29 days); Therefore, the term used for thirty days is used in "Bain Al-Hilālain", which is sometimes thirty days.

Perhaps it can be said that the word "shahr" was used for the crescent moon and then for the moon planet; But in order to reveal the months by means of the crescent or the moon, this word was used for the same crescent months and then for the number of the month, i.e. a period of thirty days. Then, in order to use the solar months in addition to the lunar months, the word "shahr" is also used for the solar months.

3- The idiomatic meaning of the word "shahr"

In astronomy, "shahr" refers to a period based on the movement of the moon. In general, the month is divided into two types: Mahy (lunar) month and the solar (shamsī) month (Nezamabadi, 2007: 73).

3-1- Mahy (lunar) month: the duration of one month is equal to the period of the moon's orbit around the earth relative to the point or direction of the sign. In other words, the time interval between two successive passes of the moon in front of the point or in the direction of the sign. Due to the use of different sign points or lines, different types of months with different durations are obtained (Malekpour, 2009: 165), which are as follows:

1) Natural Mahy month: which is the time interval between two observations of the moon relative to a reference point or direction, which has these types: astronomical moon, equinoctial moon, nodal moon, meridian moon, and crescent moon. Among these, due to the importance and direct connection of the crescent moon to the discussion, we specifically express its idiomatic meaning:

- Crescent moon: In determining the crescent moon, the sun or the earth-sun line is used as a point or sign line. Therefore, the duration of the lunar month is equal to the time interval between two similar and successive relative positions of the moon, earth, and the sun. Because every relative position of the moon, earth, and sun corresponds to a moon; Therefore, the crescent moon is equal to the time interval between two phases of the moon, and as a result, the period of full appearance of the phases of the moon. Therefore, this month is called the crescent moon. In addition, it is also called the lunar month. The duration of the lunar month is variable and in the past 5000 years, it has been irregularly from 29/2679 to 29/8376 day and night (Ibid: 166). Observing the moon in a large number of successive lunar months has made it possible to accurately determine the average length of a lunar month. The average length obtained for a lunar month is 29/53059 common days or 29 days and 12 hours and 44 minutes and 2.78 seconds. This

length of time has been used in many calendars (Ali Ehyaei, 1988: 317).

2) Calendar month of Mahy: The months defined above are not used in daily life due to the subtraction of day and night. In order for the length of the lunar months to be integers and to have a correspondence between the months, an old solution was to make the customary lunar month between 29 and 30 days, instead of 29.5306 days. In this way, the average length of the lunar month was 29.5 days (ibid: 320).

It should be noted that the Legal lunar month is called a month, according to which the beginning of the lunar month in any place is from the moment of sunset on the day when the crescent moon is seen in that place and in the evening of the mentioned day, the first time after equinox, the Islamic new moon crescent can be seen with the eyes many times. Therefore, the duration of a religious lunar month is equal to the time interval between the beginning of two successive lunar months and it can be 29 or 30 days and nights (Malekpour, 2009: 167). Therefore, it is possible to have several months of 29 or 30 days and nights in a row.

The names of the lunar months are as follows: Muharram, Safar, Rabi al-'Awwal, Rabi al-Thānī, Jamādī al-'Awwal, Jamādī al-Thānī, Rajab, Sha'bān, Ramadān, Shawwāl, Dhul-Qa'dah, and Dhul-Hijjah.

3-2- Solar month: Solar or Shamsi month refers to each of the 12 parts of the year and is based on the apparent and annual movement of the sun. It contains of two types:

1) The natural solar month, in which the position of the sun in the sky and the time required to travel a certain distance are usually considered. The most common one is the duration of the sun in its apparent movement, on the circle of the zodiac, from the twelve constellations of Aries and Taurus to Aquarius

and Pisces, each of which is approximately 30 degrees.

2) Calendar solar month, which is chosen by convention without directly paying attention to the position of the sun in the sky. The most common of them is dividing a solar year (365 or 366 days) into twelve months with different lengths or equal lengths of 30 days. The length of calendar months varies from 28 to 31 days (Nezamabadi, 2008: 73).

4- The application of "shahr" in the Qur'an

The word "shahr" appears 21 times in the Qur'an in different forms. Of these, 12 times have been used in the singular form, 2 times in the plural form (Shahrain), 6 times in the plural form (ashhur), and once in the kathra plural form (Shuhūr). In addition to the mentioned usages that explicitly refer to the word shahr and its derivatives, in 7 cases there are also pronouns in the Qur'an whose reference is the word shahr and its derivatives. In one case, the word shahr is apparently deleted as a *tamyīz* (distinction by analogy) (*minhā arba' zahū hurum*). Among them, 4 refer to the forbidden months, 2 refer to the holy month of Ramadan, one refers to the Hajj months, and one refers to the absolute number of months (*al-shuhūr*).

Accordingly, it can be seen that the word "shahr" is used in different forms: 21 times as an apparent noun and 8 times as an explicit or omitted pronoun, which are 29 times. Perhaps this number can be considered as one of the numerical miracles of the Qur'an, which sometimes corresponds to the number of days in a lunar month.

5- Explanation of the meaning of "shahr" in the Qur'an

By examining the derivatives of the word "shahr" in the Qur'an and the accuracy of the co-texts, as well as, connected and disconnected

evidences in the verse, we reach some points that are effective in explaining the meaning of the word "shahr":

5- 1- The month of Ramadan

In verse 185 of Surah Al-Baqarah, it is stated:

“The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur’an, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance, and the Criterion (of right and wrong). And whosoever of you is present, let him fast the month, and whosoever of you is sick or on a journey, (let him fast the same) number of other days. Allah desireth for you ease; He desireth not hardship for you; and (He desireth) that ye should complete the period, and that ye should magnify Allah for having guided you, and that peradventure ye may be thankful.”

This verse shows the time and duration of fasting that the few days you should fast are the days of the holy month of Ramadan. Among the months of the year, only the name of Ramadan is mentioned in the Qur’an. The months of Rajab, Dhul Qa’dah, Dhul Hijjah, and Muharram are referred to as "Ashhur Al-Haram" and the months of Hajj (Shawwāl, Dhul Qa’dah, and Dhul Hijjah) are also referred to as "Ashhur Ma'lūmāt" instead of their special names (Tabrisī, 1993, 1: 523). The word "Al-Shahr" in the verse has the letter "A" and "Lam" which refers to the same month of Ramadan. Considering the association of the word "shahr" with "Ramadan" which is from the lunar months, the word "shahr" refers to the lunar month, which is based on the sighting of the crescent moon. Also, according to some commentators, the attribution of the verb "shahada" to "al-shahr" in the phrase "Famman shahed minkum al-shahr falyasumhu", refers to

the issue of seeing the crescent moon, and whoever sees the crescent moon, fasting becomes obligatory on him (Javadi Amoli, 2006, 9: 373). While most commentators consider it to mean being in the month of Ramadan, in the sense that whoever is not a traveler, it is obligatory to fast (Tabātabā’ī, 1411 AH, 2:31) and (Ibn Āshūr, 1420 AH, 2:170). Because "Shahada" does not mean to see and is used to observe the verb "Shahada"; Rather, the meaning is a witness against the absent, and absence and testimony are the same as travel and presence (Tūsī, nd, 2: 123). Therefore, some believe, "Al-Shahr" here does not mean the crescent, for the verb "shahada" in the meaning of "presence" cannot be transitive with the crescent (Ibn Āshūr, 1420 AH, 2: 170). In the above verse, there is no clarification through the proof of the moon and the sighting of the crescent. However, from Allameh Tabātabā’ī’s point of view, it is possible to impose such a meaning on the verse sometimes by implication and despite the evidence, but the verse does not have a similar meaning (Tabātabā’ī, 1411 AH, 2:31). Therefore, the word "shahr" next to the verb "shahada" refers to the same period of one month, namely the holy month of Ramadan, where the object of "shahada" means presence, and as a result, "shahr" in this verse does not mean the crescent; However, since one of the ways to prove the lunar month is to see the crescent and observe it, it can indirectly indicate the meaning of the crescent. On the other hand, in this honorable verse, the verb "Yasum" is paired with a pronoun whose reference is "the shahr of Ramadan", which is used to indicate the necessity of fasting during the month of Ramadan for those present in the month. Also, from the association with the description of "unzila fih al-Qur’an", it’s proved that the characteristic of this holy month is the time

case for the revelation of the Qur'an. Therefore, the shahr of Ramadan is a lunar month, which may last 29 or 30 days depending on the sighting of its crescent until the sighting of the next month's crescent, and the word shahr in this verse refers to the lunar month, which is a time case for the revelation of the Qur'an and obligatory fasting. However, it should be noted that some commentators have always considered the month of Ramadan to be 30 days long, which is never incomplete, with the argument of "*li tukmil al-'idda*" in the above verse. While the meaning of "completing the 'idda" does not mean fasting for 30 days; Rather, it means that the completion of 'idda either means completing the beginning of the month to 30 days, or seeing the crescent moon, or it means completing the fasts of those who died while sick or traveling to the equivalent of it, or it means completing the five famous pillars and foundations of Islam, that is, confession (to Monotheism and Mission), prayer, zakat (alms giving), fasting, and Hajj (Javadi Amoli, 2015, 9: 377).

Those who hold this point of view, known as *Ashāb al-'Iddah*, have cited some traditions to prove their point, of which:

1. One may refer to a hadith from Imam Sadiq (as), saying: "God created the world in six days, then reduced it to the days of the year, and the year is three hundred and fifty-four days. Sha'bān is never complete, Ramadan is never diminished, by God, it will never be incomplete, and no obligatory prayer will be incomplete. God says, "And that you may complete the period," and Shawwāl has twenty-nine days." (Kulainī, 1401 AH, 4:78).

2. Imam Sadiq (as) was asked that "What is said among us is that the Prophet (PBUH) fasted twenty-nine days more often than he fasted thirty. Is this true?" Imam Sadiq (as) said: "God did not create anything like this. The

Prophet (PBUH) only fasted for thirty days, because God says: "And that you may complete the number of days," but the Messenger of God used to shorten it!?" ('Ayāshī, 2001, 1: 82)

In response to this idea, it should be said that the meaning of the verse is to finish what is obligatory on you, and this meaning does not contradict that sometimes what is obligatory is 29 days or 30 days, or it means other meanings that were stated (Tabrisī, 1993, 2: 214; Mughnīyah, 1990, 1: 505). These types of hadiths are also contrary to other authentic reports, on the one hand, which state that the month of Ramadan is deficient like other months, and on the other hand, it is against conscience and external conformity (Javadi Amoli, 2006, 9: 387). Also, the existence of these narrations in the hadith sources, while it does not prove that the month of Ramadan has thirty days, it can be a scientific point about the calculation of the lunar months using the zīj (table) method, according to which the odd months have 30 days and the even months have 29 days. This method of calculation is to facilitate the counting of months, but it is not valid in Shari'a (Hassanzadeh Amoli, 1416 AH: 524). As a result, Ramadan is a lunar month. Based on the sighting of its crescent until the sighting of the next month's crescent, it may be 29 or 30 days, and only if sighting is not possible, it is 30 days. So the word "shahr" in this verse refers to the crescent moon.

5-2- Forbidden months (Al-Shahr Al-Haram/Al-Ashhur al-Haram)

In 7 cases of the Qur'an verses, the word "shahr" is associated with the adjective "forbidden" and in 4 cases "forbidden shahr" is referred to as a pronoun. Among the words associated with "shahr" and its derivatives, the word "forbidden" has the highest frequency compared to other companions. The word "shahr" is used 5 times in the singular form of

"Al-Shahr al-Haram" and once in the plural form of "Al-Shhur al-Haram," and once the shahr is used in the singular form of "Mihā 'Arbaah Hurum". The word "Haram" originally means to prohibit and to be strict and against Halal (Ibn Fāris, 1404 Ah, 2: 45). Its plural is "Hurum". "Hurma" is the infinitive noun of respect, meaning something that is not allowed to be disrespected (Fayūmī, 1414 AH: 131). Prohibition is either by the order of divine creation or by human beings, sometimes by the rule of reason and sometimes by the rule of law (obligatory prohibition) (Kothari, 2015, 2: 110-110). The verses that He mentioned about the forbidden months (Rajab, Dhul Qa'dah, Dhul Hijjah, Muharram) with the expression "al-Shahr al-Haram" have the meaning of obligatory forbidden. This means that non-defensive fighting is forbidden in each of these months. In verses 194 and 217 of Surah Al-Baqarah, 2 and 97 of Surah Al-Mā'ida and 36 of Surah Al-Tawba, the forbidden months are interpreted as "Al-Shhur al-Hurum" or "Al-Shahr al-Haram". The attribute of sanctity for these months is that desecrating them and fighting in them is forbidden and bowing to them is obligatory (Tabātabā'ī, 1390 AH, 2: 63). In these verses, the forbidden months are briefly mentioned without mentioning their names; However, according to the frequent traditions of Shi'a and Sunni, these four months are specific. The only verse that mentions the exact number of forbidden months without mentioning their names and with the expression "four forbidden months" is verse 36 of Surah Tawbah:

“Lo! the number of the months with Allah is twelve months by Allah's ordinance in the day that He created the heavens and the earth. Four of them are sacred: that is the right religion. So wrong not yourselves in them. And

wage war on all of the idolaters as they are waging war on all of you. And know that Allah is with those who keep their duty (unto Him).”

In this verse, the root "sh-h-r" refers to the lunar or crescent moon. This verse is one of the most important verses that clearly indicates the authenticity, stability, and immutability of the lunar months and their number. According to the two adverbs "in the presence of God" and "in the book of God, the day of creation of the heavens and the earth", this verse refers to the stability of the number of months in the sight of God, which has been 12 months since the day the heavens and the earth were created. The meaning of the twelve months in this verse is clearly the lunar months; Although their number is also consistent with the solar months which are part of human contracts, due to the evidence in the verse, including "Minhā 'Arba'ahū Haram", the word "shahr" refers to the lunar months; Because the lunar months and their twelve months have a fixed principle from the world of creation (Tabātabā'ī, 1411 AH, 9: 368; Fakhr Rāzī, 1420 AH, 16: 40; Ibn Āshūr, 1420 AH, 10: 80). In verses such as Surah Yūnus 5, God considers the movement of the moon and its places, and states to be the criterion for dividing, adjusting and calculating the month and year. In verse 189 of Surah Al-Baqarah, regarding the reason for paying attention to the movement of the moon and its different states, it is said that it is because the general public should adjust the time of their various activities, especially the time of worship and homework (Javadi Amoli, 2014, 33: 588-590). Finally, it should be said that verse 36 of Surah Tawba clearly refers to the lunar months, which is a fixed, natural, and universal calendar that, according to the sighting of the crescent moon, some months are 29 days and some are 30 days. That is, some

worships have their own special time and must be performed in special months and days, and the months that are designated to perform this type of worship are lunar months (Javadi Ameli, 2014, 33: 606). All the decrees of Shari'a and divine dos and don'ts are fulfilled within a certain time. God has placed a special dignity for each month, for God has made the course of guidance and development of human dependent on time and has looked at times and including months as the validity of human guidance; Accordingly, at the end of several verses of the discussed verses, He spoke about piety and the need to pay attention to divine limits, including observing the limits and boundaries of these months and the rulings related to them. The verse 36 of Surah Tawba is one of them. The verse ends with the word "muttaqūn" and the discussion of "piety", which can be an emphasis on observing the commands, prohibitions, and limits of God mentioned in the verse, including keeping the number of lunar months fixed and respecting the sanctity of the 4 forbidden months, as well as observing piety in the fight with polytheists in defensive jihad and not transgressing the limits that God has determined in the genesis and legislation system.

In addition to these verses, we can refer to two other verses in which the duration of four months is also mentioned. One in verse 2 of Surat al -Tawbah: "Travel freely in the land four months, and know that ye cannot escape Allah and that Allah will confound the disbelievers (in His Guidance)." Another one is the verse 5 of Surat al -Tawbah: "Then, when the sacred months have passed, slay the idolaters wherever ye find them, and take them (captive), and besiege them, and prepare for them each ambush. But if they repent, establish worship, and pay the poor-due, then leave their way free. Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

According to commentators, these verses are about polytheists to whom the Prophet (PBUH) gave them four months to clarify their situation and think, and after the expiration of the four months, either stop idolatry or prepare for war. In verse 2 of Surah Tawba, the word "shahr" is used as a *tamyīz* between "*arba'ah*" and together as a time frame for the polytheist's travel deadline. In verse 5 of Surah Tawbah, the word "Al-Ashhur" is attributed to the word "*insalakha*" and is described as the attribute of "Haram". The root "s-l-kh" means to cut off something from what is connected to it, while it is surrounded by it (Mustafawī, 1430 AH, 5: 208). The title "Al-Ashhur al-Haram", which is considered for this specific time, limits this period, and with the end of its last day, this title is also finished and removed. Also, since *insilākh* (demolition) is accompanied by the revelation of something, the demolition of the shahr can be considered as the revelation of the new moon or the revelation of the truth and position of the polytheists, i.e. the month ends in such a way that there is no room for doubt at its end. Various sayings have been raised about the example of these four months, but the preferred word is the four months emphasized in the hadiths ('Ayāshī, 1380 AH, 2: 74; Al-Kulainī, 1401 AH, 8: 270), that polytheists were given a deadline (from 10 Dhul Hijjah to 10 Rabī al-Thānī), not the well-known haram months whose ruling was for the general obliges, the proof of which is the masculine form of "*'arba'atu ashhur*" (Javadi Amoli, 2016, 21: 536). Also, the apparent of the verse shows that these months are consecutive, while the famous 4 forbidden months are not consecutive (Sadeghi Tehrani, 1406 AH, 12: 325).

Therefore, "Ashhur al-Haram" is also used in a meaning other than the four forbidden

months, and it is not specifically known for those four months.

According to the fact that these four months in interpretive narrations are calculated in such a way that they include twenty days of Dhul Hijjah, the months of Muharram, Safar, and Rabī al-'Awwal and ten days of Rabī al-Thānī, it is clear that the middle months should be considered a crescent. But it is possible to consider the first month together with the last month as a number so that they become 30 days together. As a result, the meaning of "shahr" here is basically the same as the lunar months, for the examples of those 4 months are mentioned in the hadiths under the headings of lunar months and are specified as lunar. On the other, due to the way this period is expressed in the narrations about the first and last month based on 30 days of the first and last month, the word "shahr" can also mean a numerical month; Therefore, according to *'urf*, some commentators have considered the shahr in this verse to be equivalent to 30 days and the period of 4 months to 120 days (Sadeghi Tehrani, 1406 AH, 12: 325).

5-3- Hajj months (Ashhur Ma'lūmāt)

In verse 197 of Surah Al-Baqarah, "The pilgrimage is (in) the well-known months, and whoever is minded to perform the pilgrimage therein (let him remember that) there is (to be) no lewdness nor abuse nor angry conversation on the pilgrimage. And whatsoever good ye do Allah knoweth it. So make provision for yourselves (Hereafter); for the best provision is to ward off evil. Therefore, keep your duty unto Me, O men of understanding," the combination of the word "shahr" with the word "*ma'lūmāt*" indicates that the time of Hajj is certain. The pronoun "Hunna" also refers to "Ashhur Ma'lūmāt" which, along with the verb "Fard" and the preposition "Fī", indicates the time period of Hajj. So, this verse indicates the time

of Hajj rituals in general. Hajj is performed in the same special months that have been established since the time of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and the reason for not specifying the names of these months is that they are famous among the Ignorant Arabs. These months are called "months of Hajj", for some of the Hajj deeds cannot be performed in other months, not in the sense that these months are only for Hajj rituals, and it is not valid for Hajj like Umrah. Rather, it should be said that according to the mentioned verse, performing Hajj has a specific time. The appearance of the word "Ashhur" indicates that the total of these 3 months (Shawwāl, Dhul Qa'dah and Dhul Hajj) is within the time of Hajj, which is confirmed by many authentic traditions (Javadi Amoli, 2006, 10: 89-112). Therefore, the word "shahr" here also includes the lunar months, which are clear to everyone, according to the hadiths (Huwaizī, 1415 AH, 1:193). It is also worth mentioning that the honorable verse ends with the introduction of piety as the best birth and burden and the command to practice piety. We see this association in other verses that contain the word "shahr". In the verse in question, the command to piety can refer to observing the rules of Hajj, especially observing the limits and performing Hajj within a specific time frame. This means that the determination of the months of Hajj is one of the divine limits and observing these limits is one of the examples of divine piety.

5-4- The months of divorce and death 'Iddah (Thalāthat Ashhur-Arba'ata Ashhur)

In verse 4 of Surah Talāq, "And for such of your women as despair of menstruation, if ye doubt, their period (of waiting) shall be three months, along with those who have it not. And for those with child, their period shall be till they bring forth their burden. And whosoever keepeth his duty to Allah, He maketh his course

easy for him," "Thalāthat Ashhur" is used along with the word "Fa'iddatuhuna," as an explicit ruling to express the duration of divorce 'iddah of a certain group of women. This verse indicates the necessity of keeping 'iddah after divorce, the duration of which is three months for women who do not have periods, including non-menstruating adult women and menopausal women in case of doubt about their menopause. However, those women who are menstruating, their ruling is clarified in verse 228 of Surah Al-Baqarah, which says: "These women have to go through 3 cleanses," and when they start menstruating for the third time, their *'iddah* ends.

In the above verse, the duration of divorce is absolutely stated as 3 months and is not limited to specific months; Regarding whether these months are lunar or not, in the commentaries and jurisprudential books that state the rulings of 'iddah, the method of calculating "shahr" is mentioned more precisely. Studying the jurisprudential and fatwa interpretations expressed in this context (Khomeini, 2002, 2: 522-525; Bahjat, 2006, 4: 160; Shobairi Zanjani, 20: 6316-6317), it becomes clear that the criterion in keeping the number is the lunar month; Therefore, if the divorce takes place on the first of the month, all jurists believe in keeping the 'iddah for three consecutive lunar or crescent months (Jassās, 1405 AH, 2:121), but if the divorce is performed on other days of the month, the way of calculating "shahr" is different: 1) All months are calculated numerically with 30 days (the number of days for divorce 'iddah is 90 days). 2) If the beginning of 'iddah is, for example, the tenth of the month, three months later, on the 10th day, 'iddah ends. 3) The middle months are considered as crescents, and the first and last months together are considered to be thirty days (numerically). So, if 'iddah

begins at the 10th of Shawwāl, and if Shawwāl is 29 days long, after Dhul Qa'dah and Dhul Hijjah, 'iddah will end at the 11th of Muharram (Jassās, 1405 AH, 2:121).

Therefore, according to commentators and jurists on the issue of divorce 'iddah, "shahr" has two meanings; One is a lunar month (if the beginning of the period is at the beginning of the crescent) and the other is a number of 30 days (if the beginning of the period is on other days). Therefore, it can be said that the word "shahr" in the verse basically means the lunar month (whether it is 29 days or 30 days); However, according to the common interpretations among the Arabs and as a result of the interpretations introduced in the hadiths, some of which will be mentioned later, it can be said that this word has undergone a semantic development and is also used as thirty days to express the Legal ruling. The final point is related to the end of the noble verse, which talks about piety. As mentioned earlier, such references can be considered as the necessity of observing the divine limits, including the strict observance of the three-month 'iddah of divorce, in order to achieve the piety mentioned in the verse.

In the completion of the mentioned verse, it is possible to refer to the verse 234 of Al-Baqarah: "Such of you as die and leave behind them wives, they (the wives) shall wait, keeping themselves apart, four months and ten days. And when they reach the term (prescribed for them) then there is no sin for you in aught that they may do with themselves in decency. Allah is informed of what ye do." In this honorable verse, the word "Ashhur" next to "Arba'a" is used as a container and expresses the duration of death 'iddah. It mentions its duration 4 months and 10 days from the time of the death of the husband, during which time the wife should keep and refrain from remarriage.

This number is to ensure that there is no bearing (pregnancy) during this period.

According to some commentators, pregnancy lasts for 40 days in the form of a sperm, 40 days in the form of an umbilical cord, and then ۴۰ days in the form of a majesty. Then the spirit is breathed into it. Therefore, the distance between the establishment of the sperm in the womb and the blowing of the soul in the fetus is 4 months. Since the fetus gradually gains strength after the soul is blown into it, 10 days more than 4 months have been placed for the obvious realization of the movement of the fetus; Because although the fetus moves in 4 months, these 10 days have been added to it due to the difference in strength and weakness of the movements of the fetuses (Ibn Āshūr, 1420 AH, 2: 422). In the discussed verse, the word "shahr" is absolute, but as it was said about the divorce 'iddah, some jurisprudential and interpretive books have explicitly considered these months to be 4 lunar months (Tehrani, 1406 AH, 4: 99; Khomeini, 2004, 3: 603). For example, it is stated in Tahrīr al-Wasīla: "If the husband dies by the sighting of the crescent moon, the wife must take ۴ months of 'iddah and add 10 days from the fifth month to the four months. If he dies in the middle of the month, it is more obvious that 3 lunar months must be put in and complete the first one as much as it has passed from the fifth month so that it becomes 4 months and 10 days by combining" (Khomeini, 2004, 3: 603). On the other, some authorities believe that although 4 lunar months and 10 days are enough, but the caution is that the death 'iddah should also be calculated numerically (30 days each month), so that the duration becomes 130 days (Fayaz, 2005: 576; Bahjat, 1427 AH, 4: 164). In some narrations, it is mentioned that the shahr is thirty days, such as a narration from Imam Sadeq (as) states 120

days as four months, proving the meaning of the shahr being 30 days old. (see Kulainī, 1401 AH, 6: 13)

Therefore, according to jurists and some commentators, the calculation of "shahr" here is also the same as the 'iddah of divorce and means the lunar month (if the number starts from the beginning of the crescent) or a numerical month of 30 days (in order to observe caution or in the form of beginning of 'iddah is from other days of the month) or finally it is a combination (Nizām al-'A'raj, 1416 AH, 1: 645).

5-5- Īlā' period (four months)

Among the verses that contain the word "shahr" is the verse "*Īlā'*"; "Those who forswear their wives must wait four months; then, if they change their mind, lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful." (Surah Al-Baqarah: 226). Īlā' is a type of oath in which, with the intention of harming his permanent wife, the husband swears not to sleep with her forever or for more than 4 months. After the realization of Īlā', the husband has up to 4 months to refer to his wife or divorce her. The noble verse also clearly indicates the permissibility of Īlā' for a period of 4 months and its impermissibility for more than 4 months (Javadi Ameli, 2006, 11: 230). "Arba'a Ashhur" in this verse, along with the word "Tarabbus" means the maximum length of time a man waits to determine his duty towards his wife. Since the verse is intended to express the ruling of Īlā', some jurists have also made references to the concept of "shahr" in its jurisprudential interpretation.

In such a case, some have considered the "shahr" as a lunar month and have explicitly stated that the husband cannot leave the bed with his wife for more than 4 lunar months without her consent (Khomeini, 2012, 2:480). Some have also calculated this period as 120 days if it is not from the beginning of the lunar

month (Jassās, 1405 AH, 2:121). However, it seems that regarding the realization of *ilā'*, the side of caution in fulfilling the wife's rights is to count the months in lunar terms, whether they are 29 days or 30 days.

5-6- Atonement for wrongful killing and Zihār

In verse 92 of Surah An-Nisā', "It is not for a believer to kill a believer unless (it be) by mistake. He who hath killed a believer by mistake must set free a believing slave, and pay the blood-money to the family of the slain, unless they remit it as a charity. If he (the victim) be of a people hostile unto you, and he is a believer, then (the penance is) to set free a believing slave. And if he cometh of a folk between whom and you there is a covenant, then the blood-money must be paid unto his folk and (also) a believing slave must be set free. And whoso hath not the wherewithal must fast two consecutive months. A penance from Allah. Allah is Knower, Wise," the word "Shahrain" refers to the period of fasting for 2 months, and it is also consecutive. It indicates the obligation of the murderer to fast for 2 consecutive months in expiation of wrongful killing in case of inability to free the believing slave, which is as repentance and atonement for the sin of wrongful killing (Hashmi Rafsanjani, 2017, 3: 430).

Another verse that refers to two months of fasting for the purpose of atonement for sin is the verse of Zihar: "Those who put away their wives (by saying they are as their mothers) and afterward would go back on that which they have said, (the penalty) in that case (is) the freeing of a slave before they touch one another. Unto this ye are exhorted; and Allah is Informed of what ye do. And he who findeth not (the wherewithal), let him fast for two successive months before they touch one another; and for him who is unable to do so (the

penance is) the feeding of sixty needy ones. This, that ye may put trust in Allah and His messenger. Such are the limits (imposed by Allah); and for disbelievers is a painful doom." (Mujādalah: 3-4).

This verse states that in case of inability to free the slave before sexual intercourse, the doer must fast for 2 consecutive months and in case of inability to fast, he/she should feed 60 poor people.

Some jurists have explained the meaning of "shahr" in "Shahrain Mutataabi'ain" as follows: "One who is required to fast for 2 months, if he starts from the first of the month, 2 lunar months will suffice, even if they are incomplete. If it starts during it, the best way is to break 2 months and complete it incompletely. So, if he starts fasting on the 10th of Shawwāl, this period ends with the fasting of the 9th of Dhul Hijjah, and there is no difference between the months being incomplete or complete or different. However, it is a precaution to fast for 60 days. If there is a difference between the days due to something happening that does not cause harm due to the occurrence of consecutive days, then the same is determined and 60 days becomes obligatory" (Khomeini, 2014, 2: 129). Some commentators have also pointed to the same way of calculating "shahr" and calculated it in a crescent or numerical form (60 days) or a combination of both (Zuhailī, 1411 AH, 28:17; Ālūsī, 1415 AH, 14:209).

Therefore, according to most jurists and commentators, the meaning of "Shahrain Mutatābi'ain" is 2 consecutive lunar months or 60 full days (Tabrisī, 1993, 24: 268; Makaram Shirazi, 1992, 23: 414; Tūsī, nd, 9: 544). The meaning of shahr in these verses is a lunar month (either incomplete or complete) or a numerical month (30 days, in order to observe caution) (Fādil Jawad, 1986, 4: 230). Although

the word "shahr" is primarily means the lunar month, some take it as 30 days (Makaram Shirazi, 1424 AH, 3:29). In the verse of Zihār, the substitution of feeding 60 poor people instead of 2 consecutive months of fasting can be a reference to the numerical nature of "shahr," so that feeding each poor person replaces one day of fasting (Hafni, 2004, 1: 716). As a result, the meaning of "shahr" here is also originally, if starting from the beginning of the month, the same lunar month, which may be 29 or 30 days long; However, in case of starting from the middle of the month, or for the sake of safety and caution, as well as the calculation of the presence of evidence such as "feeding the poor" in its balance, it is also used in the meaning of a numerical and 30-day month.

5-7- Pregnancy and breastfeeding period (Thalāthūn-a Shahrā)

In verse 15 of Surah Al-Ahqāf, "And We have commended unto man kindness toward parents. His mother beareth him with reluctance, and bringeth him forth with reluctance, and the bearing of him and the weaning of him is thirty months, till, when he attaineth full strength and reacheth forty years, he saith: My Lord! Arouse me that I may give thanks for the favour wherewith Thou hast favoured me and my parents, and that I may do right acceptable unto Thee. And be gracious unto me in the matter of my seed. Lo! I have turned unto Thee repentant, and lo! I am of those who surrender (unto Thee)," The word "shahr" is used as a time case to express the total duration of pregnancy and breastfeeding (30 months). The important point that many commentators have used this verse according to the traditions and juxtaposing the above verse with the verses that express 2 years of breastfeeding, is that if we subtract 2 years (24 months) from 30 months, 6 months remain, which is the minimum time required for

pregnancy (Ibn Arabi, 1408 AH, 1: 202; Tayeb, 1987, 2: 471). Therefore, to understand the meaning of "shahr" in this verse, it is possible to refer to the jurisprudential interpretations and the statements of the jurists regarding the minimum period of pregnancy. Many of them considered the meaning of 6 months to be 6 lunar months (Bahjat, 2016, 4: 138). On the other, some have considered the 30-day numerical month as valid in addition to the crescent moon (Shubairi Zanjani, 25: 7772).

Also, in the explanation of the expression of "Hawlain Kāmilain", some consider it to be a reference to the lunar month, while others consider it numerically and count 24 months as 30 days (Najafi, 29: 296; Makaram, 1424 AH, 3: 29). On the other, in medical science, the minimum pregnancy period is stated as approximately 25 weeks. Since its amount is approximate, it can coincide with both 6 lunar months and 6 numerical months (30 days). However, the shortest of these times is 6 lunar months, which is mentioned in some scientific books as the possibility of having a child after 6 lunar months (Aghar, 1425 AH: 389). Therefore, it is possible to know the exact value of 30 months of pregnancy and breastfeeding in the verse according to nature, custom, and appearance, based on 30 lunar months, though, in some cases, for easier calculation, the shahr is considered numerically.

However, it seems that if the requirements of the evidence were such that the crescent moon has no characteristic and is only an important quantity, and the proportions of the ruling and the subject require that a specific quantity be considered, it is better to consider the months numerically. Like the four-month-old fetus, when the soul is blown away, it is unlikely that the crescent moon is involved in it. Also, a narration under the death 'iddah was mentioned,

which stated that the soul is blown away after 120 days.

5-8- The duration of Solomon's movement with the wind (Qhuduwwihā Shahr wa Rawāhuhā Shahr)

In verse 12 of Surah Saba', "And unto Solomon (We gave) the wind, whereof the morning course was a month's journey and the evening course a month's journey, and We caused the fount of copper to gush forth for him, and (We gave him) certain of the jinn who worked before him by permission of his Lord. And such of them as deviated from Our command, them We caused to taste the punishment of flaming Fire," God used the word "shahr" to express the speed of movement of the Prophet Suleiman (AS) by wind in order to show an example of God's miracles and power. "Ghuduw" means the first half of the day and "Rawāh" means the second half of the day. The meaning of the verse is that Prophet Suleiman (as) used to walk with this speedy ride from morning to noon, as much as a month of travelers at that time. In the second half of the day, he walked the same amount too (Makaram et al., 1992, 18: 35). If we consider the average time between sunrise and sunset as 12 hours and assume that the speed of a person while walking is equal to 5 km per hour, then we can estimate the wind's speed under the command of Suleiman (as). Accordingly, if every person walks at a speed of 5 kilometers per hour every day and night for an average of 12 hours, during a month of thirty days, it can travel 1800 km; Now, if the wind under the command of Suleiman (as) travels this distance of 1800 kilometers in the time of one "Ghuduw" or one "Rawāh", which is about 6 hours, its speed will be equivalent to 300 kilometers per hour, which is almost equivalent to the speed of the winds that blow in the most severe sea storms (Molayi, 2011: 237-238).

In the discussed verse, "shahr" is used in the singular form (1 month), which can be used as a unit for measuring wind's speed and calculating it. The appearance of its meaning is the lunar month. However, it seems that counting "shahr" as a 30-day numerical month is also possible, for the result of counting "shahr" in the form of a crescent moon or a number does not differ much here. Scientifically, since the wind's speed increases and decreases, it can correspond to the 29 or 30 days of the month. So, the verse apparently says that he traveled from morning to evening with the wind, equal to 2 lunar or numerical months (60 days), the distance traveled by ordinary people.

5-9- The value of the Qadr Night ('Alf Shahr)

The verse 3 of Surah Qadr, "The night of Qadr is better than a thousand shahrs", refers to the virtue of the night of Qadr and its superiority over a thousand nights without the night of Qadr. It was the vessel for the revelation of the Qur'an and God's blessings, in when worshiping and reviving are greatly rewarded. So, "shahr" is used along with the word "Alf" as a unit to compare, measure and express the value of Qadr Night. According to the narrations regarding the cause of descent of the verse, as well as the Legal and customary meaning of the word "shahr", it can be considered as the meaning of the crescent moon, which has 29 or 30 days. Apparently, the commentators who considered the period of a thousand months to be approximately equivalent to 83 years and several months, also paid attention to the crescent moon. As if we count the months as a crescent, a thousand months will be about 29500 days, and by dividing it by the number of days in a lunar year (354 days), the number of 83 years and months is obtained, which the commentators have considered as useful as a lifetime. That is,

the understanding of Qadr Night is higher than a useful life (Makaram et al., 1992, 27: 183). However, if this time is counted as solar years, the number of years will be different; Because each solar year is 11 days longer than the lunar year. On the other, the shahr in the verse can be understood as a numerical month with 30 days; Just as some commentators have mentioned 30000 days in their words (Sadeghi Tehrani, 1406 AH, 30: 378). Perhaps it can be said that because the verse compares the virtues of the Qadr night and a thousand months, in such cases, usually the lunar months are not considered, but rather they are 30 days long. However, these topics are useful when the number thousand in the verse is to express number, not multiplication, for if the number 1000 is used to express multiplication, then it means that the virtue of the Qadr night is not higher than a thousand but also thousands of months. It doesn't matter if the months are crescent or not. What is important is the number of months, not exactly the number of thousands.

6-Conclusion

To study the meaning of the word "shahr" in the Holy Qur'an, firstly through explaining the literal and idiomatic meaning of the word and then by considering the evidences and its

different applications in the verses, we conclude that the primary and widely used meaning of "shahr" is especially in the form of lack of indications in the language of Legislator in the Holy Qur'an is the same as lunar or crescent month, in which the criterion is the distance between the sighting of one crescent and the next crescent. The second meaning in some cases, according to the Qur'an, is a numerical month (30 days), especially in cases where the beginning and end of the month are not visible. As a result, it can be said that if the word "shahr" is a crescent, it means "*bain al-Hilālain*", which is sometimes 29 days and sometimes 30 days; But if there is no crescent, it means 30 days.

Based on examining the usage of the word "shahr", it is proved that in cases where "shahr" is in a genesis or obligatory subject based on genesis and the time interval is important, the appearance of "shahr" in these cases is mostly in the numerical month, e.g. the spirit being breathed into the fetus after four months, which is included in the traditions, and the spirit is breathed after 120 days; But if it is obligatory, the appearance of "shahr" is in the crescent moon.

In general, through examining the verses containing the word "shahr", some points are found as seen in the diagram 1.

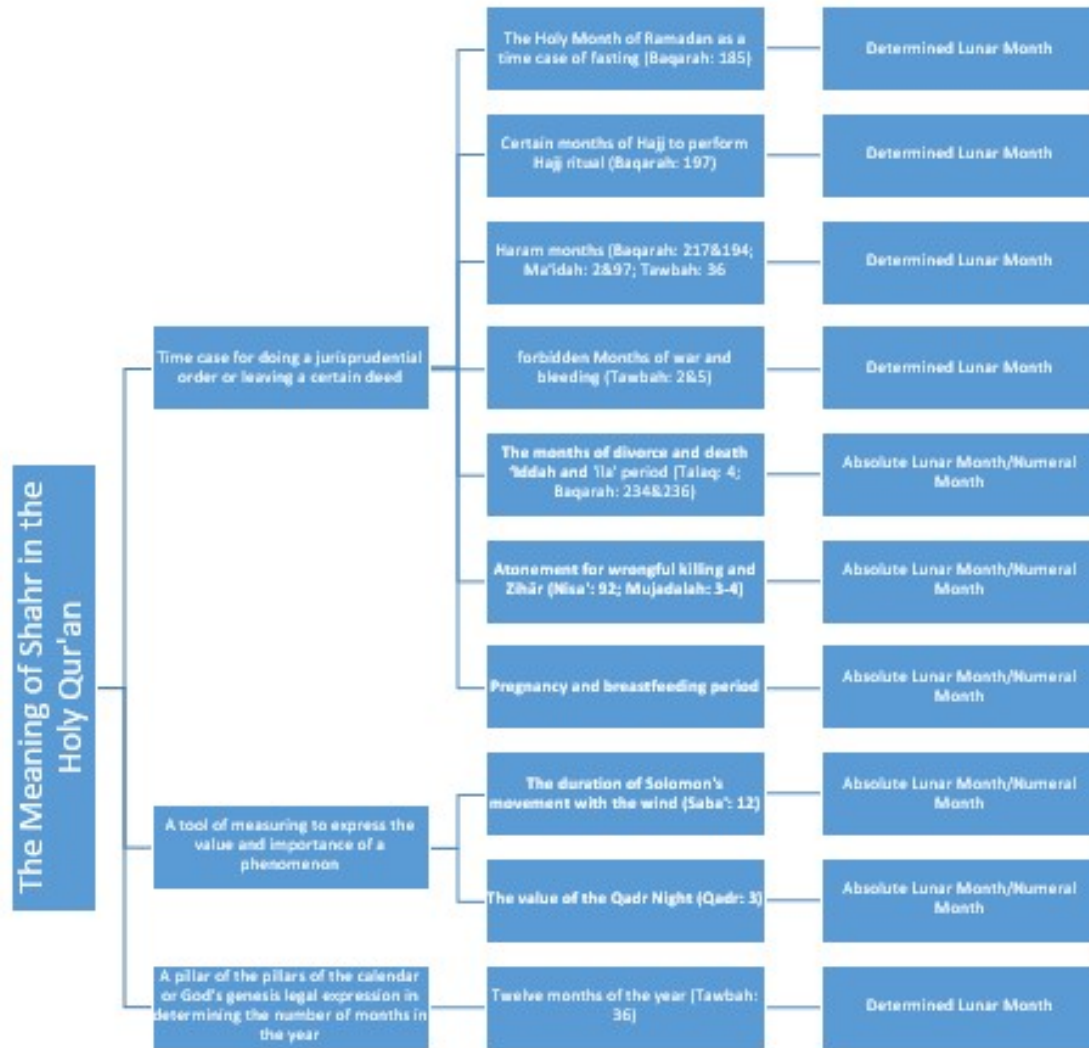


Diagram 1- Study of the meaning of "Shahr" in the Holy Qur'an

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