



IMAM SADIQ peace be upon him
ONLINE SEMINARY

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Summary

Arabic Grammar (Nahw)

Lesson 95: فعل التعجب

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The Verb of Wonder

Definition: A fixed verb coined to express the speaker's wonder at something.

The Form of the Verb of Wonder and the Analysis of the Exclamatory Sentence

The verb of wonder has two forms:

a) «مَا أَفْعَلُهُ»

Here, «ما» is an indefinite noun meaning "thing," acting as the subject (mubtada') - according to the well-known view - and the clause «أفعله» is its predicate (khabar). This clause contains the verb, its subject - a covert pronoun within it referring back to «ما» - and its object - the noun in the accusative case that follows it.

b) «أَفْعَلُ بِهِ»

Here, «أفعل» is a fixed verb, and the noun in the genitive case after it is in the position of the nominative as the subject, and the bā' is extra.



Conditions for Forming the Verb of Wonder

The verb of wonder, like the elative noun, is formed from a triliteral, positive, conjugatable, active, complete verb that admits degrees of comparison and from which the intrinsic adjective (al-sifah al-mushabbahah) on the pattern «أَفْعَل» is not formed. For a verb lacking these conditions, one resorts to «أَشَدَّ», «أَشَدَّ», and their like, and the verbal noun (masdar) of that deficient verb is placed in the accusative after «أَشَدَّ» and its like as an object, and is placed in the genitive after «أَشَدَّ» and its like with an extra bā' as the subject, for example: «ما أَشَدَّ زَلْزَلَةً» and «أَشَدُّ بَزْزَلَةٍ».

The Fundamental Principles in the Chapter of Wonder

There are four:

1. The object of wonder must be definite or a qualified indefinite.
2. It is not permissible to separate between «ما» and the verb of wonder. However, «كان» may be inserted between them to add emphasis and a past sense.
3. The subject in the genitive with the bā' after «أَفْعَل» must be mentioned, but it may be omitted if understood.
4. It is not permissible for the object of the verb of wonder to precede it, even if it is an adverbial.