

علم الصرف

Linguistic usages of the
different verb types.



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How to determine when an act occurred?

If one was to say **مَاتَ مُحَمَّدٌ** (Muhammad died) one would not be sure if he died recently or in distant past. One can obtain more knowledge about when the act occurred from other words in the sentence e.g. **كَانَ** or **قَدْ**. Also the context will also indicate the time frame as well as other grammatical considerations.

Past tense verbs in the Quran

1. Near past

قَالُوا الْآنَ **جِئْتَ** بِالْحَقِّ

They said: "Now you have brought the truth" [2:71]

2. Distant past

خَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ

Allah created the heavens and the earth with truth [29:44]

3. Future (certainty)

وَجَاءَتْ **سَكْرَةُ** الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ ^{صَاطِئُ} ذَلِكَ مَا كُنْتَ مِنْهُ تَحِيدُ

And the agony of death will come in truth. "This was the thing which you were trying to escape!" [50:19]

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ الْوَعِيدِ

And the trumpet shall be blown; that is the day of the threatening. [50:20]

Present tense verbs in the Quran

The present tense verb is usually used for the present and future but it does have other usages.

1. Repetition

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكَ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ ۚ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Say: O Allah, Master of the Kingdom! Thou give the kingdom to whomsoever You please and take away the kingdom from whomsoever You please, and You exalt whom You please and abase whom You please, in Your hand is the good; surety, You have power over all things.[3:26]

2. Used for a past event (to visualize it as if it is in front of one)

وَإِذْ نَجَّيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ يُدَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ ۚ وَفِي ذَٰلِكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ

And when We delivered you from Pharaoh's people, who subjected you to severe torment, killing your sons and sparing your women, and in this there was a great trial from your Lord. [2:49]

Allah (swt) wants us to reflect on this great trial as if we were present witnessing this great trail.

3. Unrelated to a particular time

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُعْجِبُ قَوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهَدُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ وَهُوَ
أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ

And among men is he whose speech about the life of this world causes you to wonder, and he calls on Allah to witness as to what is in his heart, yet he is the most violent of adversaries. [2:204]

Command verbs in the Quran

1. Obligation

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ

and establish regular Prayer and give regular Charity

2. Permissibility

وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا

and when you are free from the obligations of the pilgrimage, then hunt [5:2]

3. Prayer/ Dua

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ

My Lord! Forgive me and my parents [71:28]

4. Honoring

ادْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَامٍ ذَلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخُلُودِ

Enter it in peace. This is the day of immortality. [50:34]

5. Incapacitating

فَاتُّوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ

Produce a surah of the like thereof [2:23]

6. Disgracing and tormenting

ذُقْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْكَرِيمُ

"Taste you (this)! Truly you are mighty, full of honor! [44:49]

7. Reflection

فَلِنَنْظُرْ إِلَىٰ آثَارِ رَحْمَتِ اللَّهِ كَيْفَ يُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا

So observe the effects of the mercy of Allah - how He gives life to the earth after its lifelessness [30:50]

8. To expose a lie

قُلْ فَاتُّوا بِالتَّوْرَةِ فَانْظُرُوا هِيَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

Say: Produce the Torah and read it (unto us) if ye are truthful [3:93]

Linguistic aspects of the Quran

أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَحْرُثُونَ

Have you considered what you cultivate? [56:63]

أَأَنْتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الزَّارِعُونَ

Is it you that cause it to grow, or are We the causers of growth? [56:64]

Notice that when Allah spoke about himself the active participle was used to indicate a permanent state while the verb was used for humans.

In Surat Al Fatiha

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

The way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace on, those whose (portion) is not anger, and who go not astray.

Notice that when Allah spoke of those who earn Allah's anger he used the passive participle and when he talked about those astray he used the active participle.