

Final examination

CON03

Meanings and usages for the
particle/ conjunction ^{ثُمَّ}



Question 1) (2 marks)

Read the following ayah:

وَمِنْ ءَايَاتِهِ أَنْ تَقُومَ السَّمَاءُ وَالْأَرْضُ بِأَمْرِهِ ثُمَّ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ دَعْوَةً
مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ إِذَا أَنْتُمْ تَخْرُجُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

And of His signs is that the heaven and earth remain by His command. Then when He calls you with a [single] call from the earth, immediately you will come forth.
[Surat Al-Room]

Why was the conjunction ثُمَّ used in the ayah? Contrast this with the ending of the ayah:

إِذَا أَنْتُمْ تَخْرُجُونَ

Question 2) (4 marks)

ثُمَّ can be used for what scholars call تَرْتِيبُ الْإِخْبَارِي (arrangement of two piece of information). This usage contrasts between 2 pieces of information and adds extra meaning which the conjunction وَ is unable to do. Use the following 2 Ayaat in the Quran as examples to contrast this conjunction with the conjunction وَ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمَاتِ وَالنُّورَ
ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١﴾

[All] praise is [due] to Allah , who created the heavens and the earth and made the darkness and the light. Then those who disbelieve equate [others] with their Lord.
[Surat Al-An'aam]

وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَىٰ ﴿٨٢﴾

But indeed, I am the Perpetual Forgiver of whoever repents and believes and does righteousness and then continues in guidance. [Surat Taha]

Question 3) (2 marks)

Read the context of the Ayah below regarding Dhul Qarnayn and explain the meaning of ثُمَّ ?

ثُمَّ اتَّبَعَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٢﴾

Then he followed a way [Surat Al-Kahf]

Question 4) (2 marks)

Why does the conjunction ثُمَّ in the following ayah not indicate a time frame? If one interpreted it to mean a long period of time why would this be an error?

وَيَقَوْمِ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ
عَلَيْكُمْ مَدْرَارًا وَيَزِدْكُمْ قُوَّةً إِلَىٰ قُوَّتِكُمْ وَلَا تَتَوَلَّوْا
مُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

And O my people, ask forgiveness of your Lord and then repent to Him. He will send [rain from] the sky upon you in showers and increase you in strength [added] to your strength. And do not turn away, [being] criminals. [Surat Hood]

Now these base letters can be augmented with extra letters, and they can be dropped or changed due to morphological rules as well. Derived words in the language are a combination of a set of base letters plus a given template called **الأوزان**.

For example, the word **إِسْلَام** is the base letters **س ، ل ، م** on the pattern **إِفْعَال**. The base letters give us a base meaning (safety) and the pattern gives us another associated meaning. In the case of **إِفْعَال** it has the meaning to do something to someone or something. Hence we get the meaning of ‘to make someone safe or secure. More specifically, the word means **إِسْلَام** is the religion (of all the Prophet) which gives one safety and security in this life and the next.

So we can think of each word in the language as a set of base letters that have a specific template.

In the previous lessons we learnt about the 3 verb forms (past, present and command verbs) and 2 derived nouns (the active and passive participle)

But there are far too many templates in the language. So we have a layer of abstraction above templates which we call ‘template sets’.

For example, the words

عَالِم , مِفْتَاح , غَفَّار

are instantiations of the patterns

فَاعِل , مِفْعَال , فَعَّال

using the base letters which have an associated meaning

(ع، ل، م)، (ف، ت، ح)، (غ، ف، ر)

respectively. And all of the templates have another associated meaning .

Below is a table of examples that will help bring these definitions into perspective. For each type of noun, we have chosen a particular pattern from its inventory of patterns as well as a sample gerund. We place the gerund on that pattern and explain the meaning of the resulting word.

Meaning	Example		One of the Patterns	Derived Noun
	Resulting Word	Sample Gerund		
one who hits i.e. hitter	ضَارِب	ضرب hitting	فَاعِل	إِسْمُ الْفَاعِلِ
one who travels a lot i.e. globetrotter	رَحَّالَة	رحيل traveling	فَعَّالَة	إِسْمُ الْمُبَالِغَةِ
that which is understood i.e. concept	مَفْهُوم	فهم comprehension	مَفْعُول	إِسْمُ الْمَفْعُولِ
one who knows i.e. the all-knowing	عَلِيم	علم knowing	فَعِيل	الْصِفَةُ الْمُشَبَّهَةِ
thing that is used to open i.e. key	مِفْتَاح	فتح opening	مِفْعَال	إِسْمُ الْأَلَةِ
place where people play i.e. playground	مَلْعَب	لعب playing	مَفْعَل	إِسْمُ الظَّرْفِ
more/most far i.e. further/furthest	أَقْصَى	قصو being far	أَفْعَل	إِسْمُ التَّفْضِيلِ

Below is a very similar chart. Here, however, we use the same base letters to illustrate all of the derived nouns. This gives a clear picture of the function of each of them.

Meaning	Example		One of the Patterns	Derived Noun
	Resulting Word	Gerund		
one who knows (scholar, scientist)	عَالِم	علم knowing	فَاعِل	إِسْمُ الْفَاعِلِ
one who knows a lot (erudite)	عَالَمَةٌ		فَعَّالَةٌ	إِسْمُ الْمُبَالِغَةِ
that which is known (known, fixed, determined)	مَعْلُوم		مَفْعُول	إِسْمُ الْمَفْعُولِ
one who knows intrinsically (the all-knowing)	عَلِيم		فَعِيل	الصِّفَةُ الْمُشَبَّهَةِ
that through which we know (God) (the world)	عَالَم		فَاعِل	إِسْمُ الْأَلَةِ
where/when we know (landmark)	مَعْلَم		مَفْعَل	إِسْمُ الظَّرْفِ
one who knows the most (most learned)	أَعْلَم		أَفْعَل	إِسْمُ التَّفْضِيلِ

Note: the meanings cannot be directly inferred; but this template system is helpful in trying to understand the meaning of derived words.

What are these extra letters

The template system covers the study of letters that are extra in a given word (i.e., part of the template and not the base letters). It is one of the most important skills for a student to be able to differentiate between base and extra letters. Without this skill, one will not even be able to look up words effectively in a dictionary.

Not every letter in the alphabet may act as extra. In fact, they include the following nine:

ء، ا، ة، ت، س، م، ن، و، ي

Some more terminology

The letters of a root word that are also found in its derivatives are referred to as the

(الأحرفُ الأصليُّ).

The letters that are found only in some of the Derivative Words are called

(الأحرفُ الرّائِدَةُ).

For example, in the words: عَلِمَ، عَالِمٌ، مَعْلُومٌ، أَعْلَمَ, the three letters: (علم) are the *Original Letters* since they are found in its Root Word (عِلْمٌ) and each of the subsequent words. The remaining letters are *Additional Letters* because they are only found in some of these words, all of which are *Derivative Words* (المُشتَقَّاتُ).