



The Prohibitive Style in the Commentaries of Riyadh al-Salihin: A Grammatical Study

¹Reem abdalhamead Kadhem, ²Dr: Salman Abbas Abed

¹Reem.Abd2203m@cois.uobaghdad.edu.iq

²Professor

Dr.salman@cois.uobaghdad.edu.iq

College of Islamic Sciences / University of Baghdad

Abstract :

Among the styles of the Arabic language is the phenomenon of prohibition, a notable aspect that definitively negates, being the opposite of affirmation. This negation is expressed through various methods, the strongest of which is prohibition, performed using the definitive prohibitive particle (la). Prohibition can be employed as a form of supplication when directed from a lower to a higher status and is realized in the present tense verb, as it denotes the current time, with the verb being marked by the jussive case. I have examined this style within the commentaries on the hadiths of Riyadh al-Salihin and found that the commentators have shown considerable attention to this phenomenon in their texts on the hadiths of Riyadh al-Salihin. I have divided it into two sections: literal prohibition and figurative prohibition.

Keywords: prohibition, Riyadh al-Salihin, commentaries on Riyadh al-Salihin.

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Chapter One: The Concept of Prohibition

Definition of Prohibition:

Linguistically, it is the opposite of command. One says, "I prohibited him from it," and in another dialect, "I restrained him from it."² Ibn Sīda remarked that prohibition is the antithesis of command, stating, "I forbade him, so he refrained and desisted," indicating mutual interdiction.³

In technical terminology, prohibition opposes command. It is the speaker's statement to a subordinate, "Do not do," implying prevention from the action⁴ Sībawayh explained, "'Do not strike' negates 'strike'; prohibition negates and demands cessation from the act." Ibn al-Sarrāj equated negation with prohibition and affirmation with command, emphasizing that command entails execution while prohibition implies refraining from it⁵. Al-Tahānawī defined it as "a statement indicating a demand to desist from an action, expressed authoritatively," or simply, "a statement commanding 'Do not do.'" It implies compliance with the directive, devoid of contextual hints contrary to the prohibition, or the phrase "Do not do" with three intentions: the existence of the utterance, its indication, and adherence⁶.

The prohibitive "la" universally signifies the negation of the commanded action. For instance, "Stand" orders the action, whereas "Do not stand" seeks its negation, akin to how command implies affirmation, prohibition implies negation⁷.

Prohibitive Tools:

The primary prohibitive particle is "la," denoting a request for cessation, as in "Do not grieve." Prohibition mimics command usage, wherein "Do not do" signifies authoritative instruction, generally implying obligation unless mitigated by context, suggesting merely a request for cessation. Both command and prohibition imply immediacy, with delay contingent on circumstantial evidence due to their inherent demand for prompt fulfillment⁸.

Grammarians distinguish between the use of "Do not do" for prohibition and for supplication or request⁹. Al-Mubarrad noted that prohibition in supplication is akin to command, as one does not typically say "I prohibited from above," but rather "I requested," exemplified by "May God not sever so-and-so's hand." Both expressions share a common form yet differ in meaning. The response to both command and prohibition often serves as a conditional statement, as the conditional verb is jussive, similar to the jussive nature of prohibitive verbs¹⁰.

First Issue: The sole form of prohibition is the present tense verb paired with prohibitive "la."

An example from the Prophet (peace be upon him) is: "O people, do not wish to meet the enemy."¹¹ The prohibition appears as "do not wish," where "la" is the prohibitive particle and "tata-manna" is the jussive present tense verb, with "wa" as the subject pronoun. The prohibition implies a request to desist from the action, executed using "la talabiyya," known as "la nahiyya" when directed from a superior to a subordinate, and "la du'a'iyya" if from a subordinate to a superior¹².

The demand in prohibition parallels that of command and adheres to its form. One might say, "Come to me, and I will honor you," meaning "If you come, I will honor you." Al-Suyūṭī noted that the origin of "la" is the imperative "lam" with an added alif, opened for it.¹³

Ibn al-Mulqīn observed that "la nahiyya" may prohibit multiple actions or a specific one. For instance, Sibawayh and others exemplified "Do not eat fish and drink milk" when intending to prohibit combining the two actions. If the intent were to prohibit fish consumption or milk drinking independently, they would say, "Do not eat fish and do not drink milk."¹⁴

The term "لا" in the context of prohibition pertains to both the addressee involved in the action beginning with (addressing a specific person), such as (Do not do it, O Zaid), and to the third person, such as (Zaid should not do it), because it only has one form. It is always in the jussive mood unless it is accompanied by the emphatic (nun of emphasis), in which case it becomes in the indicative mood.¹⁵

"Like the imperative, the prohibition causes the present tense to be jussive if it functions as a response indicating it clearly and necessarily implies leaving the prohibited act. A sign of this is the validity of substituting (if you do not do) in place of the prohibition. You say, (Do not disobey God, and you will gain His pleasure) because when you prohibit disobedience and demand its cessation, it indicates that this is a cause and condition for something, which in this case is 'gaining pleasure,' so it is jussive based on what the prohibition indicates."¹⁶

As for (the prohibitive), it is a particle that only enters upon the present tense verb and designates it for the future, such as (Do not fear and do not grieve). It is also used for supplication, as in (Do not hold us

accountable if we forget).¹⁷ Thus, some have termed it (the requesting) to encompass prohibition and other requests. Al-Suhaili claimed it is " (the negating la), and the jussive occurs after it due to an implied " (the "lam" of command) before it, which was omitted to avoid the conjunction of two in pronunciation. These are weak claims.¹⁸

The argument for this is that the prohibition seeks the negation and abandonment of the act just as the command seeks its occurrence. The prohibition is considered one of the types of jussive present tense verbs according to grammarians.¹⁹

Al-Faradhi stated: "The prohibitive causes the verb to be jussive, unlike the negating 'لا,' because prohibition is a request, and its tool is so its function must be to make the verb jussive like (Let Zaid stand), due to their shared nature of requesting. All forms of prohibition are future-oriented because you only prohibit a person from something they have not yet done."²⁰

The significance of the hadith: The wisdom behind the prohibition, as Ibn Battal explained, is that a person does not know the outcome of their affairs, similar to asking for well-being in trials. He also cited the saying to Abu Bakr: "To be safe and thankful is more beloved to me than to be tested and patient." It was said that it was prohibited due to the arrogance, reliance on strength, confidence, and lack of concern for the enemy it entails, all of which are contrary to caution and prudence. The compiler added: "It is a form of oppression, and Allah has promised victory to those oppressed."²¹

Therefore, one should not wish to meet their enemy and say, (O Allah, let me meet my enemy).²²

Reflecting on the statement of the Prophet, "O people, do not wish to meet the enemy," the address is directed to all Muslims, and the term "people" implies humanity and compassion, reminding fighters of their shared humanity and common ancestry. Hence, the Prophet forbids making the meeting with the enemy a wish, for wars bring destruction and devastation. The Islamic principle stems from Allah's saying: "And if they incline to peace, then incline to it"²³ The conditional clause "if" indicates certainty and the meeting of two groups. Al-Nawawi mentioned: "The prohibition of wishing to meet the enemy is due to the arrogance and reliance it entails," and some interpreted it as a prohibition in specific cases where there is doubt about its benefit and potential harm. Otherwise, fighting is entirely a virtue and obedience.²⁴

The prohibition of wishing to meet the enemy does not mean hating jihad or not desiring to fight or wish for martyrdom for the sake of Allah, as all these are encouraged by Islamic teachings and are among the traits of the pious. What should be understood from the prohibition of meeting the enemy are several points, including:

- a) Avoiding arrogance in numbers and reliance on strength, which leads to lack of concern.²⁵
- b) Meeting the enemy is unknown, and one does not know if they will stand firm or flee when they see the flashing swords. Thus, the Prophet commanded asking Allah for well-being.²⁶

Section Two: Figurative Prohibition

The prohibition may deviate from its literal form to other figurative forms, including:

1. Request: As exemplified by the Prophet's saying, "He used to serve me, so I said, 'Do not do it.' He replied, 'I have seen the Ansar do something for the Prophet (peace be upon him) and I vowed not to accompany any of them without serving them.'" ²⁷

- In the hadith, the prohibition do not do (لا تفعل) is used as a jussive particle for the request. "تفعل" is a present tense verb in the jussive mood due to la "لا", with the sign of jussive being sukoon.²⁸

Al-Suyuti affirmed that the form of prohibition is originally designated for prohibition, stating: "Prohibition is a request to refrain from action, and its form is 'لا تفعل' (do not do), which is literally for prohibition and figuratively for meanings such as (dislike), as in (do not walk exultantly on the earth)."²⁹

The correct understanding of the prohibition form is that it is designed to request the cessation of an action, and it does not exclusively indicate prohibition, dislike, or request unless there is a contextual clue indicating so.³⁰

Using "لا" for a request is akin to saying to an equal, "لا تفعل كذا" (do not do this), and similarly when it deviates from a request to other meanings like (threat), as in saying to your child or servant, "لا تطعني" (do not obey me).³¹

The accurate interpretation of the form "لا تفعل" is that it is called a (prohibition) even if used to request the cessation of an action by way of (request) or (supplication) without (superiority), because the meaning of (requesting the cessation of an action) in the form "لا تفعل" is the common meaning that unites the senses of (prohibition), (request), and (supplication) that are used in the form "لا تفعل".³²

A request is a demand issued by equals in status or rank, made politely or gently, such as a brother to his brother or a friend to his friend, as in "يا بن أم لا تأخذ بلحيتي ولا برأسي" (O son of my mother, do not seize me by my beard or by my head).³³ The basis of a request in a demand is equality with the negation of supplication and superiority.³⁴

Al-Hazimi said: "This has no basis; it is merely a convention used for prohibition, which they call literal. Request and supplication are called figurative, and the correct view is that it is unknown, being a foreign concept to the Arabic tongue."³⁵

Abdul Khaliq Adhima stated: "The use of 'لا' in prohibiting the addressee is much more frequent than its use in prohibiting the absent in the Quran: 'As for the particle of prohibition, it is (لا), and it applies to both the present and absent, as in 'لا يقيم زيد' (Zaid should not stand) and 'لا تقم يا رجل' (do not stand, O man)."³⁶

There is an example of 'لا' prohibiting the speaker in a rare reading of the verse, "ولا نكنتم شهادة الله" (and we do not conceal the testimony of Allah).³⁷ In the reading of Al-Hasan and Al-Shaabi: "ولا نكنتم" (and let us not conceal) with the meem in the jussive mood, prohibiting ourselves from concealing the testimony. The use of prohibitive 'لا' for the speaker is rare, as in the saying:³⁸

(If we ever leave Damascus, we shall never return as long as it is inhabited by the tyrants)

This usage is rare because the speaker does not usually prohibit themselves except metaphorically, treating themselves as an outsider.³⁹

Indications of the Hadith "He used to serve me although he was older than me, so I said to him: 'Do not do it.' He replied, explaining his reason for humbling himself before Anas despite being younger: 'I have seen the Ansar (children of Aws and Khazraj) do something great for the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), something beyond description, so I vowed (آليت) to myself that I would not accompany any of them without serving them.'" In this hadith, we find evidence of honoring the benefactor, even if they are younger. It also showcases Jarir's humility, his virtue, his respect for the Prophet, and his goodwill towards those who served him well.⁴⁰

"This indicates the honor given to those who honor the Prophet (peace be upon him). Respecting a man's companions is respect for the man himself. Hence, Jarir (may Allah be pleased with him) considered honoring these individuals as honoring the Prophet (peace be upon him)."⁴¹

Al-Amar commented, "The prohibition was Anas saying to Jarir (may Allah be pleased with them), 'Do not do it,' out of hesitation to let Jarir serve him because Jarir was older. Jarir's response, 'I have seen the Ansar,' was to reaffirm his commitment to serving anyone among the Ansar for their support of the Prophet (peace be upon him), thereby demonstrating his love for the Prophet and, by extension, for those who aided him."⁴²

The hadith highlights the importance of honoring those who have done good for the Prophet (peace be upon him), even if they are younger, and underscores the virtue and humility of Jarir ibn Abdullah Al-Bajali.⁴³

2. Supplication

An example from the Prophet (peace be upon him): "O Allah, let my companions complete their migration, and do not turn them back on their heels."⁴⁴

The prohibition in the hadith appears in the form of supplication: "لا تردهم" (do not turn them back). Here, "لا" is a jussive particle used for supplication. "ترد" is a present tense verb governing two objects, made jussive by the presence of "لا" and marked by sukoon, with a change to a fatha due to assimilation.⁴⁵

In supplication, "لا" is the prohibitive particle but is called supplicative out of politeness, as in "لا تؤاخذنا"⁴⁶(do not hold us accountable). It governs a single verb⁴⁷. Sibawayh mentioned: "It is termed supplication because it is considered too significant to be called prohibition."⁴⁸ Prohibition is directed to inferiors, while supplication is directed to superiors.⁴⁹

Supplication is a request to perform or refrain from an action, provided it is from a lower to a higher status. Otherwise, it is a prohibition if from a higher to a lower status. Its form is the present tense preceded by the prohibitive "لا" with the intent of supplication.⁵⁰

The prohibitive form becomes a supplication when used in a context of humility and entreaty⁵¹, such as in (Our Lord, do not hold us accountable if we forget or make a mistake).⁵²

Indication of the Hadith: "Do not turn them back on their heels"

Qadi Iyad mentioned: "Some inferred from this hadith that the return of the emigrants to Mecca under any circumstance undermines their migration. However, there is no clear evidence for this in my view, as it could be a general supplication."⁵³

"Do not turn them back on their heels" may also mean not allowing them to revert to disbelief, as reverting to disbelief is regressive while faith is progressive. This contradicts the views of today's atheists who label Islam as backward and claim progress lies in abandoning Islam. However, true progress lies in maintaining faith.⁵⁴

The hadith also signifies the fear of apostasy after faith and retreating after migration. It underscores the compassion and kindness a caller to faith must have for those he invites, as exemplified by the Prophet (peace be upon him), which was a key factor in his successful mission. It also highlights preventing excuses such as illness to avoid the love of homeland and homeland ties⁵⁵

Conclusion

It is imperative to pause and reflect upon the objectives achieved and the conclusions reached after the research has been completed in the manner we envisioned. Thus, I conclude:

1. The language indicates a command to refrain from an action, typically used in a superior-subordinate context.
2. When someone says "Do not do it" with an air of authority, it implies that the one being addressed is expected to comply by refraining from the specified action.
3. The phrase "Do not do it" when used by a superior to an inferior, devoid of any mitigating context, is a straightforward command comprising three elements: the presence of the phrase, its meaning, and adherence to it.
4. Supplication is the act of requesting the performance or abstention from an action, provided that it is directed from a lower to a higher status. Otherwise, it is a command if from a higher to a lower status, and its form is the present tense preceded by the jussive "لا" with the intent of supplication.
5. The use of "لا" in prohibiting an addressee is significantly more frequent than its use in prohibiting an absent party.
6. Petition is the polite request made by equals in status, often characterized by courtesy, or it is the request made from a brother to his brother or a friend to his friend.

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FOOTNOTES

1. Al-Sihah Taj Al-Lugha: 6 / 2517.
2. Al-Ayn: 4 / 93, Al-Muhit Fi Al-Lugha: 1 / 321, Al-Sihah Taj Al-Lugha: 6 / 2517, Al-Sihah Fi Al-Lugha: 5345, Mujmal Al-Lugha: 844, Kifayat Al-Mutahaffiz: 198.

3. Refer to Al-Muhkam Wal Muhit Al-Azam: 4 / 384, Mukhtar Al-Isihah: 320, Lisan Al-Arab: 15 / 343, Taj Al-Arus: 40 / 148, Mu'jam Matn Al-Arabiya: 5 / 565.
4. Refer to Al-Ta'rifat: 391, Al-Ta'rifat Al-Fiqhiyya: 233, Illal Al-Nahw: 198, Kitab Al-Afal: 3 / 171, Tawjih Al-Luma: 370, Sharh Al-Tashil: 4 / 57.
5. Refer to Al-Kitab: 1 / 136, Al-Usul Fi Al-Nahw: 2 / 180, Sharh Kitab Sibawayh Lil-Rummani: 795, Al-Murtajil Fi Sharh Al-Jumal: 215, Sharh Al-Mufasssal: 5 / 170.
6. Kashaf Istilahat Al-Funun Wa Al-Ulum: 1 / 267, Sharh Alfiyyat Ibn Malik Lil-Ibn Uthaymin: 60 / 10.
7. Al-Usul Fi Al-Nahw: 2 / 157.
8. Refer to Sharh Al-Tashil: 4 / 62, Al-Kafiya Fi Ilm Al-Nahw: 46, Amali Ibn Al-Hajib: 1 / 178, Al-Lumha Fi Sharh Al-Mulha: 2 / 860, Miftah Al-Ulum: 320, Al-Kinash: 1 / 146, Ma'ani Al-Nahw: 4 / 8.
9. Refer to Al-Lubab Fi Illal Al-Bina Wa Al-I'rab: 1 / 168, Sharh Al-Azhariyya: 48, Asalib Al-Talab 'Inda Al-Nahawiyyin Wa Al-Balaghin: 466.
10. Refer to Al-Muqtadab: 2 / 135, Al-Usul Fi Al-Nahw: 2 / 176, Al-Ta'liqa Ala Kitab Sibawayh: 4 / 18, Dhiya' Al-Salik Fi Awda' Al-Masalik: 4 / 26, Ma'ani Al-Nahw: 4 / 12.
11. Riyad Al-Salihin, Al-Risala edition: 50.
12. Refer to Al-Nahw Al-Wafi: 4 / 367, Ta'jil Al-Nada: 66, Al-Sharh Al-Mukhtasar Ala Nazm Al-Ajrumiyya: 5 / 16.
13. Refer to Al-Usul Fi Al-Nahw: 2 / 176, Hima' Al-Hawami: 2 / 540, Al-Jana Al-Dani: 300, Sharh Al-Faradhi Ala Alfiya Ibn Malik: 4 / 8.
14. Al-Masa'il Al-Nahwiyya Fi Kitab Al-Tawdih Li Sharh Al-Jami' Al-Sahih: 160, Al-Badi' Fi Ilm Al-Arabiyya: 1 / 603.
15. Refer to Sharh Al-Muqaddima Al-Muhtasiba: 1 / 245, Al-Insaf Fi Masa'il Al-Khilaf: 2 / 430, Al-Badi' Fi Al-Arabiyya: 1 / 624, Hashiyat Al-Saban: 1 / 167, Sharh Al-Mukhtasar Ala Al-Nazm Al-Maqsud: 7 / 5.
16. Sharh Al-Tashil: 4 / 42.
17. Al-Baqarah: 286.
18. Refer to Al-Jana Al-Dani Fi Huruf Al-Ma'ani: 300, Al-Barauma Fi Al-Nahw: 2, Saleh, H. S. R., & Saleh, A. B. (2023). "The Islamic Worldview Posits that Enlightened Leadership Plays a Crucial Role in the Attainment of Sustainable Development." Migration Letters, 20(S3), 602-612.
19. Refer to Inas Al-Nas: 36, Asalib Al-Talab 'Inda Al-Nahawiyyin Wa Al-Balaghin: 482.
20. Refer to Sharh Al-Faradhi Ala Alfiya Ibn Malik: 4 / 8, Tawjih Al-Luma: 102.
21. Dalil Al-Falihin Li-Turuq Riyad Al-Salihin: 1 / 205.
22. Hatem Abdel Alim Hamed Mafarha Al-Kubaisi, Dr. Sanaa Aliwi Abd Al-Sada, University of Baghdad, College of Islamic Sciences. "Artistic Photography in the Vocabulary (And Gloun, the Despondent, the Evacuees)." Vegueta, Anuario de la Facultad de Geografía e Historia, 22(9), 2022, 103.
23. Al-Anfal: 61.
24. Refer to Kunuz Riyad Al-Salihin: 1 / 643-645.
25. Refer to Bahjat Al-Nazirin: 1 / 119, Nuzhat Al-Mutaqin: 1 / 84.
26. Refer to Bahjat Al-Nazirin: 1 / 119.
27. Riyad Al-Salihin, Al-Risala edition: 138, "Nawasikh Al-Jumla Al-Ismiyya Fi Sharh Sunan Abi Dawud Lil-Imam Badr Al-Din Al-Aini (855 AH)", Dr. Muhammad Khudair Mudhi, Journal of the College of Islamic Sciences, Issue 39, Part 1, 2014, pp. 231-301.

28. Refer to I'rab Riyad Al-Salihin: 300.
29. Al-Israa: 37, Luqman: 18.
30. Bassem Saleh, A., & Glub Madloul, Y. (2023). The Role of Science in the Formation of Personality according to the Islamic Intellectual Perspective. Yusra, The Role of Science in the Formation of Personality according to the Islamic Intellectual Perspective (May 2, 2023).
31. Refer to Mughni Al-Labib Ibn Hisham: 326, Ulum Al-Balagha Al-Bayan: 76.
32. Refer to Asalib Al-Talab Bayn Al-Nahawiyyin Wa Al-Balaghin: 467, Al-Ab'ad Al-Ma'rifiyya Lil-Amal Al-Nahwi 'Inda Sibawayh Fi Daw' Mu'tayat Al-Khitab, Dr. Salman Abbas Abd, Journal of the College of Islamic Sciences, Issue (40) Part 2, 2014, (461-486).
33. Taha: 94.
34. Refer to Asalib Balaghiya: 112-117, Al-Minhaj Al-Wadih: 2 / 92, Sharh Mi'at Al-Ma'ani: 10 / 19, Hashiyat Al-Dusuqi Ala Mukhtasar Al-Ma'ani: 2 / 418.
35. Refer to Sharh Mi'at Al-Ma'ani: 10 / 17-19, Al-Damir Al-Marfu' Al-Mufassar Bima Ba'dah, Dr. Salman Abbas Abd, Dr. Imad Alwan Hussein, Journal of the College of Islamic Sciences, University of Baghdad, Issue 36, Part 2, 2013, (524-604).
36. Refer to Dirasat Li-Asalib Al-Qur'an Al-Karim: 2 / 523.
37. Al-Ma'idah: 106.
38. This verse is from the long meter (Al-Bahr Al-Tawil). There is a debate over its author; some attribute it to Al-Farazdaq, others to Al-Walid Ibn Uqba. It is cited in Mughni Al-Labib: 326, Sharh Shawahidihi: 2 / 633, Amali Ibn Al-Shajari: 2 / 533, Al-Ayni in Al-Maqasid Al-Nahawiyya: 4 / 1909, Sharh Al-Tasrih: 2 / 394, Tamheed Al-Qawa'id: 9 / 4303.
39. Refer to Al-Bahr Al-Muhit: 4 / 396, Tamheed Al-Qawa'id: 9 / 4310, Sharh Al-Tasrih Ala Al-Tawdih: 2 / 394, Dirasat Li-Asalib Al-Qur'an Al-Karim: 2 / 523.
40. Refer to Tatriz Riyad Al-Salihin: 238, Nadhariyyat Al-Nahw Al-Arabi Bayn Al-Ta'sil Wa Al-Tahdith, Dr. Salman Abbas Abd, Qatari Journal of Islamic Sciences, University of Baghdad, Issue 3, 2007, (635-669).
41. Sharh Riyad Al-Salihin: 3 / 221.
42. Athar Al-Tawzif Al-Shar'i Fi Al-Tahlil Al-Nahwi 'Inda Sibawayh, Dr. Salman Abbas Abd, Journal of the College of Islamic Sciences, Issue (38) 2014: (360-380).
43. Refer to Bahjat Al-Nazirin: 1 / 416, Nuzhat Al-Mutaqin: 1 / 326.
44. Riyad Al-Salihin, Al-Risala edition: 31.
45. Refer to I'rab Riyad Al-Salihin: 19-20.
46. Al-Baqarah: 289.
47. Refer to Hashiyat Al-Ajurumiyya: 54, Al-Sharh Al-Mukhtasar Ala Mukhtasar Nazm Al-Ajurumiyya: 5 / 16.
48. Al-Kitab: 1 / 142, Al-Usul Fi Al-Nahw: 2 / 170.
49. Refer to Al-Usul Fi Al-Nahw: 2 / 170, Sharh Al-Muqaddima Al-Muhtasiba: 2 / 457.
50. Refer to Al-Nahw Al-Wafi: 4 / 368.
51. Al-Baqarah: 289.
52. Al-Minhaj Al-Wadih Lil-Balagha: 2 / 92.

53. Dalil Al-Falihin Li-Turuq Riyad Al-Salihin: 1 / 71.

54. Refer to Sharh Riyad Al-Salihin: 1 / 47.

55. Refer to Bahjat Al-Nazirin: 1 / 39, Duraid Abd Muzayel Al Dhaheri, Dr. Hazem Adnan Ahmed, University of Baghdad, College of Islamic Sciences, "The Divine Discourse to Satan in the Old Testament," Journal of Namibian Studies, Published Mar 10, 2023, HOME, Archives, Vol. 33 (2023), Articles / 1404.