

# Directing the Shādh (Irregular) Readings from Verse 7 to Verse 59 of Sūrat Al-Baqarah

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the methodology of Imam Muhammad bin Ali Al-Shawkani in his famous exegesis, *Fath Al-Qadīr*, focusing on the Shādh (Irregular) Readings found from Verse 7 up to Verse 59 of Sūrat Al-Baqarah. *Fath Al-Qadīr* is considered one of the most prominent exegetical works that combines *transmission (Naql)* and *reasoning (Dirāyah)*, bringing together the interpretation of scriptural texts through direct narration with linguistic, grammatical, and jurisprudential analysis.

In his exegesis, Al-Shawkani reviews the various readings reported in these verses—whether *Mutawātir* (mass-transmitted) or *Shādh* (irregular)—clarifying the differences between these readings in terms of pronunciation, grammatical inflection (*I'rāb*), linguistic structure, and sometimes the effect on the theological or jurisprudential meaning.

The study focuses on the concept of "Directing the Reading" (*Tawjīh Al-Qirā'ah*), which is the method Al-Shawkani adopts to prefer one reading over another or to highlight its effect on understanding the meaning, while adhering to the proofs from the Qur'an and Sunnah. An analysis of Al-Shawkani's exegesis reveals that the direction of the reading is based on precise controls, including the strength of the chain of transmission (*Sanad*), the authenticity of the narration (*Isnād*), the reinforcement of the linguistic meaning, and its suitability for the objectives of the Sharī'ah (*Maqāsid Shar'iyyah*).

The study provides a detailed description of the Shādh readings in these verses and clarifies Al-Shawkani's approach to dealing with them, whether by presenting them without preference, indicating the more optimal choice, or interpreting based on the reading's impact on the meaning, highlighting the precise scholarly method used in comparing the readings.

The study also demonstrates that this method helps readers and students of knowledge understand the Qur'anic texts deeply, avoid monolithic interpretations, and emphasizes the importance of considering the Shādh readings and understanding their impact on the meaning, especially in verses related to legal rulings, creedal issues, or Qur'anic narratives.

The research concludes that Al-Shawkani's methodology in directing the readings reflects a comprehensive vision that balances transmission and reason, stability and variation, and memorization and analytical study. This makes it an important reference for understanding the **diverse readings in Sūrat Al-Baqarah** and their application in contemporary scholarly research and Qur'anic studies.

**Keywords:** Directing (*Tawjīh*), Readings (*Qirā'āt*), Irregular (*Shādhah*), Sūrat Al-Baqarah, *Fath Al-Qadīr*.

## INTRODUCTION

Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds, and prayers and peace be upon our Master Muhammad and upon all his family and companions. The noblest and best of sciences are those related to the science of the Holy Book, as it concerns the speech of the Creator, Exalted and Glorified is He. One of the most severe misconceptions raised

by our enemies is their challenge to the Qur'an and its readings. I wanted to enter through this blessed door, hoping that God Almighty would count us among those who adhere to it and cling to His rope. We also ask Him to make it an intercessor for us, for He is Capable of all things.

I looked extensively into books of exegesis that discuss the readings, and I found our scholars recommending

*Fath Al-Qadīr* to us. Therefore, relying on God, Lord of the Worlds, I decided to focus this research on the **Shādh Readings** mentioned in *Fath Al-Qadīr* by Al-Shawkani, may God have mercy on him, the scholar and Mufti of Sana'a. I collected the readings mentioned in Al-Baqarah, from Verse 7 to Verse 59, in twenty instances under three sections, and I undertake to direct and attribute them to their reader, so that the information is easy for the beginner student of knowledge, accessible to the advanced one, easy to search, and smooth in expression. This will facilitate future researchers' return to their sources, and the understanding of their content and direction.

## Section One: Linguistic Concepts (Al-Mabḥath Al-Awwal: Al-Mafāhīm Al-Lughawīyyah)

1. **Tawjīh (Directing) Linguistically:** It is the verbal noun (*maṣḍar*) of *wajjaha*, stemming from *al-wajh* (face/direction). *Wajh al-kalām* means the way/path one intends by it. It is said, "*wajjih al-ḥajar wijhatan mālah*" (Direct the stone to its direction).
2. **Tawjīh (Directing) Terminologically:** It is a science concerned with clarifying the linguistic and exegetical facets (*wujūh*) of the readings and indicating the preferred one among them. It is also called (*Ilal al-Qirā'āt* - Reasons for the Readings), (*Hujaj al-Qirā'āt* - Proofs for the Readings), or (*Al-Ihtijāj lil-Qirā'āt* - Arguing for the Readings). However, using **Tawjīh** (Directing) is preferable. Al-Zarkashi said: It is a sublime art by which the majesty and robustness of meanings are known. Thus, Tawjīh can be said to be a science that enhances the beauty of the reading and clarifies its intended meaning and objective.
3. **Qirā'āt (Readings) Linguistically:** It is the plural of *Qirā'ah* (reading). Linguistically, it is the verbal noun of *qara'a*. *Qara'a* means "recited" (*talā*).
4. **Qirā'āt (Readings) Terminologically:** It is the science by which the manner of pronouncing the Qur'anic words and the way of their performance are known, whether in agreement or difference, while attributing each facet to its reporter.
5. **Shādhah (Irregular) Linguistically:** It stems from *shadhdha yashidhdhu/yashudhshu shudhūdhan*, meaning it isolated itself from others. *Shādh* is that which is distinct or isolated.
6. **Shādhah (Irregular) Terminologically:** It is the reading where one of the three established pillars of reading is lacking: **mass-transmission** (*Mutawātir*), **conformity with the Ottoman script** (*Rasm Uthmānī*), or **conformity with a valid face of the Arabic language**.
7. **Al-Shawkani (May God have mercy on him):** He is the scholar and judge of Yemen, the Imam of his time and the unique figure of his era. He compiled various sciences and authored works in many arts, including jurisprudence (*fiqh*), language, and exegesis. He is the author of the book *Fath Al-Qadīr*.

## Section Two: Directing The Shādh Readings in the First Segment (Verses 7-24)

Instance	Word (Arabic)	Transliteration	Verse No.	Type of Reading
First	عِشَاوَةً	<i>ghishāwatan</i> (Accusative)	7	Shādhah (Irregular)
Second	مَرَضٌ	<i>marḍun</i> (Sukūn on rā')	10	Shādhah (Irregular)
Third	لَقُوا	<i>lāqū</i> (with Alif)	14	Shādhah (Irregular)
Fourth	اسْتَرَوْا الصَّلَاةَ	<i>ishtarawo...</i> (Kasrah/Fatḥah on wāw)	16	Shādhah (Irregular)
Fifth	صُمُّ بَكَ مَ عُمِي	<i>ṣumman bukman 'umyan</i> (Accusative)	18	Shādhah (Irregular)
Sixth	يَخْطِفُ	<i>yakhṭifu</i> (Kasrah on tā')	20	Shādhah (Irregular)
Seventh	وَقُوْدَهَا	<i>wuqūduhā</i> (Ḍammah on wāw)	24	Shādhah (Irregular)

## Detailed Direction (*Tawjīh*):

1. غَشَاوَةٌ (*ghishāwatan*) (V. 7): The majority read *ghishāwah* with *ḍammah* (nominative). A Shādh reading is *ghishāwatan* with *naṣb* (accusative). **Direction:** The majority reading (nominative) makes the word the delayed subject (*Mubtada' Mu'akkhar*). The accusative reading implies an omitted verb conjoined with the previous verb *khatama Allāhu* (God sealed). The majority reading is preferred because avoiding omission is better than inferring it. The Shādh reading is irregular due to the lack of *Tawātur* (masstransmission).
2. مَرَضٌ (*marḍun*) (V. 10): The majority read *marad* with *fathah* on the *rā'*. The Shādh reading is *marḍ* with *sukūn* on the *rā'*. **Direction:** There is apparently no difference in meaning between the two readings; they are two Arabic dialects (*lughatān*). The *sukūn* is intended for lightness (*Takhfīf*). The Shādh reading is due to the lack of *Tawātur*.
3. لَقُوا (*lāqū*) (V. 14): The majority read *laqū* (without *alif*). The Shādh reading is *lāqū* (with *alif*). **Direction:** Reading *laqū* implies a unilateral action. Reading *lāqū* implies *Mufā'alah* (mutual participation). The non-majority reading, despite its grammatical justification, is Shādhah because it did not reach the level of *Tawātur*.
4. اَشْتَرَوْا الضَّلَّةَ (*ishtarawo...*) (V. 16): The majority read *ish-tarawu* with *ḍammah* on the *wāw*. Shādh readings include *kasrah* on the *wāw* (*ish-tarawi*) and *fathah* on the *wāw* (*ish-tarawa*). **Direction:** The *ḍammah* on the *wāw* (majority) is to distinguish it from the original *wāw*. The *kasrah* (Shādh) follows the original rule for the meeting of two unvoiced letters (*Ittiqā' As-Sākinayn*). The *fathah* (Shādh) is due to its lightness. The non-majority readings are Shādhah because they lack *Tawātur*.
5. صَمُّ بَكٍّ مَّ عُمٍ يَّ (*ṣumman bukmun 'umyan*) (V. 18): The majority read *ṣummun bukmun 'umyun* with *ḍammah* (nominative). The Shādh reading is *ṣumman bukmun 'umyan* with *naṣb* (accusative). **Direction:** The majority reading is the predicate (*khavar*) of an implied subject (*hum* - they are). The accusative reading (Shādh) is either for censure (*naṣb 'alā al-dhamm*) or as the direct object (*maf'ūl bih*) of an implied verb. This reading is Shādhah because it violates the *Rasm Al-Muṣḥaf* (Ottoman script).
6. يَخْطِفُ (*yakhtaḥifu*) (V. 20): The majority read *yakhtaḥifu* with *fathah* on the *tā'*. The Shādh reading is *yakhtaḥifu* with *kasrah* on the *tā'*. **Direction:** Both are Arabic dialects. The reading with *fathah* (majority) is more eloquent (*aḥṣaḥ*) and superior. The Shādh reading is considered less common (*qalīlah radī'ah*) by some scholars.
7. وَقُودَهَا (*wuqūduhā*) (V. 24): The majority read *waqūduhā* with *fathah* on the *wāw*. The Shādh reading is *wuqūduhā* with *ḍammah* on the *wāw*. **Direction:** *Waqūd* (with *fathah*) means the fuel/firewood (*al-Ḥaṭab*). *Wuqūd* (with *ḍammah*) means the action of kindling/the act itself. Some Arabs use both meanings interchangeably. The reading of Al-Ḥasan and those who agreed with him is Shādhah for not reaching *Tawātur*.

## Section Three: Directing The Shādh Readings In The Second Segment (Verses 2638)

Instance	Word (Arabic)	Transliteration	Verse No.	Type of Reading
First	لَ يَسْتَحْيِي	yastahī (One yā')	26	Shādhah (Irregular)
Second	بَعُوضَةً	ba'ūḍatun (Nominative)	26	Shādhah (Irregular)
Third	عَرَضَهُنَّ	'araḍahunna (Feminine plural pronoun)	31	Shādhah (Irregular)
Fourth	رَغْدًا	raghdan (Sukūn on ghayn)	35	Shādhah (Irregular)
Instance	Word (Arabic)	Transliteration	Verse No.	Type of Reading
Fifth	هَذِي	hadhī (with yā')	35	Shādhah (Irregular)
Sixth	الشَّيْرَةَ	ash-shīrah (yā' instead of jīm)	35	Shādhah (Irregular)
Seventh	تَبَعَ هَدِي	hadiyy (Shaddah on yā')	38	Shādhah (Irregular)

### Detailed Direction (Tawjīh):

1. **لَّ يَسْتَحْيِي (yastahī)** (V. 26): The majority read *yastahyī* with two *yā*'s. The Shādh reading is *yastahī* with one *yā*'. **Direction:** Both are Arabic dialects. The reading with one *yā*' is the dialect of Tamīm and Bakr bin Wā'il, which resulted from a linguistic process (vowel transfer and deletion of one of the two *yā*'s).
2. **بَعُوضَةً (ba'ūḍatan)** (V. 26): The majority read *ba'ūḍatan* with *naṣb* (accusative). The Shādh reading is *ba'ūḍatun* with *raf'* (nominative). **Direction:** For the majority reading (*naṣb*), *mā* is either an extra particle (*zā'idah*) or *ba'ūḍah* is a substitute (*badal*). For the Shādh reading (*raf'*), *mā* is the subject (*mubtada'*), and *ba'ūḍah* is the predicate (*khabar*). The non-majority reading is Shādhah due to the lack of *Tawātur*.
3. **عَرَضَهُنَّ ('araḍahunna)** (V. 31): The majority read *'araḍahum* (masculine plural pronoun). The Shādh readings include *'araḍahunna* (feminine plural pronoun) and *'araḍahā* (singular feminine). **Direction:** The pronoun *hum* (majority) refers to the *Musammayāt* (the named things), and the use of the masculine plural pronoun is due to the principle of **Ghalabat Al-'Uqalā'** (prevalence of rational beings). The Shādh readings (*hunna* and *hā*) refer back to the *Asmā'* (names). The Shādh readings violate the *Rasm AlMuṣḥaf*.
4. **رَغْدًا (raghdan - with sukūn on ghain)** (V. 35): The majority read *raghdan* with *fathah* on the *ghayn*. The Shādh reading is *raghdan* with *sukūn* on the *ghayn*. **Direction:** Both are Arabic dialects. When a trilateral noun has a guttural letter (*ḥarf ḥalq*) in the middle, both *sukūn* and *tahrīk* (vowelization) are permissible. The *sukūn* reading is Shādhah due to the lack of *Tawātur*.
5. **هَذِي (hadhī)** (V. 35): The majority read *hādhīhi* (with *hā*'). The Shādh reading is *hādhī* (with *yā*'). **Direction:** *Hādhī* (with *yā*') is considered the linguistic origin, and the *hā*' is a substitute for the *yā*'. The Shādh reading violates the *Rasm* (Ottoman script).
6. **الشَّيْرَةَ (ash-shīrah)** (V. 35): The majority read *ash-shajarah*. The Shādh readings include *ash-shijrah* and *ash-shīrah* (with *yā*' instead of *jīm*). **Direction:** These are all Arabic dialects. The reading *ash-shīrah* (with *yā*') is a case of letter substitution (*ibdāl ḥarf makān ḥarf*). The *shīrah* reading is Shādhah for violating the *Rasm Al-Uthmānī*.
7. **تَبَعَ هَدِيَّ (hadiyy)** (V. 38): The majority read *hudāya* (with *alif* and light *yā*'). The Shādh reading is *hudiyy* (with *shaddah* on the *yā*' and no *alif*). **Direction:** Both readings are Arabic dialects, both meaning *AlHudā* (guidance). The reading *hudiyy* is achieved by replacing the *alif maqṣūrah* with a *yā*' and merging it with the *yā*' of the first person possessive, which is the dialect of Hudhayl.

### Section Four: Directing The Shādh Readings in The Third Segment (Verses 49-59)

Instance	Word (Arabic)	Transliteration	Verse No.	Type of Reading
First	يَذْبَحُونَ	yadhbaḥūn (No Tashdīd)	49	Shādhah (Irregular)
Second	فَرَّقْنَا	farraqnā (with Tashdīd)	50	Shādhah (Irregular)
Third	جَهْرَةً	jaharatan (Fathah on hā')	55	Shādhah (Irregular)
Fourth	الصَّعْقَةَ	aṣ-ṣa'qah (Shortened)	55	Shādhah (Irregular)
Fifth	حِطَّةً	hiṭṭatan (Accusative)	58	Shādhah (Irregular)
Sixth	رُجْزًا	rujzan (Ḍammah on rā')	59	Shādhah (Irregular)

### Detailed Direction (Tawjīh):

1. **يَذْبَحُونَ (yadhbaḥūn)** (V. 49): The majority read *yudhabbiḥūn* (with *tashdīd* on the *bā*'). The Shādh reading is *yadhbaḥūn* (without *tashdīd*). **Direction:** The *tashdīd* in the majority reading implies repetition and increase in the action, based on the rule: "Increase in structure implies increase in meaning." The lighter reading (*yadhbaḥūn*) suffices with the absolute act. The Shādh reading is irregular.
2. **فَرَّقْنَا (farraqnā)** (V. 50): The majority read *farraqnā* (without *tashdīd*). The Shādh reading is *farraqnā* (with *tashdīd* on the *rā*'). **Direction:** *Farraqnā* means "We split." *Farraqnā* means "We made it into *firaq* (sections)." *Farraqnā* implies a greater degree of subdivision (*ashadd tab'īḍan*). The reading is Shādhah due to the lack of *Tawātur*.



3. **جَهْرَةً (jaharatan)** (V. 55): The majority read *jahratan* (with *sukūn* on the *hā'*). The Shādh reading is *jaharatan* (with *fathah* on the *hā'*). **Direction:** The *fathah* and *sukūn* are two Arabic dialects, following the rule that both *tahrīk* and *sukūn* are permissible for a middle guttural letter in a trilateral verb. The reading of Ibn 'Abbās is Shādhah.
4. **الصَّعْقَةُ (aṣ-ṣa'qah)** (V. 55): The majority read *aṣ-ṣā'iqah* (with *alif* after *ṣād*). The Shādh reading is *aṣṣa'qah* (shortened, with *sukūn* on 'ayn). **Direction:** *Aṣ-Ṣa'qah* (Shādh) is the verbal noun referring to the single event (*al-marrah al-wāḥidah*) or the sound that accompanies the thunderbolt. *Aṣ-Ṣā'iqah* (majority) refers to the destructive punishment or the fire descending from the sky. The Shādh reading is non-*Mutawātir*.
5. **حِطَّةً (ḥiṭṭatan)** (V. 58): The majority read *ḥiṭṭatun* (with *raf'* - nominative). The Shādh reading is *ḥiṭṭatan* (with *naṣb* - accusative). **Direction:** The majority reading (nominative) is the predicate of an omitted subject (*Mas'alatunā ḥiṭṭah* - our request is a remission). The accusative reading (Shādh) is the object of an omitted verb (*Iḥṭu' 'annā dhunūbanā ḥiṭṭatan* - remit our sins with a remission). The reading is Shādhah.
6. **رُجْزًا (rujzan)** (V. 59): The majority read *rijzan* (with *kasrah* on the *rā'*). The Shādh reading is *rujzan* (with *ḍammah* on the *rā'*). **Direction:** *Rijz* (with *kasrah*) and *Rujz* (with *ḍammah*) are two Arabic dialects, both meaning *Al-'Adhāb* (punishment). *Rijz* is also the name of a famous idol. The reading is Shādhah.

## RESULTS (Al-Natā'ij)

1. Shādh readings are of several types: those with a sound chain of transmission (*Sanad*) but which violate the Ottoman script (*Rasm Al-Muṣḥaf*) or the rules of Arabic grammar, or which did not achieve the required level of fame (*Ish-tihār*). Others may have an unsound chain of transmission.
2. *Tafsīr* (Exegesis) is the clarification of the verse's meaning, its circumstance, its story, and the reason for its revelation (*Sabab An-Nuzūl*) with wording that clearly indicates it.
3. A source for many Shādh readings is that some of the Companions used to write explanatory words in the margins of their private copies of the Qur'an (*Maṣāḥif*) to clarify ambiguous words. They did not fear confusing them with the Qur'an because most of them had memorized and fully controlled the Qur'an.

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