

## A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE ANCIENT SAILOR'S POEM AND THE NARRATION OF PROPHET YUNUS BASED ON KIERKEGAARD'S EXISTENTIALIST THOUGHT

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**Abstract.** *This research, with a comparative approach, examines the existentialist manifestations in the poem "The Ancient Mariner" by Samuel Coleridge and the Quranic narrative "Prophet Yunus" based on the philosophical components of Søren Kierkegaard. The starting point of this research is the analysis of the concrete situation of the main characters in the face of the fundamental concepts of "despair", "darkness", "loneliness" and "fear", which ultimately leads to the experience of the transition from anxiety to "absolute faith". This research attempts to show how "The Mariner" and "Yunus" are driven towards a transcendent meaning in a context of existential crisis, with the collapse of external structures and the encounter with emptiness. The findings of the research indicate that both works, while representing ontological pains, depict the evolution of the "self" from a state of suspense and fear to the affirmation of faith and liberation from existential isolation. This research seeks to answer these questions using a descriptive-analytical method: 1- How are Kierkegaard's existentialist components, including despair, loneliness, and fear, reflected in the narrative structure of "The Ancient Mariner" and the narrative of "Jonah"? 2- What are the fundamental similarities and differences between the transition from a state of anxiety and fear to "absolute faith" in the lived experience of the sailor and Prophet Jonah? The research findings indicate that there seems to be a structural similarity between the sailor's distress in facing the sea and the suffering of Prophet Jonah in the belly of the whale in the components of darkness and loneliness that lead both characters to accept existential responsibility and return to the sacred. It is assumed that faith in both works is not a passive refuge, but the result of a conscious passage from "absolute hopelessness" and "existential fear" that, in accordance with Kierkegaard's model, guides the individual from the false self to the realization of the "authentic self."*

**Keywords:** *Existentialism. Philosophical thought. Ancient sailor. Prophet Jonah.*

### **Introduction**

Man's search for meaning has always been on the thin line between anxiety and faith; a conflict that reaches its peak in ancient literary and religious texts. Existentialism, as a philosophy that emphasizes the authenticity of "individual lived experience," provides specific analytical tools for reinterpreting these experiences. Among the thinkers in this field, Kierkegaard, by carefully explaining concepts such as fear, despair, and loneliness, opens a new perspective on human existential challenges. This study, with a comparative approach, targets two different narrative areas, namely Samuel Coleridge's poem "The Ancient Mariner" and the Quranic narrative of "Prophet Yunus." Although these two works emerged in different temporal and cultural contexts, both are linked to each other in a situation of "existential crisis." The sailor in the vast expanse of the sea and the prophet Jonah in the darkness of the fish's belly are both in a situation that Kierkegaard calls "confrontation with the void." In this situation, the usual structures of life collapse and the individual, in his absolute solitude, is forced to confront the

truth of his existence. Darkness in these works is not only an environmental feature, but also a symbol of internal dead ends that lead the individual to "dialectical despair." According to Kierkegaard's model, this despair does not mean the end of the road, but rather a necessary stage in the transition from the false self to the true self. The fear of the characters in these narratives is a reflection of absolute freedom and the responsibility that weighs heavily on the individual's shoulders in the face of the sacred. The central issue here is how man, in the darkest moments of solitude, finds his way back to the light of faith. In his narrative, Coleridge portrays the sailor's suffering as an atonement for the transition from sin to an understanding of the ontological connection with all beings. On the other hand, the narrative of the Prophet Jonst embodies repentance and a return from existential escape to the acceptance of the divine mission. The comparison of these two works, based on Kierkegaard's views, makes it possible to recognize the connection between existential impasses and the essence of faith. In fact, both characters move on an inner journey from the realm of "the passion and excitement of sin" to the "calm of faith." The aim of this research is to show how existentialist components can penetrate the depths of the human messages of these narratives. Examining these concepts in the two works mentioned above leads us to the point that faith is an experience that is born from the heart of despair. This study aims to show how individual suffering, by linking to the absolute, emerges from the state of emptiness. The present study attempts to present a modern reading of human salvation in the face of loneliness and fear, avoiding traditional views, and using Kierkegaard's framework, to illuminate unspoken aspects of personality development in these two outstanding works.

#### Research Background

On the subject of the present study entitled "A Comparative Study of Samuel Coleridge's *The Ancient Mariner* and the Narration of the Names of Prophet Yunus Based on the Existentialist Thought of Søren Kierkegaard", no independent and comprehensive research has been conducted so far, and only limited case studies and research have been conducted on this subject. Therefore, the present study has been conducted in line with this existing necessity. The research that was used as a reference in this study and is relevant to the content of the present study is introduced; Zahra Yari et al. (2019), *The Impact of the Existentialist Approach on the Works of Kamran Diba (Case Examples: Pak Shafaq, Shahr Shushtar, and the Contemporary Art Museum)*; Kianoush Daniyari and Ali Nouri (2014), *Naser Khosrow's Ontological Anxiety (Comparison of Naser Khosrow's Anxiety and Worry, and the Anxiety of the Existentialists)*; Mohammadi Fesharaki and Roya Hashemizadeh (2014), *analysis of the story of Saedi's Beggar based on the principles and characteristics of the existentialist school*; Narjes Tohidifar and Reza Nazimian (2012), *analysis of the impressionist-existentialist brilliance in the short story "Eistgah" by Taher Alavi and the two short stories "Al-Wahid" and "Taqab" by Abdul Hamid Al-Gharbawi*; Kamran Sepهران and Mehrdad Ezzati (2019), *concept of existentialist tragedy in the play "Manfred" by Lord Byron*; Seyed Aziz Javan Pourhari (2017), *comparative study of Moana Jaledin's thoughts with existentialist thoughts*; this research is important because it provides a new platform for analyzing human experiences by combining the two fields of classical literature and existentialist philosophy. A comparative study of the poem "The Ancient Mariner" and the narrative of "Jonah" under Kierkegaard's thoughts reveals hidden layers of suffering and salvation that operate beyond time and space. This study is necessary because it shows how components such as "fear" and "despair" are not only not endpoints, but are also prerequisites for returning to the "original self."

In addition, a deeper understanding of the existential situation of man in critical situations helps to more accurately reread religious and literary texts. Finally, this research, by explaining the connection between existential impasses and the essence of faith, offers an educational model for facing modern crises.

#### 1- Conceptualization of Existence

"This newly arrived word is derived from the word *existentialis* meaning existence, from which two adjectives, *existential* and *existential*, both meaning existential, have recently been created. After adding the suffix *-ism* to the end of the second adjective, they have created the new word *existentialism*, which apparently means supporters of existence. The suffix generally represents the superiority that is accepted over a word. Therefore, *existentialism* is also a term for a school of thought that takes steps to prove the superiority and superiority of existence" (Folicke, 1964:3). "Existentialism is not easily defined because the two philosophers who both took the name *existentialist* (Sartre-Kierkegaard) were opposed to each other in all philosophical directions and the only thing they had in common was their aversion to such a title. In philosophy, we encounter a tradition of *existentialism* and a formal school of *existentialism*. It is clear that it is impossible to determine the beginning and end of the tradition of *existentialism*."

Which great thinker has not paid attention to issues such as death and life at some point in his work or life? But the existential philosophical school has a clear and definite beginning.

Some have considered its beginning on a Sunday afternoon in 1834 when a young Dane sat in a cafe, smoking a cigarette, and was absorbed in the thought that he would grow old without having added anything to this world. ... Kierkegaard spent the rest of his short life exploring the *existentialist* position and published several important existential treatises during the 1840s. His works remained untranslated for years and had little impact on others, but after World War I they found fertile ground and were taken up by Martin Heidegger and Kal Jaspers (Irwin, 2019: 39).

It can be said: "The *existentialist* approach was a reaction against purely abstract philosophies, the peak of which was evident in the thoughts of Hegel. The principle and basis of the formation of existential philosophies was attention to the specific human existence.

Therefore, all the discussions that are raised in this school are centered around man and his life. Kierkegaard, a Danish thinker, is considered the first *existentialist*. He tried to prove by criticizing Hegelian metaphysics and official and cult-oriented Christianity that the meaning of human life is not achieved in the system and in the veils of general concepts" (Bidhendi and Zaryeh, 2012: 81). With these interpretations, it can be acknowledged that *existentialism* is a concept that is applied to the works of specific philosophers from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who, despite deep school differences, share the belief that philosophical thinking begins with the subject of man, not merely subjective thinking.

#### 2- Existentialism and its characteristics.

In the lexicon, the term *existence* in the Greek language has the following meaning: "It means "coming out of", "appearing" and "emerging". This term is usually used synonymously with being and existence" (Navali, 1374: 17). It can be safely admitted that *existentialism* is a branch of contemporary philosophy that includes theists such as Kierkegaard to nihilists such as Camus and Marxists such as Sartre. "Existentialism is a school of thought that relies on existence. The *existentialist* does not accept the essence of possibilities, abstract and absolute concepts, and is opposed to the spirit of mathematics. He only focuses on the existent or, better yet, is engaged in investigating the existence of the existent" (Foucault, 1343: 43). Philosophers

consider this intellectual thought to be a way to bring philosophy closer to everyday life: "Existentialism is a tendency to bring philosophy closer to everyday life of humans, and in fact it is the tendency of those who say: Man should be able to find the answer to his problems in philosophy, but now philosophy has cut off its real contact with human life and, like mathematics, physics, and chemistry, does not treat problems such as worries, anxieties, fear of death, sin, and the like" (Ghiyashi Kermani, 1375:6).

### 3- Pioneers and key figures in the development of the school of existentialism

What complicates the matter is that existentialists are divided into two groups: the first group is Christian existentialists, including Jaspers and Gabriel Marcel, followers of the Catholic religion, and the second group is existentialists who deny the necessity of existence, namely Heidegger and the French existentialists of Sartre. And the only thing these two groups have in common is this principle that they all believe that existence precedes essence. In other words, philosophy must begin with introspection. (Rahimi, 1982:20).

With these interpretations, it can be said: The founder of the school of existentialism is the Danish philosopher, theologian, and mystic Kjerkegur, one of the prominent mystics of the West, who lived in the first half of the 19th century and did not live more than 43 years. After him, this school was divided into two branches: theistic and atheistic: 1- Dostoevsky: A famous Russian theistic thinker and novelist who is considered one of the greats of Russian literature. He has a famous saying that if God did not exist, everything would be permitted. 2- Karl Jaspers: A German theistic philosopher, physician, and psychologist, and one of the greatest defenders of spirituality in the West with existentialist views. 3- Gabriel Marcel: The most divine philosopher after Kierkegaard, also called Gabriel. 4- Simon Way: One of the theistic philosophers of the existentialist school, he was also a mystic and a discoverer of revelations. 5- Nietzsche: A German philosopher who lived in the second half of the 19th century and the first quarter of the 20th century. He has been called an atheist. 6- Jean-Paul Sartre: The most atheistic existentialist philosopher and a Frenchman. 7- Simone de Beauvoir: Mrs. Simone de Beauvoir is also an atheist philosopher of this school. Among the atheist philosophers are: Franz Kafka - Albercamo - Merleau-Ponty - Heidegger (Ghiyashi Kermani, 1375:19).

### 4- Comparative Literature

Comparative literature is a window opened to the world of monotony, in which, despite the time and space distances, common aspects of ideas in the field of culture and literature appear and the truth of humans is manifested in commonalities. "It is difficult to determine the exact date of the formation of interdisciplinary studies in the field of literature, but it seems that Greece was the first origin of this knowledge... However, the scientific and theoretical flourishing of this scientific field dates back to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the field of comparative literature and the field of interdisciplinary studies, it should be said that the second half of the twentieth century was the beginning of the flourishing of this knowledge" (Fayzi, 2014: 1291). It is a means or method to achieve the goal, which is to explain the literary interactions and principles between different nations. In other words, comparative literature has a specific theory and definition for literature and specific research areas. At the same time, it has an independent academic field in literary studies and research. Anoushirvani writes about the historical background of comparative literature: "Comparative literature began in the second half of the 19th century in France with the lectures and writings of French researchers such as Abel-François Villemin (1790-1870) and Jean-Jacques Ambert (1800-1864).

Regarding the goal of comparative literature, he believes that it is often thought that the goal of comparative literature is to compare the literature of different nations.

Whenever researchers compare the literary works of two poets, two writers, or two subjects with each other, they have entered the realm of comparative literature. The main reason for this misconception is their lack of patience and inattention to the literary theories of this field." (Anoushirvani, 2010:7). Therefore, the goal in this field is not comparison or comparison.

Comparison is merely a means or method to achieve the goal, which is to explain the literary interactions and principles between different nations. In other words, comparative literature has a specific theory and definition for literature and specific research areas. While relating to the literature of different nations, it has an independent academic field in literary studies and research.

#### 5- Basing on the thoughts of Søren Kierkegaard

Kierkegaard is a Danish philosopher and the founder of the school of existentialism.

Although these ideas are as old as humanity, he was the one who founded modern existentialism. The founder of existentialism is generally considered to be Søren Kierkegaard, a Danish philosopher and thinker. The first important figure of the movement that is known today as existentialism. Kierkegaard founded a philosophy in which he defined the feeling of responsibility of man towards the universe and made man free to have choice and choose between two paths; that is, to have and not to have. That is, he accepted existence and man as an existent if the more he was rejected, he considered existence, that is, to have an individual... a free choice between options. In his opinion, a living person generally has two ways to choose from, one way or the other; one way is to try his best to forget that he is a person who exists, in which case he becomes a ridiculous person. The other way is to focus all his energy on the fact that he is a living person. Kierkegaard divides humans into two types in relation to their existence and the place they have chosen to live in: A: An existential person, a living person. B: An inexistent person, a non-living person (Banai Kashtan and Zamani, 1400:222). Kierkegaard believed that the methods of previous philosophical systems, especially Hegel, were incapable of understanding man. Kierkegaard's criticism of Hegel's philosophy actually includes all abstract theorizing; Because in his opinion, abstraction, which is a purely subjective matter, the real existence of man is set aside and as a result it is neither thought about nor a way of knowing is introduced. According to Kay Yerkgur, Hegel's philosophy did not leave a place for the existential individual and all it did was to universalize him in amazing ways and what could not be universalized was considered unimportant and lost sight of (Bidhendi, 2011:17). Kay Yerkgur criticized Hegel from the point of view of extreme subjectivism. For Kay Yerkgur, truth is always subjective. In ethics, he was a supporter of individualism and ethical relativism and preached depression, fear and hatred of the masses. He preferred religious existence among the three types of human existence: "aesthetic, ethical, religious". The concept of existence as a "combination of the finite and the infinite, the temporal and the eternal" is the brainchild of Kierkegaard. In the last years of his life, he criticized the official church for its lack of piety.

(Babayi, 2017:658).

6- The origins of existentialist philosophy in two works (The poem of the ancient sailor - The narration of Prophet Jonah).

#### 1-6 - The ancient sailor

The story of this poem begins with the method of hypnotism and in a charming way.

The old sailor is trying to tell his sea voyage full of excitement, anxiety and suffering to a young man at a wedding feast. The course and changes of this sea voyage are mentioned in seven parts: In the first part: The sailor sees three well-dressed young men who have been invited to a wedding feast, he stops one of them. Through hypnotism or, as it was called in Coleridge's time, through charm, the sailor takes the will of the wedding guest (Zarei, 2019:60).

In this part, the old sailor tells how a ship sailed south with a favorable wind and favorable weather until it reached the equator. The storm pulls the ship south. A land of ice and terrifying sounds where no one can be seen. Until a large seabird named Albatross appears through the snow and fog, and the sailors welcome him with great joy and hospitality. It turns out that this seabird is a good-natured seabird and follows the ship that returns to the north through the fog and floating ice. But the old sailor abandons the tradition of hospitality and kills the good-natured bird. Part Two: In this part, the old sailor's ships cry out to him why he killed the good-natured bird. With the changes in the weather, the old sailor's companions sometimes consider themselves complicit in the crime and sometimes refuse to accept it. Suddenly, the ship stops moving and the albatross' revenge is taken little by little. A ghost follows the ship. The sailors, in their intense suffering and fear, blame the old sailor for all the blame and hang a dead seagull around his neck as a sign of the cross and sin. Part Three: The old sailor sees a group in the sky in the distance. Coming closer, the old sailor thinks it is a ship; and with the precious blood of his arms, he frees his tongue from the shackles of thirst. At the height of the joyous flash, horror dawns in the sailors' eyes. How can this be a ship that comes without wind or waves? Only the skeleton of the ship is visible, with the ghost of its guide. Death and life-in-death are the dice for the ship's crew, and life-in-death takes the old sailor. After that, one after the other, the sailors fall to the ground and die, but life-in-death begins its work with the old sailor. Part Four: The old sailor is so sad that he envies the dead on the deck of the ship that they have died peacefully. But the dead men still curse him in their eyes. In silence and fear, under the moonlight, the ship splits the sea and moves forward. Part Five: The curse begins, the bodies of the deceased are awakened, and the ship sets off. The lonely ghost of the South Pole, by command of the heavenly host, takes the ship to the equator, but he still intends to take revenge.

Part Six: The old sailor falls into a trance due to the speed of the ship and hears voices.

Then the supernatural movement slows down; the sailor opens his eyes and the punishment begins. Finally, the curse is paid and the old sailor returns to his homeland. Part Seven. The astonished lifeboat approaches the ship, and the ship sinks at once, and the boat saves the old sailor.

#### 2-6 - The narration of Prophet Yunus

The story of Prophet Yunus (AS) is mentioned in several parts of the Quran in different verses. The story is that Yunus (AS) was one of the prophets whom God sent to his people to guide them, but they did not accept his call. God's punishment approached them and Yunus (pbuh) himself went out from among the people. As soon as their punishment was near, they all believed in God and repented, and God accepted their repentance. But Yunus (a.s.) learned that the divine punishment was removed from his people, and it seems that he did not realize that his people believed and repented, so he did not return to them. So he boarded the ship and left. In the middle of the way, a whale came in the way of the ship, they saw no choice but to throw one person near it. For this purpose, they cast lots and cast the lot in the name of Yunus, his income in the sea. The whale was killed and the ship was saved. Then God Almighty kept him alive in the belly of a fish for several days and preserved him. Yunus understood that this process is a

divine test and a reprimand from God for the way he treated his people. From the darkness of the belly of the fish, he repented to God and God accepted his repentance. God Almighty ordered the whale to throw Yunus into the water and by the sea. The whale did so.

The Almighty God made a pumpkin plant grow with his head, so that it would cast a shadow on him.. Then God sent him to his people, and the people also accepted his call and believed in him. This story is stated in the verses of the Qur'an as follows: "Then why should they not believe in any city when their faith benefits them and be stubborn until the time of punishment, and they are the only people of Yunus (AS) who, when they believed, We removed from them the punishment of humiliation in the world and made them enjoy and benefit until a certain time when it was the time of natural death" (Quran, verse 98: 220). And indeed, Yunus was one of the messengers/ when he ran towards the feathered ship/ so the occupants cast lots together and Yunus became one of the losers/ they threw him into the sea and the amber fish swallowed him up while he was his own accuser/ and if he was not one of the glorified ones/ he would certainly remain in the belly of the fish until the day they are lifted up/ so he was sent to dry land while he was unwell. We planted a tree of all kinds of gourds on his head, and sent him to more than one hundred thousand people of Nineveh, so they believed, and We blessed them for a while (Qur'an, verses 148-139: 451). Again, wait for God's judgment and don't be like the owner of the fish "Yunus" who hastened in the punishment of the nation out of anger, who eventually regretted it and fell into the darkness of the fish's belly prison, and in his sadness called God for his salvation// If you did not receive the grace and mercy of his Lord, you fell into a waterless and grassy desert with his reproach and became a hoe/ But when he came to the door of truth, he cursed his God and chose him from among his righteous ones. (Surah Qalam, verses 48-50). And remember the situation of Jonah, when he went out of his people angry and thought that we will never put him in trouble until he was caught in the darkness of the sea and the belly of a fish in the dark night. Then, in that darkness, he shouted that there is no god but your unique nature, you are pure and free from partners and every flaw and shame, and I was one of the wrongdoers who wronged my soul// So we answered his prayer and saved him from the vortex of grief and we save the people of faith in the same way. :133).

3-6 - The main components of the philosophy of existentialism and Kierkegaard's thoughts in the system of the ancient sailor and Yunus the Prophet

The most important existentialist ideas that are the main focus of these two selected works and that we intend to examine and analyze in this study include the following: 1- Hopelessness. 2- Loneliness and darkness. 3- Anxiety (fear). 4- Faith. Kierkegaard believes that humans are not originally creatures with reason and rationality, but rather beings with feelings.

Hopelessness. Anxiety and unhappiness who make their actions and decisions based on this nature. The fact that humans are irrational beings who have feelings. Hopelessness and fear is one of the characteristics of existentialist philosophies and we see it in Heidegger and Sartre (Asghari, 2009: 111).

4-6 - Despair

According to Kierkegaard, if humans stop at the sensory stage, they are forced to struggle in the direction of oblivion and, since they do not find a way to get anywhere, they become hopeless (Banai Kashtan, Zamani, 1400:243). Kierkegaard describes despair as a psychological illness that is a disease of the soul and considers only a specific way of despair to be specific to the self, defining a threefold form for it: despair from not being aware of having a self; despair from not wanting to be oneself; despair from wanting to be oneself (Kierkegaard, 1388:27).

He considers despair to be a disease leading to death. At the peak of loneliness, the lack of education and the suffering surrounding the ancient sailor and Prophet Jonah lead them to loneliness and despair.

Despair in the poem of the ancient sailor is a despair of not being aware of having a soul.

Sometimes, without awareness of their own existence, the passengers of a ship are at the height of despair, their tongues fail to speak in absolute silence. They are hopeless of salvation in silence. Our throats are thirsty, our black lips are burned, / We could neither laugh nor cry / We all stood still from thirst. (Zarei, 2019:30). When despair takes control of the body and soul. A sad silence reigns over the hearts: This crowd of people, each waving their hands, / No sound; But ah! Silence fell / Like music in my heart. (Ibid., 49). Sometimes time also brings wealth and despair: "Time to bring wealth! Time to bring wealth! / Eyes weary, each staring somewhere (ibid.: 29). Sometimes despair spreads its shadow so much that there is no hope of opening one's mouth to ask for forgiveness: The cursed torment with which they died / Had never faded: / I could not lift my eyes from them / Nor look up to them for any prayer (ibid.: 46).

In the beginning, it seems that the prophet Yunus, despairing of those who feared him, becomes angry with them and asks the Merciful Lord to bring down punishment on them: "He stood among the people for thirty years to preach the divine mission, but during this time, except for two people named Rubil and Tanukha, no one believed in him. During that time, Yunus preached and guided the people for a long time. But he found that except for two people, others did not believe in him and continued to deny him and even tried to kill him. And they have come to harm him. He also complained to God and asked for the divine punishment to be sent down on those people" (Mohati, 1382:554). This is while God criticizes His Prophet's premature despair and haste: "So be patient for the judgment of your Lord and be steadfast like the owner of the whale when he calls and is oppressed" (Quran, verse 48:568). The despair of Prophet Yunus is what Kiyarkugar considers as a special weakness of himself. Prophet Yunus, with his self-confidence, did not only despair of the people, but despair of divine mercy is also seen in his behavior. The Prophet of God, despairing of his people, turns his back on them and thinks that God, the Most Gracious, has also despaired of His people and will send down the promised punishment, while the Lord of the worlds is the one whose mercy and kindness have preceded His wrath and anger. Therefore, his confidence in despair and the descent of divine punishment and abandonment The people, the Prophet of God's neglect and despair of the mercy of God. The missing link is faith, which is what Kierkegaard calls the knight of faith in fear and trembling.

#### 5-6 - Loneliness and Darkness

Existential thought refers to a deeper and more rooted loneliness; The loneliness that is related to existence, the loneliness that remains despite the most satisfying relationships with others and despite complete self-knowledge and coherence: "Existential loneliness refers to the abyss that lies between man and every other being and cannot be bridged. It also refers to a loneliness that is much more fundamental and radical: the separation between the individual and the world" (D. Yalom, 2010: 496). In the poem *The Old Mariner*, we witness the feeling of individual loneliness among each of the sailors; the loneliness of the old man of the sea is an interpersonal loneliness in which they experience being far from others and being alone and geographically isolated.

When sadness and silence surround them in the middle of the sea; they try to break the silence and loneliness by speaking: The breeze died down, the sails fell down / How sad it was, how sad; / And we spoke only until Let's break the silence of the sea. (Zarei, 2019:27).

In geographical isolation and being far from home, a shadow of loneliness has cast a shadow on the inhabitants of the ship. "The wind between the ice crevices of snow/ had a sad tone:/ We saw no sign of man or animal/ Among us, there was ice everywhere (ibid.:24).

In the depth of the loneliness of the old man of the sea and the repetition of words evokes the depth of loneliness of a human being: "Alone, alone, alone, alone/ Alone in a vast sea!/ And no saint has shown mercy/ On my soul in torment. (ibid.:34). In the midst of a burden of loneliness, sometimes abandonment appears in the personality of the old sailor and he becomes an absolute denier of existence (of God):" O wedding guest! My soul was alone in a vast sea:/ It was so silent and blind there that even God/ As if he was not present (Ibid.: 55). The loneliness of Prophet Yunus was due to his lack of social skills and lack of social interaction appropriate to his time. According to the commentators, the meaning of darkness is three kinds of darkness: the darkness of the night, the darkness of the depths of the sea, and the darkness of the belly of the fish. But the author of the stories of the prophets says: There were four darknesses and Jonah was in the middle: the first darkness of pride, the second darkness of fear of God, the darkness of the darkness of the belly of the fish, the fourth darkness of the sea." It is in this darkness and loneliness that they say: "In the narrow and dark prison of the belly of the fish, Jonah began to glorify, extol, and worship, and in the darkness, he called out, meaning he called on God, and he came to the place where he had wronged himself and regretted what he had done" (Sattari, 1377:44). The prophet Jonah experiences a more fundamental and deep-rooted loneliness and darkness in the belly of the fish, which is the separation between the individual and the world.

#### 6-6 - Anxiety (fear).

What is frightening for humans is being free, being responsible, and making the right and responsible choice. Worry and anxiety are considered important principles of existentialism; because in their view, anxiety and worry cause Human movement and striving. Anxiety and similar concepts such as fear, apprehension, etc. are other key words in the works of existentialists, to the extent that significant parts of the epoch-making works of this philosophical school, namely, existence and time, and existence and nothingness, have addressed this issue and explained it. In the book *Fear and Trembling*, as the title of the book suggests, Kay Yergkur tries to portray the sensitive and anxious situation of man in relation to choosing the path of life and choice with a very beautiful, passionate and attractive expression. An anxiety accompanied by internal conflicts between reason and faith that challenges Prophet Abraham in the process of sacrificing his son Isaac. These anxieties and fears are the result of the special human situation, which is the result of man's free will and responsibility in his actions and beliefs.

Kierkegaard was the first to distinguish between fear and anxiety; he defined fear as fear of something and anxiety as fear of nothing or non-being, and he firmly believed that in this non-being, one is no longer a person" (D. Yalom, 2010: 74). This is the same anxiety that Kierkegaard mentions as "the anxiety of Abraham" in his book *Fear and Trembling*. An angel orders Abraham to sacrifice his son, and if it were certainly an angel who gave the order, if an angel had really come and said: You are Abraham and you must sacrifice your son, then there would be no problem. But before anything else, this question comes to everyone's mind: Is this really an angel? Am I really Abraham? What proof is there that this is an angel and that I am Abraham? (Rahimi, 2012: 30). In the poem *The Ancient Sailor*, we witness the fear of the main character of the poem and the passengers of the ship. The fear of ghosts and unknown and imaginary creatures that surround the ship: "Yes, slimy creatures crawled with their feet / On the slimy sea. / Spinning and spinning and screaming / The flames of death danced in the night

(Zarei, 2019: 28). The fear of ghosts imposes a pounding heart and severe anxiety on the ancient sailor: " Alas! I have imagined and my heart beats hard (ibid.: 31).

The fear and anxiety of the prophet Yunus when he leaves his people and disobeys God's command and is caught in the waves of the sea and the presence of the whale (Zalunun) around the ship is far beyond the fear of the other passengers of the ship. Because he knows the reason for this anger of the sea. Prophet Yunus in the fish's prison is not free from fear either. Will his praise and supplication to God be accepted? How long will this rebuke and punishment of God last? Yunus was also gripped by the fear of God in the darkness. If you had not been that Yunus was one of the worshippers, and God Almighty loves those who worship, you would have remained in the belly of that fish (Satari, 1377:44). And when he went away in anger and thought that We would not be able to do anything against him, he called out in the darkness: "There is no god but You. Glory be to You, and I am of the wrongdoers." So We answered him and saved him from the distress. And thus did We save the believers. We answered his prayer and delivered him from the distress, and thus do We deliver the believers. (Ibid.: 24) And the Lord showed that glorification has value in times of fear and distress, not in times of comfort and ease.

#### 7-6 - Faith

Here, man reaches the highest stage of existentialism. Faith is accompanied by suffering, hardship, and asceticism. The passion that arises from faith causes him to accept the opposite of reason and custom (Niko and Hassanzadeh Mirali, 1402:110). The stage of faith is beyond the stage of morality. At this stage, man establishes a direct and immediate relationship with God.

The word immediate refers to the same general moral rule. In the indirect relationship with God - which is the same moral relationship - the individual acts according to a general rule, and this general rule has God's support behind it. However, in performing an action, the individual does not interact directly with God. Whereas in the absolute and immediate relationship, there is no obligation or rule, but the individual's action is directly related to God himself. It is a general moral matter and therefore it is also divine. So it is correct to say that every duty is, in principle, a duty towards God; but if we cannot say anything more than this, in fact, we have said at the same time that we have no duty towards God. Duty is a duty by reference to God, but in the duty itself I do not find a connection with God. Therefore, loving one's neighbor is a duty to the extent that this love is referred to God. But by performing this duty, I have found a connection not with God but with the neighbor I love (Ismailzadeh Vahidri, 2012:113). In the stage of faith, there are two characteristics. In the stage of faith, the individual cannot find a collective expression. It is an individual relationship, which is because there is no other intermediary or general rule in the field. In the second stage of faith, language is insufficient to express itself, it cannot speak. So, communication with others is impossible at this stage because there is no intermediary. That is, there is no general rule that the two parties to the communication can understand each other by referring to that speech. Since Kierkegaard considers faith to be superior to reason and sometimes in complete contradiction with it, and also considers faith to be the way to save humanity, he takes the side of faith in the conflict between reason and faith; he is called a faithist. Kierkegaard considers faith to be superior to reason and sometimes in complete contradiction with it. In Kierkegaard's opinion, faith cannot save us, but faith cannot be understood with reason. He takes the side of faith in the conflict between reason and faith, and hence he was called a faithist. Given the non-rational nature of faith, it is difficult to provide a definition of faith. In his book *Fear and Trembling*, Kierkegaard provides a psychological definition of faith; He says, "Faith is passion."

Faith is a passion that is dependent on a story that does not understand it, and is uninterrupted and is thrown back, a passion that competes with God (Kierkegaard, 1378:17).

In the poem of the old sailor and the prophet Jonah, the journey of the nature of these two characters from the stage of existence to the stages of intellect, morality and faith is seen. The old sailor finally reaches his destination after enduring suffering and hardship; with a heart filled with love for God, he reaches the stage of faith: "The best prayer is made by the one who loves well/both man and bird and animal/The best prayer is made by the one who loves better/everything, small or great/because God loves us,/He created and loves everyone" (Zarei, 1389:56). What determines the salvation of the prophet Jonah is his faith in the power of divine salvation. Therefore, Yunus before imprisonment and Yunus after it are not the same, but there is a huge difference: Yunus' heart before being in the belly of the fish was not a place of love, and after that, even if it cannot be said that his soul has become a place of love, he has undoubtedly realized that obtaining blessings and forgiveness for the sins of the disobedient and the excessive, and as for the repentant, when the argument against them is exhausted and they have no excuse left, is more desirable than the release of punishment. And the binding and unbinding, the severing and the joining, the forcing and the breaking, are all in the hands of God who has sent him as His prophet (Sattari, 1377:50). It is the same passion that tests strength with God and it is faith that makes Abraham the warrior believe. Salvation is the ultimate condition for a person's salvation, it is faith that is mixed with trust and love.

#### Conclusion

The present study aimed to conduct a comparative analysis of the components of Kierkegaard's existentialism in the two works "The Ancient Mariner" and "The Story of Jonah (AS)". The findings from the content and comparative analysis of these two works show that both narratives, beyond a simple narrative structure, represent fundamental existential crises of man.

The results of the study indicate that the concepts of despair, loneliness, anxiety, and faith in these two works do not function as scattered elements, but rather as a dialectical chain that ultimately ends with "faith." Based on the analyses conducted, it was determined that "anxiety" or "fear" that Kierkegaard has discussed in detail in the work "Fear and Trembling" is the most central component in both narratives. In the poem "The Ancient Mariner", the fear resulting from encountering unknown elements of nature and an unknown fate takes the character out of existential neglect. Similarly, in the story of Prophet Jonah (AS), the anxiety resulting from facing the darkness of the whale's belly and absolute loneliness acts as a catalyst for returning to the sacred. In both cases, fear is a motivating factor for the transition from the "false self" to the "authentic faith." Furthermore, the research showed that the elements of "freedom" and "responsibility" underlie the existential transformations of these two characters. The sailor, by choosing himself, and the prophet Jonah, by disobeying the divine command, both find themselves in a position to experience the consequences of their choices in the form of suffering and isolation. This finding confirms that, from Kierkegaard's perspective, suffering and anxiety are essential tools for achieving salvation and realizing existential authenticity. Finally, this research proved that faith in these two works is not a static state, but an "existential leap" in response to profound human crises.

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