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Challenging the Verdict of Epigonality: A Study of Late Antique Judeo-Christian Literature Traces in the Quran

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ABSTRACT

Is the Quran an epigonic text? In other words, does the Quran rely on Late Antique Judeo-Christian literature for its stories, figures, and themes? This article examines the widely debated claim among Western scholars that the Quran is an epigonic work, borrowing from prior religious texts, and aims to critically assess this assertion. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, many Western Orientalists argued that the Quran was constructed through selective borrowing from Judeo-Christian literature. Key figures promoting this view include Abraham Geiger, Michael Cook, and Christopher Luxenberg. However, from the latter half of the 20th century onwards, there has been a significant shift in Western academic perspectives on the Qur'ān, with increasing recognition of its originality and theological independence. Scholars like Sidney Griffith and Joseph Witztum argue that while the Quran may have adapted stories from earlier religious traditions, it reinterprets them within a distinct theological framework, exhibiting originality. Although certain Quranic narratives bear similarities to Jewish and Christian sources, their recontextualization within the Quran highlights the text's unique theological message. This paper challenges the notion of epigonality by examining the Qur'ān's originality and its divine origins in light of recent academic discourse.

Keywords: *Epigonality, exegesis, parallelism, the Quran, Judeo-Christian literature.*

Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, many Western scholars—particularly Orientalists—observed similarities between the Quran and Late Antique Judeo-Christian literature, leading to frequent questions about the source of the Quran's narratives. Early Western researchers often approached these questions with an underlying assumption: that the Quran was composed by borrowing from earlier texts such as the Bible and post-biblical traditions. Notable proponents of this view include Samuel Lee, Abraham Geiger, Tor Andrae, Edmund Beck, Richard Bell, Charles Cutler Torrey, Norman Geisler, John Wansbrough, Michael Cook, Patricia Crone, and more recently, Christopher Luxenberg, who argued that the Quran derived much of its material from Syriac Christian liturgies.

This early wave of Quranic studies, dominated by the theory of "epigonality," suggested that the Quran selectively adopted narratives and ideas from biblical and post-biblical sources (Andrae 1923; Bell 1926; Torrey 1933; Wansbrough 2004). For example, in the 19th century, Abraham Geiger asserted that Jewish influence was fundamental to the formation of the Qur'ān—

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a claim later expanded upon by C.C. Torrey in the early 20th century. Michael Cook similarly contended that Muhammad's religious ideas were more heavily influenced by Judaism than Christianity, pointing to the pre-Islamic fusion of Jewish monotheism with Arab identity in Palestine (Geiger 1833). A 5th-century Christian writer, Sozomen, observed that some Arab tribes, after encountering Jewish communities, rediscovered their Ishmaelite heritage and adopted Jewish laws and customs. While no direct link between these tribes and Muhammad has been established, Cook suggested that this environment may have fostered ideas that later emerged in the Quran (Cook 1983; Crone 1987).

John Wansbrough's theory, though described as "tentative" and "provisional," proposed that neither Islam nor the Quran originated with Muhammad or even in Arabia (Wansbrough 2004). According to historian Herbert Berg, Wansbrough argued that Islam emerged from internal sectarian conflicts among various Jewish-Christian groups and that the Quran gradually developed over approximately two centuries, culminating in a fixed sacred text that supported the Abbasid legal system (Berg 2000; Wansbrough 2004; Andrew 2006).

Critics such as Norman Geisler have similarly pointed to the Qur'ān's reliance on earlier sources—specifically, Jewish Midrashic traditions—as evidence of its human authorship. They highlight parallels like the story of Cain learning how to bury Abel in Surah 5:31, which closely resembles Jewish traditions, arguing that the Quran repurposed pre-existing material rather than presenting a wholly original divine revelation (Geisler 1999). In *Hagarism*, Michael Cook and Patricia Crone proposed that many elements of early Islam, including key features of the Qur'ān, were influenced by the Jewish sect of Samaritanism. They pointed to parallels such as the Qur'ān's relationship with the Torah, Muhammad's similarities to Moses, Mecca's role as a sacred city, and the Kaaba's association with Abraham, suggesting these may have been inspired by Samaritan ideas (Crone & Cook 1977). Ibn Warraq extended this comparison, drawing attention to the resemblance between Muhammad and Moses, both of whom were portrayed as prophets receiving divine revelation on mountains and leading their people out of oppression.

Tor Andrae further argued that early Islam was significantly shaped by Christian influences, particularly from Nestorian Christians in Yemen, Monophysites in Ethiopia, and Syrian pietistic traditions (Andrae 1923). Some scholars have even gone so far as to suggest that Islam originated as a Christian heretical sect, given its reliance on pre-Islamic Christian ideas.

However, from the latter half of the 20th century, there has been a notable shift in the academic approach to the Qur'ān. Scholars have increasingly moved away from questioning the Quran's originality and are instead recognizing it as an authentic and independent text. Recent studies suggest that, just as the presence of similar religious figures, narratives, and practices in the Bible and post-Biblical materials (i.e., late antique Judeo-Christian texts) from earlier cultures (such as the Babylonians, Sumerians, and Akkadians) and religions (such as Zoroastrianism) does not undermine the originality of the Biblical canon, likewise, the parallels between the Quran and Judeo-Christian traditions do not detract from the Qur'ān's originality.

Marianna Klar's article, *Quranic Exempla and Late Antique Narrative*, underscores the Qur'ān's unique structure while critiquing scholars like Van Bladel and Tesei for not adequately addressing the differences between the Quran and Syriac Christian texts like *Neshānā* (Klar 2019, Bladel 2007, Tesei 2014). Sidney Griffith's study of the "Aṣḥāb al-Kahf" (Seven Sleepers) narrative similarly highlights the Qur'ān's originality, arguing that the Quran does not merely retell Judeo-Christian stories but reinterprets them to communicate its own theological message (Griffith 2021, 2008). Joseph Witztum, in his article *The Syriac Milieu of the Quran: The Recasting of Biblical Narratives*, supports this view by showing how the Quran reinterprets Jewish-Christian traditions in its narratives of Cain and Abel, and Abraham's construction of the Kaaba, adapting them to its own theological framework (Witztum 2011).

Recent studies in Western academia demonstrate that the concept of Quranic epigonality is gradually losing its prominence. The presence of extra-biblical stories from Late Antique Judeo-Christian sources in the Quran is increasingly seen not as evidence of plagiarism, but as a natural reflection of the shared divine heritage and cultural environment of the time. This paper, therefore, critically examines these extra-biblical stories from the Late Antique period to

challenge the assertion that the Quran was constructed through selective borrowing from biblical and post-biblical materials, and to re-evaluate its claims to divine origin.

The Quran's Engagement with Late Antique Christian Literature

The notion that the Quran has connections with Syriac Christian writings, particularly homilies (a form of religious sermons), has been a subject of scholarly debate for nearly two centuries. This theory was first proposed in 1824 by Samuel Lee, a professor of Arabic at the University of Cambridge, who argued that certain Quranic narratives were derived from Syriac texts, with the works of Ephrem playing a significant role. A century later, scholars such as Tor Andrae and Edmund Beck explored apocalyptic themes and other elements in the Quran, such as the virgins in paradise, by drawing parallels to Ephrem's Syriac writings. However, none of these scholars argued that the entire Quran originates from homilies. Instead, they limited their comparisons to specific passages in relation to Syriac texts.

This line of inquiry resurfaced in 2000 with the publication of Christopher Luxenberg's work, which posited that the Quran has Christian Syriac origins. However, Luxenberg's claims lacked sufficient historical evidence to substantiate his thesis (Luxenberg 2007). More recently, Gabriel Said Reynolds re-examined the literary genre of the Quran in 2010, emphasizing the relationship between the Quran and both homilies and the Bible. Reynolds suggested notable similarities between Syriac Christian homilies and the Quran and proposed that writers like Narsai and Jacob of Serugh, rather than Ephrem, show closer parallels to the Quran (Neuenkirchen 2022; Reynolds 2008 & 2019). Despite this, Reynolds' methodology has been criticized for failing to provide a precise definition of "homily," leading to questions about the consistency of his argument that the Quran draws directly from Christian homiletic traditions.

Conversely, scholars such as Stephen J. Shoemaker have rejected these claims, contending that the Quran does not display the essential characteristics of Christian homilies and should thus be regarded as a distinct literary genre. Shoemaker's argument asserts that the Quran lacks the defining features of Christian homilies (Shoemaker 2021). Similarly, Nicolai Sinai, in his 2017 article *The Eschatological Kerygma of the Early Qur'ān*, analyzed the eschatological motifs in Syriac homilies and the Qur'ān, drawing attention to fundamental differences between the two. According to Sinai, the key distinction lies in the Quran presenting itself as divine speech, while Syriac homilies are generally human compositions (Sinai 2017). This distinction underscores the unique rhetorical and narrative elements of the Quran, further suggesting its self-representation as divine revelation, unlike the Syriac homilies.

Interestingly, the exact number of Christian homilies allegedly reflected in the Quran remains indeterminate. One reason for this is the aforementioned lack of clarity surrounding the definition of "homily." Another factor is that certain homilies attributed to Christian culture might instead originate from Jewish or other regional religious traditions. Nonetheless, based on current scholarship, it can be argued that approximately 10-15 stories in the Quran may exhibit parallels to Christian homilies. Among these are narratives such as Iblis claiming superiority due to his creation from fire, the creation of jinn from fire, the story of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus (Aṣḥāb al-Kahf), Moses and his servant with the fish, the journey of Moses and al-Khidr, Mary seeking refuge under a palm tree, Jesus speaking from the cradle, Jesus creating clay birds, the birth of Mary, and her guardianship by Zechariah.

Despite these proposed connections, the Quranic versions of these stories differ significantly from their counterparts in Christian homilies, both in narrative structure and character details. While certain elements found in Christian homilies are absent in the Qur'ān, the reverse is also true. For example, in the Christian homily about Mary seeking refuge under a palm tree, Mary and Joseph walk through the desert with the infant Jesus. Mary, exhausted, takes shelter under the tree, and Jesus performs miracles—causing the tree to bend and provide fruit, followed by a spring of water emerging from its roots. These details are either absent from or contradict the Quranic narrative (Roberts 2017). In the Quran's version, Jesus has not yet been born, Mary is alone under the tree, and the tree is accessible without any miraculous intervention

by Jesus. Moreover, the Quranic account does not mention Joseph or a desert journey. Thus, while similarities exist between the two versions, significant divergences raise doubts about claims that the Quranic story was directly borrowed from Christian homilies.

Another example is the story of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus (Aṣḥāb al-Kahf). Some Western scholars contend that this Quranic story closely aligns with the account found in the writings of Theodore of Tarsus (Eich 2023). Although there are shared elements between the Quran and late antique Christian texts, notable differences—some of them even contradictions—are readily apparent. For instance, while Christian sources claim that the Sleepers slept for 200 years, the Quran states that they slept for approximately 309 years. Furthermore, whereas Christian sources explicitly number the Sleepers as seven, the Quran leaves their number ambiguous, asserting that only God knows their exact number. Another discrepancy involves who went to the city: Christian sources claim that two individuals, along with a dog, went, while the Quran indicates that only one person made the trip. Additionally, certain details are exclusive to the Christian sources, such as the adventures of the Sleepers in the city, whereas the Quran contains unique information about the positioning of the sun relative to the cave, how the Sleepers' bodies were turned during their sleep, and the posture of their dog.

As demonstrated in the stories of Mary under the palm tree and the Seven Sleepers, while there are parallels between the Quran and late antique Christian literature, significant differences exist as well. Given that Islam and Christianity both claim to derive from the same divine origin, the existence of shared themes is to be expected. Indeed, the Quran itself acknowledges these similarities (al-Quran al-Fath 48: 29). However, these parallels should not be interpreted as evidence that the Quran is derived from Christian sources. Rather, they reflect a shared religious heritage, with the Quran introducing novel elements and unique perspectives on earlier traditions.

Moreover, there is evidence suggesting that the Quran may have influenced Christian texts and prayers. For instance, Sean Anthony's analysis of the concept of "*sibghat Allah*" (Q 2:138) identified a Christian text where the term "*sibgha*" is used to refer to baptism, potentially indicating that this usage was influenced by Quranic language or Islamic exegetical traditions (Klar 2019; Anthony 2014). While it would be inaccurate to label this as a direct transfer, the presence of such parallels is unsurprising, given that both texts emerged from a shared monotheistic divine origin and Semitic cultural context. Therefore, the presence of similar stories in both the Quran and Christian sources should be understood not as a case of borrowing, but rather as a reflection of their common divine origins.

The Quran's Engagement with Late Antique Jewish Literature

The exploration of the Quran within the framework of Late Antique Judaism has been undertaken by scholars such as Abraham Geiger, Heinrich Speyer, Charles Cutler Torrey, and more recently, with a more nuanced approach, by Gordon Newby (Zellentin 2019). Among these, Geiger and Speyer argued that the Quran borrowed from and reiterated passages found in *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer* (PRE), a rabbinic Hebrew text traditionally attributed to the tannaitic sage Eliezer ben Hyrcanus (active circa 100 CE). This text merges elements of the "rewritten Bible" genre with Midrashic exegesis, offering an expansive retelling of biblical events from Creation to the Israelites' wanderings in the wilderness, along with scriptural proofs and interpretations (Sinai 2019). Geiger and Speyer specifically pointed to Pharaoh's repentance in both PRE and the Bible—such as in the passage "Pharaoh said, 'I have sinned this time; the LORD is righteous, and I and my people are wicked'"—to argue that the Quran, in surah 10:90-92, implies Pharaoh's salvation by the phrase "Now We will save you in your body" (Sinai 2019).

However, this proposed link between PRE and the Quranic depiction of Pharaoh's repentance raises significant theological and textual issues within both the Quran and the Bible. An analysis of the Quranic verses clearly indicates that Pharaoh ultimately drowned, and his last-minute declaration of faith in the God of the Israelites was rejected with the statement, "What! Now! When previously you rebelled and were of the wrongdoers?" Also, the biblical narrative in

Exodus highlights Pharaoh's repeated pattern of repentance followed by immediate rebellion after each plague, emphasizing the insincerity and transitory nature of his repentance. Importantly, no biblical passage suggests that Pharaoh's repentance was accepted or that he was forgiven and spared. This view is further supported by Rudi Paret, who argues that Pharaoh's repentance, as described in the Quran, was not accepted by God and that he did not escape his punishment. The question posed in Quran 10:91—"Now?"—is seen as an indication that Pharaoh's belated repentance is rejected. Paret also draws parallels with other Quranic verses (e.g., 4:18, 40:84-85), which emphasize the futility of repentance or faith at the moment of death (Paret 1977; Sinai 2019). Similarly, Nicolai Sinai concurs with this interpretation in his study on Pharaoh's submission to God in the Qur'ān, which he juxtaposes with parallel narratives in rabbinic literature. Sinai asserts that the Quranic account of Pharaoh's submission to God in his final moments exhibits a unique theological stance compared to similar Jewish and Christian narratives. Specifically, Sinai emphasizes that the Quran rejects "last-minute" repentance, contrasting it with Jewish and Christian understandings of repentance and salvation (Sinai 2019).

In a related vein, Mehdi Azaiez, in his study *Anti-Apocalyptic Discourses in the Quran and the Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 90b-91a*, explores parallels between similar eschatological discourses in the Quran and Talmudic literature. Azaiez highlights the differences in religious polemics addressed by both texts, noting that while there may be thematic similarities, the Quran employs its own distinctive theological, linguistic, and rhetorical framework, which renders it unique as both a literary and theological text (Azaiez 2015; Zellentin 2019).

The precise number of Late Antique Jewish texts allegedly reflected in the Quran remains uncertain, though it is generally posited that approximately twenty expressions or narratives in the Quran may bear resemblances to Jewish texts. These include motifs such as: the boiling of the *tennur*; the moral equivalence of killing one individual to killing all humankind; the story of Abel and Cain; the crow and Abel's burial; Abraham's destruction of the idols; the miraculous salvation of Abraham from the fire; Joseph's bloodstained shirt; Joseph's torn tunic; Iblis's refusal to prostrate before Adam; Iblis's rationale that he was created from fire, while Adam was created from clay; Adam informing the angels of the names of things; Korah's wealth; the mountain raised above the Children of Israel; the body placed upon Solomon's throne; jinn assisting Solomon in the construction of temples; the narrative of the Queen of Sheba; and the drowning of Pharaoh, among others.

Despite the claims of shared motifs between the Quran and Late Antique Judaic sources, it is evident that the Quran diverges from these sources in significant ways, both in terms of the broader narrative structures and theological emphases. In some instances, the overlaps are limited to a few shared words or phrases, while the surrounding context and thematic focus differ markedly. For instance, the Quranic verse "When Our command came and the *tennur* boiled" (Q 11:40, Q 23:27) refers to the boiling of water as a prelude to the onset of the Flood, and has been compared by some Western scholars to a passage in *Leviticus Rabbah* describing the boiling of rainwater in Gehinnom (hell) as a form of punishment. Furthermore, the Babylonian Talmud contains a similar reference to the punishment of sinners with boiling water (*Leviticus Rabbah* 7:6). Gabriel Reynolds notes: "This passage may reflect midrashic traditions. For example, *Leviticus Rabbah*, a text contemporaneous with the rise of Islam, mentions that the waters of the Flood were heated: 'R. Johanan said, 'The Holy One, blessed be He, boiled each drop of rain in Gehinnom before it fell on the generation of the Flood.' (*Leviticus Rabbah* 7:6). A similar tradition exists in the Babylonian Talmud, which states, 'They sinned with boiling passion and were punished with boiling water'" (Reynolds 2018; Talmud, Sanhedrin 108b).

However, a close examination of these narratives reveals significant distinctions between the Quranic account and its purported Jewish parallels. While Reynolds highlights shared imagery (e.g., boiling water), the overall narrative frameworks differ substantially. In the Talmudic version, for instance, boiling water serves as punishment for illicit sexual conduct, while in the Qur'ān, it signals the punishment of the disbelievers who rejected Noah's divine call. Additionally, while *Leviticus Rabbah* describes the Flood waters as boiling in Gehinnom, the Quran makes no mention of hell in this context, using the term *tennur* (oven) instead (Q 23:27). These notable

differences call into question the notion that the Quran simply borrowed these stories from earlier Jewish sources. A thorough comparative textual analysis underscores the Qur'ān's originality in its presentation and interpretation of these narratives, distinguishing it from the Midrashic and Talmudic traditions it is often compared to.

Discussion

In an age characterized by globalization, where cultural and religious beliefs are increasingly interwoven, it is noteworthy that the Quran has not been adequately acknowledged in the West as an integral part of the shared divine heritage. It is a well-established fact that the Quran holds a significant position within the Biblical tradition, akin to that of Jewish and Christian sacred texts. Despite this intrinsic relationship, the Quran has not attained the desired level of recognition in the West; rather, it exists in a state of partial acceptance. This situation can be attributed to a dichotomy of perspectives regarding the Quran's nature and origin:

1. **Theological Continuity Perspective:** Advocates of this viewpoint regard the Quran as a legitimate and authentic theological continuation of the Biblical tradition. This group posits that the Quran represents an extension of the monotheistic teachings articulated in the Bible.
2. **Imitation Perspective:** Conversely, critics of the Quran argue that it is merely an imitation or a vague reiteration of the Biblical tradition. From this standpoint, the Quran is perceived as a text that reprocesses Biblical teachings without the infusion of original thought or creativity.

The tension between these two perspectives reflects a broader discourse regarding the historical contextualization of sacred texts. The critical question arises: Does the application of historical-critical methods to the Quran and other sacred texts undermine their intrinsic meanings? Friedrich Nietzsche offers a resolute affirmation to this question, arguing that such methodologies risk severing texts from their traditional contexts, thus relegating them to mere objects of historical inquiry. This perspective, he asserts, has precipitated the demise of ancient cultural narratives. In stark contrast, Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff contended that to grasp the past comprehensively, all phenomena must be studied within their historical frameworks. Consequently, he argued that texts should invariably be understood in relation to their historical backgrounds.

This methodological divergence between Ulrich and Nietzsche has ignited a robust debate concerning the appropriate methodologies for the examination of sacred texts, specifically the Quran and the Bible. Early Western Quranic scholars such as Abraham Geiger and Josef Horowitz adopted the historical-critical method, subjecting the Quran to positivist historical analysis. Their findings led them to conceptualize the Quran as a derivative of the Bible and post-Biblical (Late Antique Judeo-Christian) traditions. Over time, this interpretation engendered the assumption that the Quran was entirely derivative of Judeo-Christian influences (Neuwirth 2013). By emphasizing the Quran's connections to Christian traditions, this framework sought to reinterpret it as an anonymous text, positing that its origins lay in Christian subtexts rather than recognizing it as a prophetic revelation. In this context, several Western scholars have extracted the Quran from its Arab cultural and historical milieu, framing it instead as an extension of Christian traditions (Neuwirth 2019).

Nevertheless, we argue that this methodology not only overlooks fundamental philological principles—such as textual criticism and literary analysis—but also facilitates a speculative historical approach that seeks to identify Christian influences within the text. Such a reductionist approach fails to acknowledge the complex structure of the Quran. Indeed, the Quran is a polyphonic text that engages with a myriad of cultural traditions, including Jewish, pagan, and pre-Islamic Arab influences. The integration of these diverse traditions and beliefs is intricately linked to the political and social events of the 7th century, a period marked by wars, peace treaties, and confrontations with Meccan polytheists. Within this framework, narratives, stories,

and homilies from earlier communities are reframed through the lens of Quranic revelation and theological understanding, resulting in the creation of a distinctive text. Given the Qur'ān's eclectic structure and its ability to present its own revelation history alongside preceding histories, it is evident that it warrants examination outside the dichotomy established by Ulrich and Nietzsche. In other words, it merits being addressed beyond the limited discourse between Ulrich and Nietzsche regarding the historical analysis of sacred texts. Ultimately, whether subjected to historical analysis or not, the Quran consistently preserves its unique structure and traditional context.

Research Method

This study employs a qualitative research methodology to elucidate the relationship between the Quran and Late Antique Judeo-Christian literature. In the initial phase, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to identify narratives and themes present in the Quranic text and their parallels in both Christian and Jewish sources. This review specifically focused on the claims articulated by scholars such as Abraham Geiger, Tor Andrae, and Christopher Luxenberg, analyzing the historical contexts and methodological frameworks that underpin these assertions.

In the subsequent phase, a systematic analysis of Late Antique texts exhibiting parallels to the Quran was undertaken, with a detailed comparison of the similarities and differences between these texts and the Quran. This analysis particularly concentrated on the narratives of *Mary and the Seven Sleepers (Ashab al-Kahf)*. The comparative examination of elements and themes across these texts served to illuminate how the Quran reshaped these narratives, thereby conveying an original theological message.

Lastly, the study adopted a comparative method for the qualitative analysis of data, seeking to balance critical and supportive readings of the Quran. This approach aimed to foster a deeper understanding of the Qur'ān's originality and its interconnections with Late Antique literature.

Findings and Conclusion

This study addresses several discussions concerning the possible intertextuality between the Quran and Late Antique Jewish-Christian writings, with a particular focus on homilies, narratives, and key figures involved in these debates. The findings indicate that claims asserting the Qur'ān's alignment with certain Christian and Jewish texts are frequently made. Specifically, parallels have been drawn between Syriac homilies, rabbinic midrash, and the Qur'ān. However, a thorough analysis reveals that these similarities are often superficial, accompanied by significant differences.

Firstly, in examining the narratives of Mary's refuge by a tree and the story of the Seven Sleepers, both similarities and notable disparities were identified between the Quranic accounts and their Christian counterparts. In the story of Mary, Christian texts include elements such as Joseph's presence, Jesus' miracles, and the bending of the tree, none of which are found in the Quranic version. Similarly, the narrative of the Seven Sleepers reveals substantial differences in terms of numbers, duration, and plot structure between the two texts. These observations indicate that the Quran does not merely replicate Late Antique Christian literature; rather, it actively reshapes these narratives, contributing original insights.

Secondly, discussions surrounding the alleged Christian homilies referenced in the Quran remain ambiguous due to the lack of a precise definition of the homily. Taking into account Stephen J. Shoemaker's critiques, it becomes apparent that the Quran does not maintain a direct relationship with Christian homilies and exhibits a distinct structural identity. Nonetheless, it is plausible to expect thematic parallels among texts emerging from similar religious heritage and cultural contexts. In this regard, it is concluded that although the Quran may exhibit certain parallels with Judeo-Christian literature, such parallels do not undermine its originality.

Lastly, the study also examined the relationship between the Quran and Jewish midrash. For instance, the narrative concerning Pharaoh's repentance was analyzed for potential influences from Jewish texts like *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer*. However, this examination revealed that

significant differences exist between the two narratives, indicating that the Quran does not directly quote from these traditions. In summary, the parallels between Late Antique Jewish-Christian literature and the Quran do not negate the Quran's status as an original text; rather, they suggest that these parallels may emanate from a common revelatory source.

This study also presents significant findings by analyzing the perspectives of scholars investigating the Quran's relationship with Late Antique Jewish and Christian traditions. Joseph Witztum posited that although the Quran is influenced by Biblical narratives, it gradually developed its own unique versions. Hawting (2019) noted that the Quran's accusations against the Israelites became more pronounced under the influence of Christianity, yet these common themes and narratives were articulated with originality. Gabriel Said Reynolds concluded that the Quran reinterpreted its relationship with Christianity according to its rhetorical objectives, while Cunningham (2019) emphasized that the Quran emerged as an original text within an interactive religious landscape.

In conclusion, the Quran's similarities with Jewish and Christian traditions do not suggest that it imitates or duplicates earlier materials; rather, they indicate that the Quran conveys an original message through engagement with existing religious and cultural frameworks. The findings support the view that the Quran should be understood not as an epigonic text, but as a revelation that constructs its own theological structure and message. This perspective underscores the idea that, despite historical and cultural interactions with late antique monotheistic traditions, the Quran maintains its distinctive originality.

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