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## Methodological Convergences and the Problem of Distinction in the Riwayah and Dirayah Tafsir Traditions: The Case of Prophet Moses and al-Khidr

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### ABSTRACT

*This study comparatively examines the ways in which the narrative of Prophet Moses and the “righteous servant” in Surat al-Kahf, verses 60–82, is interpreted in riwayat and dirayah tafsirs. The study aims to answer the question, “Can the riwayat and dirayah tafsir methods be distinctly separated from each other?” Although numerous studies have been conducted on this subject, no work has been found that addresses this question through the analysis of a specific narrative. In the study, the tafsirs of al-Tabari and Ibn Abi Hatim, representing the riwayat method, and those of al-Razi and al-Andalusi, representing the dirayah method, were examined through the sampling method. These four exegetes represent the differing aspects of the riwayat and dirayah methods, while also reflecting the points at which these methods intertwine. The study employs the methods of literature review and textual analysis. The findings indicate that the riwayat and dirayah methods are not strictly separated; rather, they complement each other. It has been concluded that a profound tafsir cannot be achieved without integrating reason and transmission. This situation highlights the importance of methodological flexibility and a holistic approach that should be observed in contemporary tafsir studies.*

### **Keywords:**

*Dirayah, Khidr, Prophet Moses, Riwayah, Surat al-Kahf, Tafsir.*

### Introduction

In the history of Quranic exegesis (*tafsir*), the activities carried out and the exegetical works produced as a result are generally examined under two main categories: *riwayah* (transmitted) and *dirayah* (rational/analytical) exegesis. *Riwayah tafsir* refers to interpreting Quranic verses based on other verses, the hadiths transmitted from the Prophet, and the statements of the Companions and the Successors. *Dirayah tafsir*, on the other hand, is the method of interpreting verses from legal (*fiqhi*), theological (*kalami*), or mystical (*sufi*) perspectives by prioritizing

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reason and adhering to the rules of the Arabic language (Cerrahoğlu 1993; al-Qattan 2000; al-Dahabi 1976; al-Zurqani 1995). This classification reflects a general tendency rather than a strict division. In *riwayah* tafsirs, it is possible—and even necessary—to find features of the *dirayah* method, and vice versa. This is because determining the relevance of the Quranic verses and hadiths cited in *riwayah* tafsirs, as well as establishing the authenticity of the reports and arranging them in order of priority, inevitably requires the use of reason. Likewise, within the *dirayah* method, any interpretation based solely on personal desires and inclinations, without grounding in the Quran and hadiths, has been unanimously rejected by scholars.

In this study, the interpretations of the story of Prophet Moses and Khidr, which is presented in verses 60–82 of Surat al-Kahf, will be examined within the framework of *riwayah* (transmitted) and *dirayah* (rational/analytical) tafsirs. The study aims to investigate the extent to which the distinction between *riwayah* and *dirayah* tafsirs remains valid by analyzing the exegetical methods employed in the selected sample of commentaries.

The analytical framework of the study is the analysis of the selected works through thematic comparison. This comparative process involves first examining the relevant texts within the selected tafsirs, identifying the exegetes' interpretive methods, and then comparing the results. Subsequently, the information obtained was interpreted in accordance with the research question. The selection of the narrative on which the study is based was influenced by its rich content in terms of both transmitted reports and rational interpretation.

Although the story of Prophet Moses and Khidr has been discussed in numerous academic studies, it has not been analyzed specifically through the lens of the *riwayah-dirayah* classification. It is anticipated that this perspective will contribute both to a deeper understanding of the narrative and to clarifying whether this methodological grouping leads to a significant interpretive difference in tafsir. The study in the literature that can be regarded as the closest to our perspective is the research titled “A Comparison of Classical Tafsir Movements in the Context of the Story of Prophet Moses and al-Khidr” (Güloğlu 2021). In that work, the author examines the approaches of classical tafsirs to the narrative, particularly focusing on their use of interpretive methods (*ta'wil*)—specifically rhetorical (*bayani*) and mystical (*'irfani*) approaches—and on how the events in the story are interpreted from theological or jurisprudential perspectives. In contrast, the present study conducts an in-depth analysis of four selected tafsirs, examining how the *riwayah-dirayah* distinction is reflected in their interpretations.

Given the large number of works produced within both exegetical traditions and the scope of this study, it is necessary to limit the corpus through sampling. In this research, two works representing the *riwayah* method and two works representing the *dirayah* method have been selected for analysis. For the *riwayah* tradition, the study examines Abu Ja'far al-Tabari's (d. 310/923) *Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil ay al-Qur'an* and Ibn Abi Hatim's (d. 327/938) *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim Musnad al-Rasul wa-l-Sahaba wa-l-Tabi'in*. For the *dirayah* tradition, the study analyzes Fakhr al-Din al-Razi's (d. 606/1210) *Mafatih al-Ghayb* and Abu Hayyan al-Andalusi's (d. 745/1344) *al-Bahr al-Muhit*.

### The Story of Prophet Moses and Khidr

Al-Tabari and Ibn Abi Hatim, following the *riwayah* (transmitted) tradition, begin their exegesis by directly presenting the narrations related to the story. In doing so, they make it clear that they shape the interpretation of the text primarily on the basis of the reliability and diversity of the transmitted reports. Abu Hayyan, by contrast, adopts a grammatical and linguistic approach. Before addressing the thematic aspects of the story, he focuses on the meanings and etymologies of key words, thereby grounding the interpretation in the internal structure of the Arabic language (E. H. al-Andalusi 1993). Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, on the other hand, adopts an analytical and holistic method, situating the story within its broader Quranic context. He explains both its place within Surat al-Kahf and its connections to the two preceding narratives. In this way, his commentary takes into account not only the linguistic or transmitted dimensions but also the

structural and thematic unity of the text. The two stories that precede the Prophet Moses–Khidr narrative are the story of the Companions of the Cave (verses 9–26) and the story of the Two Companions (verses 32–44). In these narratives, the arrogant disbelievers are depicted as boasting of their wealth, supporters, and political power, oppressing and persecuting the poor and weak believers. The Prophet Moses–Khidr story, in contrast, presents Prophet Moses—despite his prophetic rank—displaying humility by following Khidr purely for the sake of knowledge. The narrative thus conveys the message that humility is superior to arrogance (Razi 1981).

### **Prophet Moses and The Identity of the Young Man Accompanying Him**

The only person explicitly mentioned by name in the story is Prophet Moses. Al-Tabari, Ibn Abi Hatim, and al-Razi state that this Prophet Moses is Moses son of `Imran, the bearer of the Torah, and they substantiate this with a hadith transmitted by Sa`id b. Jubayr on the authority of Ibn `Abbas (al-Bukhari, `ilm, 44; Anbiya`, 27; Tafsir, 18/3; Muslim, Fada`il, 46; al-Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 19/1): When Khidr met Prophet Moses, he asked, “Which Moses are you?” Prophet Moses replied, “I am Moses son of `Imran, the Prophet of the Children of Israel.” (Ibn Abi Hatim 1997; al-Tabari 2001; al-Razi 1981). Abu Hayyan adopts the same view but, instead of narrating the hadith explicitly, simply states: “This matter is established by a sound hadith” (E. H. al-Andalusi, 1993). All the exegetes examined in this study are in agreement regarding the identity of Prophet Moses and base their position on transmitted reports (*riwayat*). In Jewish sources, however, it is claimed that this Moses is not their prophet Moses b. `Imran, but rather Moses b. Misha`. According to Jewish interpretation, it is unlikely that a prophet who was granted clear miracles and the Torah, and who spoke to God without intermediaries, would follow someone else in search of knowledge (al-Razi 1981). In response, al-Razi and Abu Hayyan provide a rational argument: “This person must be Moses b. `Imran, the bearer of the Torah, because God has not mentioned any other Moses in the Quran. Therefore, when the name ‘Moses’ is mentioned without qualification, it must refer to Moses b. `Imran. If someone else had been intended, a distinguishing epithet would necessarily have been used.” (al-Razi 1981; E. H. al-Andalusi 1993). Thus, al-Razi and Abu Hayyan not only support their interpretation with transmitted evidence but also employ rational reasoning, which is a hallmark of the *dirayah* exegetical method.

Al-Tabari records—without citing an *isnad* and using the expression “it is said”—that the young man accompanying Prophet Moses was Yusha` b. Nun b. Efrayim b. Yusuf b. Ya`qub, a descendant of Prophet Joseph (al-Tabari 2001). The same information is also transmitted by Ibn Abi Hatim, Abu Hayyan, and al-Razi. Moreover, they note that the word *fata* (“youth”) can also mean “servant,” citing a hadith (Muslim, Alfaz, 13) as evidence, and therefore suggest that this person might have been Moses’ servant (al-Razi 1981; E. H. al-Andalusi 1993). From these evaluations, it is understood that exegetes of the rationalist (*dirayah*) tradition also transmitted relevant narrations regarding the identities of both Moses and the young man accompanying him. This indicates that narrative (*riwayat*) reports maintained an authoritative position, particularly in matters such as *mubhamat al-Quran* (ambiguous or unspecified in the Quran).

### **The Reason for Prophet Moses’ Journey**

In most of the narratives found in the Quran, many details are left unexplained so that the reader may focus on the intended message. When the tafsirs are examined, it is seen that these gaps are filled by the exegetes. Although the Quran does not specify why Prophet Moses sought out Khidr, the tafsir sources contain rich accounts on this subject (Albayrak 2003). Al-Tabari and Ibn Abi Hatim cite the report transmitted from Ibn `Abbas as evidence for the reason of the journey (al-Tabari 2001; Ibn Abi Hatim 1997). Both exegetes, in accordance with their narration-based exegetical understanding, filled the textual gaps with transmitted reports. Abu Hayyan, however, questions the authenticity of these reports, quoting Ibn `Atiyya, who said: “Apart from this hadith, we do not see any other information stating that Prophet Moses and the Israelites settled in Egypt” (I. A. al-Andalusi 2001; E. H. al-Andalusi 1993). This approach clearly shows the *dirayah*

aspect of his tafsir, which not only transmits the reports but also examines their consistency with historical information. Al-Razi, on the other hand, transmits the same reports and states that they are weak. However, he bases his criticism not on a lack of historical knowledge but on theological and rational reasoning. Because, according to him, a prophet must know that the knowledge of created beings is limited, that it is possible to add other knowledge to this limited knowledge, and that above every degree of knowledge there certainly exists another level of knowledge (Yusuf 12/76). A person who knows this cannot possibly say, "There is no one more knowledgeable than I." Indeed, such a statement cannot be considered for a great prophet like Prophet Moses (al-Razi 1981). Thus, al-Razi does not directly reject the report but indicates that it is weak on rational grounds. The focus of his criticism is the conception of knowledge that prophets must possess, and based on this, he sees a contradiction between the rank of Prophet Moses and this report. In response to our research question, "Can the riwayat and dirayah tafsir methods be distinctly separated from each other?" the findings of this section indicate that they cannot be distinctly separated. The dirayah exegetes never adopt a reflex of outright rejecting the transmitted reports; rather, they examine them carefully in order to reach the most authentic narration possible.

### **Interpretations of the Verb "to Forget" in the Verse**

In the verse, "They both forgot their fish" (al-Kahf 18/61), although the one who actually forgot was the young man accompanying Prophet Moses, the verb "forgot" is attributed to both of them. While Ibn Abi Hatim does not provide any explanation on this matter, al-Tabari states that this usage is consistent with the Arabic linguistic tradition. Accordingly, although it was Yusha` who prepared and carried the food, the act of forgetting can be attributed to both, since the task was performed with the approval of Prophet Moses. Therefore, al-Tabari notes that Allah addresses them in a manner consistent with the linguistic usage known and practiced by the Arabs (al-Tabari 2001). According to Abu Hayyan, in this verse the construct (mudaf) has been omitted, and the meaning intended is "one of them forgot." He explains that Yusha` forgot to inform Prophet Moses, while Prophet Moses forgot to ask him about it. For this reason, the act of forgetting is ascribed to both of them (E. H. al-Andalusi 1993). Al-Razi, however, adds a theological and human dimension to the discussion, asking: "How could Yusha` forget such an extraordinary event, in which the salty fish came to life, when Allah had made it a sign for them to reach their goal?" He then provides his own answer: "Since Yusha` had already witnessed many great miracles from Prophet Moses, he regarded this event as unimportant and thus overlooked it." Furthermore, al-Razi points to the divine wisdom behind the incident, adding: "Allah caused this important matter to be forgotten in order to emphasize that the acquisition and preservation of knowledge can occur only by His permission" (al-Razi 1981). These differing approaches demonstrate that, within the tafsir tradition, even a single detail in a verse can be explained in various ways—through transmitted reports, grammatical interpretation, linguistic conventions, or rational and theological perspectives.

### **The Wise Servant: His Identity, Prophethood, and the Nature of the Knowledge Given to Him**

Although the Quran provides no information about the identity of Khidr, in the related narrations and in the tafsir works examined in this study, this figure is unanimously referred to by the title Khidr (al-Tabari 2001; Ibn Abi Hatim 1997; al-Razi 1981; E. H. al-Andalusi 1993). In addition, Abu Hayyan notes that in some reports this person is named Elyas`a (Elisha), Ilyas (Elijah), or Hadarun b. Qabil b. Adam, and that his real name is reported to be Balya b. Malkan. He also mentions opinions stating that his mother was Byzantine, his father a Persian king, and that Khidr rejected his father's offer of the throne and withdrew to an island. However, it is clear that these accounts belong to the category of Isra'iliyyat and are not based on reliable sources. This diversity of reports indicates that the historical or personal identity of Khidr remains uncertain and that he is more often treated as a symbolic figure rather than a historically defined one. Although Abu

Hayyan transmits various reports in this context to present different perspectives, he evaluates them with a critical attitude (E. H. al-Andalusi 1993).

Regarding the attribution of the title al-Khidr to this figure, the hadith narrated from Abu Hurayra (ra) — “He was called al-Khidr because when he sat on a dry patch of grass, it turned green and swayed” (Bukhari, “Anbiya’,” 29; “Tafsir Surat al-Kahf,” 18/2; Tirmidhi, “Tafsir,” 19) — is transmitted in all four tafsirs examined in this study (al-Tabari 2001; Ibn Abi Hatim 1997; al-Razi, 1981; E. H. al-Andalusi, 1993). At this point, a consensus based on transmitted reports (riwayah) is observed among the exegetes. Al-Tabari and Ibn Abi Hatim record a narration from Qatada, stating that Khidr was a servant who carried out his duty according to God’s command and that the people around him knew him as a righteous person (salih). For this reason, they allowed him to board their ship without charging any fare (al-Tabari 2001; Ibn Abi Hatim 1997). In addition, Ibn Abi Hatim transmits the view of Hammad b. Zayd, who said: “Khidr is a person who appears to those whom God wills, and in this story, he appeared only to Prophet Moses. If others had seen him, they would have interfered with their mission” (Ibn Abi Hatim 1997). Khidr’s extraordinary qualities contributed to the perception of him as a superhuman figure, while his description as a righteous servant (‘abd salih) became the main foundation of the debate concerning whether he was a prophet (nabi) or a saint (wali).

According to the majority (jumhur), the “mercy” mentioned in the verse refers to prophethood, while the “knowledge” granted to Khidr refers to esoteric or inner knowledge (‘ilm al-batin). Prophet Moses was taught the exoteric sciences, such as issuing legal judgments and verdicts, whereas Khidr was taught the inner, spiritual knowledge (‘ilm al-ladun) (al-Razi 1981; E. H. al-Andalusi 1993). In this respect, since the knowledge of prophets also originates from God—that is, through revelation—it too can be considered ‘ilm al-ladun. However, the knowledge granted to each prophet or possessor of ‘ilm al-ladun is not the same. Indeed, the knowledge taught to Khidr differs from that granted to Prophet Moses. Although the source of both types of knowledge is God, the knowledge given to Prophet Moses is exoteric, based on the divine law (ahkam shar’iyyah), while the knowledge given to Khidr is esoteric, revealing the inner dimension of events (Yazir 1979). Since Prophet Moses was a prophet, his knowledge is of a more general nature, whereas Khidr’s knowledge is more specific and should not be disclosed to those unable to perceive the inner realities of events. As seen in this case, this very point is also reminded to Prophet Moses by Khidr himself (Bardakçı 1998).

The scholars (‘ulama’) are divided into two groups regarding whether Khidr was a prophet (nabi) or a saint (wali). Among those who consider Khidr to have been a prophet are scholars such as al-Tha’labi (d. 427/1035), al-Ghazali (d. 505/1111), Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1201), Ibn al-‘Arabi (d. 638/1240), Ibn al-Salah (d. 643/1245), al-Qurtubi (d. 671/1273), al-Nawawi (d. 676/1277), Ibn Kathir (d. 774/1372), and al-Firuzabadi (d. 817/1414). However, many Sufis and some exegetes—such as al-Baghawi (d. 516/1122) and Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 606/1209)—hold the view that Khidr was a saint (wali) rather than a prophet (Uysal 2000). For instance, al-Razi, in his tafsir, examines one by one the evidences cited by the majority (jumhur) in support of Khidr’s prophethood and concludes that they are weak. He further notes that if Khidr were indeed a prophet, the Prophet Moses mentioned in the story could not have been the Prophet Moses b. ‘Imran, and that the evidences put forth by the majority in fact support this interpretation (al-Razi 1981). Abu Hayyan, on the other hand, explicitly defends Khidr’s prophethood by emphasizing that “it is not a flaw for one prophet to acquire knowledge from another prophet; the real flaw would be for a prophet to take knowledge from someone who is not a prophet” (E. H. al-Andalusi 1993).

In the Quran, the servant mentioned in the verse, “Then they found one of Our servants to whom We had given mercy from Us and had taught knowledge from Our own presence” (al-Kahf 18/65), is expressed in an ambiguous manner. Within the Islamic tradition, it is generally accepted that this servant was a human being. However, since the Quran uses the word ‘abd (“servant”) not only for humans but also for jinn (al-Dhariyat 51/56), angels (al-Zukhruf 43/19), and even other beings (al-A’raf 7/194), this assumption remains open to discussion. Al-Tabari, Ibn Abi Hatim, and Abu Hayyan state regarding the knowledge possessed by Khidr only that “this

knowledge pertained to the unseen (ghayb) and was divinely revealed.” They also transmit the narration in which Khidr says to Prophet Moses: “I have been given knowledge that Allah has not taught you, and you have been given knowledge that Allah has not taught me.” (al-Tabari 2001; Ibn Abi Hatim 1997; E. H. al-Andalusi 1993).

Abu Hayyan reports that Khidr is believed to still be alive and that some Sufis—such as al-Qushayri, who transmitted this from his teacher—claimed to have met and spoken with him. He also mentions reports among certain Hanbalis stating that `Abd al-Wahid al-`Abbasi al-Hanbali had encountered Khidr, and that when they were asked, “How did they know that the person they met was Khidr, and how did they recognize him?” they remained silent and gave no answer (E. H. al-Andalusi 1993). Thus, Abu Hayyan transmits these reports but does not consider them reliable, adopting a critical stance toward them. Nevertheless, the Sufi view that Khidr continues to exist not as a historical figure but as a mystical or symbolic presence appears to have had a significant influence on popular religious culture.

### **Prophet Moses’ Proposal of Discipleship to al-Khidr and Its Outcome**

#### **Subtleties in Prophet Moses’ Proposal of Discipleship**

Al-Bukhari narrates the conversation that took place between Prophet Moses and Khidr during their encounter as follows: “Khidr said: ‘O Moses! I possess knowledge from the knowledge of Allah that He has taught me, which you do not know; and you possess knowledge from the knowledge of Allah that He has taught you, which I do not know.’” (Bukhari, Tafsir Surat al-Kahf, 18/2). Taking this narration into consideration, some exegetes state that because of the difference between the kinds of knowledge possessed by Prophet Moses and Khidr, Prophet Moses was unable to remain patient regarding Khidr’s actions—since he was not aware of their inner reality (al-Razi 1981; Ibn Kathir 1999). Al-Razi points to this very issue as the reason Prophet Moses was sent to Khidr. According to him, although Prophet Moses possessed knowledge of the shari`ah, he was sent to Khidr in order to realize and learn that the highest degree of perfection lies in esoteric (batini) knowledge (al-Razi 1981).

Prophet Moses said to Khidr, “May I follow you so that you may teach me something of the knowledge which you have been taught to guide me to the right path?” (al-Kahf 18/66). Despite being a prophet, Prophet Moses expressed his willingness to follow someone who possessed a different kind of knowledge, doing so with humility in order to learn (al-Razi 1981). This attitude contains a significant lesson and encouragement that a person, regardless of his rank or position, should make every effort to seek knowledge. Moreover, Prophet Moses sincerely and explicitly asked Khidr to teach him from the knowledge that had been granted to him. However, he limited this request, seeking not all of what Khidr had been taught, but only a portion of it (Albayrak 2003).

Al-Tabari, examining Khidr’s response to Prophet Moses’ request, notes that the actions performed by Khidr were based on knowledge of the unseen (‘ilm al-ghayb). Since Prophet Moses had no knowledge that could serve as evidence for the apparent correctness of these actions, he was unable to judge whether they were right or wrong; therefore, he would inevitably be unable to remain patient in such circumstances (al-Tabari 2001). In Ibn Abi Hatim’s tafsir, apart from the statement that Khidr possessed knowledge of the unseen, there is no further explanatory information regarding the notion of following (tabi`iyah). Al-Razi and Abu Hayyan, however, state that Prophet Moses’ act of following Khidr embodies many forms of etiquette, subtle meanings, and wise lessons, which they list in detail (al-Razi 1981; E. H. al-Andalusi 1993).

In this section, the exegetes who follow the riwayat-based approach focus on the outward aspect of the event and provide relatively limited explanations, whereas those who adopt the dirayah-oriented method address the difference in knowledge in a systematic manner and interpret Prophet Moses’ act of following Khidr within the framework of wisdom. Moreover, they elevate the narrative to a didactic level by emphasizing themes such as humility in the pursuit of knowledge, submission to one’s teacher, and proper etiquette. Here, it is concluded that, although

not definitively, a positive answer may be given to the question, “Can the riwayat and dirayah tafsir methods be distinctly separated from each other?” While the dirayah-oriented exegetes focused on rational interpretations, others confined their exegesis to transmitted reports.

### Prophet Moses’ Pledge of Obedience Despite al-Khidr’s Warning of His Impatience

Al-Tabari states that Prophet Moses promised Khidr that, by Allah’s permission, he would not oppose him even if his actions appeared contrary to his own understanding of what was right. According to him, Prophet Moses’ inability to remain patient is attributed to the fact that his sense of justice was based on outward appearances (*zahir*) and that he was not acquainted with the knowledge of the unseen (*‘ilm al-ghayb*) (al-Tabari 2001). Ibn Abi Hatim does not provide any further explanation on this matter and limits himself to what is transmitted in the narrations. Al-Razi, however, addresses the issue in a more comprehensive manner. He first discusses the views of al-Jubba’i concerning whether “capacity (*istita’ah*) exists prior to the act.” He then presents the differences of opinion regarding *‘ismat al-anbiya’* (the infallibility of prophets) in relation to Khidr’s statement, “Indeed, you will never be able to have patience with me,” and Prophet Moses’ reply, “If Allah wills, you will find me patient, and I will not disobey you in any matter.” In addition, he responds to the Mu`tazilite interpretations concerning the meanings of the phrase “if Allah wills.” Furthermore, al-Razi derives an educational principle from this verse, stating that a student should show humility toward his teacher, and that it is appropriate for a teacher to treat the student with firmness if he believes it will be beneficial (al-Razi 1981). Abu Hayyan explains that Prophet Moses, due to the severity and difficulty of the situation, gave his promise to Khidr passionately while attributing his patience to the divine will of Allah. He also cites al-Qushayri’s view that “Prophet Moses was ultimately able to remain patient because he linked his patience to the divine will of Allah, whereas he protested against Khidr’s actions because he did not verbally link his promise not to oppose him to the divine will.” Abu Hayyan further emphasizes Khidr’s request that Prophet Moses should not ask questions about his actions until he himself offered an explanation, noting that this illustrates an important rule of decorum (*adab*): a student should not object to his teacher but rather wait patiently for clarification (E. H. al-Andalusi 1993).

The exegetes who follow the riwayat-based approach explain Prophet Moses’ inability to remain patient in terms of the difference between apparent (*zahir*) and hidden (*ghayb*) knowledge, providing more limited interpretations. In contrast, the dirayah-oriented exegetes expand the discussion within the framework of theological issues, the doctrine of *‘ismat al-anbiya’* (the infallibility of prophets), and educational principles. Thus, while al-Tabari and Ibn Abi Hatim focus on the outward dimension of the event, al-Razi emphasizes the authority of the teacher and the humility of the student, whereas Abu Hayyan highlights the etiquette of questioning and objection on the part of the student. This diversity demonstrates that the narrative can be interpreted from multiple perspectives—both pedagogical and theological.

### The Events on the Ship

After transmitting the narrations concerning the incident of the ship’s being pierced, al-Tabari focuses on Prophet Moses’ statement in the verse, “Do not blame me for what I forgot.” According to him, contrary to the claim of some scholars, Prophet Moses did not deliberately disobey Khidr; rather, he genuinely forgot, and for this reason he asked not to be reproached. Al-Tabari also emphasizes that this view is supported by an authentic hadith (al-Tabari 2001). Ibn Abi Hatim, on the other hand, merely transmits the narrations related to the story and adds no further commentary.

Al-Razi states that the damage Khidr inflicted on the ship was not severe enough to cause it to sink but merely created a visible defect. He also notes that Prophet Moses’ objection resulted from forgetfulness and responds to those who interpret this verse as evidence against the infallibility of prophets (*‘ismat al-anbiya’*) (al-Razi 1981). Abu Hayyan, on the other hand, reports that there are differing views regarding Khidr’s act of making a hole in the ship and later repairing

it. However, he maintains that the only reliable source on this matter is the hadith stating that “Prophet Moses’ first objection was due to forgetfulness” (Bukhari, “‘Ilm,” 44). He concludes the discussion by saying, “When the Prophet’s hadith exists, no other opinion is to be given consideration” (E. H. al-Andalusi 1993).

Regarding the word *imran* (إِمْرًا) mentioned in the verse, al-Tabari cites narrations in which it is interpreted to mean “detestable,” “evil,” or “strange.” He explains, with examples from Arabic poetry, that in the Arabic language the term denotes “a great calamity,” and he records the view of the linguists who stated that “its root usage applies to everything that is great and severe” (al-Tabari 2001). Al-Razi, while acknowledging these meanings, adds that the word also conveys the sense of “something extraordinary whose cause is unknown.” Accordingly, he explains that Prophet Moses used this expression not because he believed Khidr had done something wrong, but rather because he desired to learn the explanation of the matter (al-Razi 1981). At the beginning of his commentary on the story, Abu Hayyan defines the term as referring to “those actions that are repulsive and displeasing—such as great disasters or calamities” (E. H. al-Andalusi 1993).

In the matter of “forgetfulness,” it is observed that al-Tabari and Abu Hayyan adopt a hadith-centered approach, whereas al-Razi defends the issue primarily with theological sensitivity, focusing on the doctrine of prophetic infallibility (*‘ismat al-anbiya’*). Ibn Abi Hatim, by contrast, remains in the position of a compiler of transmitted reports. In the incident of the ship’s being pierced, al-Razi’s interpretation aims to mitigate the severity of the event, while Abu Hayyan emphasizes that in exegesis, priority should be given to sound hadiths. Regarding the interpretation of the word *imran* (إِمْرًا), Ibn Abi Hatim merely transmits the narration, whereas al-Tabari provides linguistic explanations and supports them with evidence from Arabic poetry. Al-Razi, in addition, offers interpretations centered on theology and reason. This section demonstrates that both *riwayah* and *dirayah* methods were employed simultaneously, indicating that there was no strict division between the exegetes in their methodological approaches. In this section, it is understood that the *riwayah* and *dirayah* tafsir methods cannot be distinctly separated from each other. It is observed that Abu Hayyan, regarded as a representative of the *dirayah* tafsir, adopts a hadith-centered approach, whereas al-Tabari, considered a representative of the *riwayah* tafsir, does not confine himself to transmitted reports but also provides linguistic explanations and cites poetry as evidence. Therefore, both schools employ the methods of the other.

### The Killing of the Child

After transmitting the narration describing the boy as gentle, pure, and innocent, al-Tabari discusses the variant readings (*qira’at*) of the word *zakiyyah* (زَكِيَّةً) that characterizes him and states: “Most of the Quranic reciters of the Hijaz and Basra read the word as *zakiyyah* (زَاكِيَّةً). According to this reading, the meaning is ‘sinless due to his young age.’ The reciters of Kufa, however, read it as *zakiyyah* (زَكِيَّةً); in this case, the meaning is ‘repentant, whose sins have been forgiven’” (al-Tabari 2001). According to the first reading, the boy had not yet reached the age of maturity, whereas in the second reading he was a young person capable of sin but had repented. Al-Tabari concludes that both readings convey the same essential meaning and that there is no difference between them in terms of sense (al-Tabari 2001).

Ibn Abi Hatim transmits various narrations stating that the boy was a disbeliever, a Muslim, an innocent child who had not yet reached puberty, or a twenty-year-old youth whose name was Jaysur. He also reports from Sa’id b. Jubayr the narration: “That mother and father rejoiced on the day their son was born and grieved on the day he died, but if the boy had lived, he would have caused their destruction.” Moreover, he records that Khidr said he feared that the parents’ excessive love for their child might lead them away from their religion. However, Ibn Abi Hatim makes no further commentary beyond transmitting these reports (Ibn Abi Hatim 1997).

Al-Razi explains that although the word *ghulam* clearly denotes a “young boy,” the Arabs also used this term to refer to adolescent youths, providing examples to illustrate this usage. He further notes that since the Quran offers no specific clarification on the matter, he refrains from

making detailed interpretations about the child. Regarding the variant readings of the word *zakiyyah* (زَكِيَّةً), he presents the same information as al-Tabari. Moreover, he draws attention to the fact that Prophet Moses uses the word *'imran* (إِمْرًا) in reference to the incident of the ship and *nukran* (نُكْرًا) in reference to the killing. According to him, the term *nukr* is employed for acts that are more reprehensible, indicating that the killing of the boy was graver than the piercing of the ship. The reason is that in the case of the ship, no life was lost, whereas in the killing of the boy, an irreparable loss of life occurred (al-Razi 1981).

Abu Hayyan relates the various opinions regarding how the boy was killed by using the expression "it is said." Concerning his age, he cites the views that he was either an innocent child who had not reached puberty or a young adolescent. He explains that the word *ghulam* derives from the root *al-ightilam* (الاغْتِلام), which means "inclination toward sexual desire," and therefore can also be used in the sense of "a young man." Emphasizing that there is no information in the hadiths regarding the names of the boy or his parents, he remains silent on this matter (E. H. al-Andalusi 1993).

Al-Tabari explains the differences in *qira'at* (variant readings) and transmits the related narrations, while Ibn Abi Hatim merely compiles the reports. Al-Razi exercises caution by stating that "details not mentioned in the Quran should not be speculated upon." In other matters, al-Tabari discusses the *qira'at* variations, transmits the narrations, and points out their semantic consistency. Ibn Abi Hatim again limits himself to transmitting the reports without interpretation. In contrast, Abu Hayyan examines the linguistic roots of words, transmits the relevant reports, and refrains from addressing information not found in the hadiths. In this section, the fact that both al-Tabari and al-Razi transmit the same reports regarding the Quranic readings, and that Abu Hayyan does not comment on matters not mentioned in the narrations, demonstrates that the *riwayah* and *dirayah* methods are employed by all exegetes to varying degrees, yet there is no sharp distinction between them.

#### The Repair of the Wall

After transmitting the narrations regarding how the wall was repaired, al-Tabari states that there is no definitive evidence in the Quran or the Sunnah concerning this matter. According to him, both possibilities are valid—that the wall may have been completely rebuilt after collapsing or that it was simply straightened by hand. Ultimately, Khidr, through Allah's power and grace, corrected the wall's inclination and reinforced it. Al-Tabari also discusses at length the expression *yuridu an yanqadda jidaran* ("a wall that wanted to collapse") from a linguistic perspective, and concludes that the intended meaning of the verse is "a wall that was on the verge of collapsing." He further notes that Allah revealed the Quran in the language of the people to whom it was addressed, and that they could easily understand such figurative expressions (al-Tabari 2001).

Al-Razi also comments on the expression "a wall that wanted to collapse," though not in as much detail as al-Tabari, providing examples from both Arabic poetry and Quranic verses (al-Razi 1981). Abu Hayyan cites various narrations regarding the name of the town but finds these reports to be quite confused and ultimately leaves the matter to Allah's knowledge. He further explains that attributing "will" (*iradah*) to the wall is an eloquent metaphor and a remarkable instance of figurative speech (*isti'arah*), noting that in Arabic rhetoric it is common to ascribe intention or intellect to inanimate objects and animals as a stylistic device (E. H. al-Andalusi 1993).

In their discussion of the wall's repair and its attributed "will," al-Tabari and al-Razi, in addition to transmitting the reports, detail the debates among the linguistic schools and adduce examples from poetry and Quranic verses. Ibn Abi Hatim transmits numerous reports without commentary. Abu Hayyan, by contrast, approaches the issue from a rhetorical/literary angle in his explanation. This section demonstrates that all exegetes employ both the *riwayah* and *dirayah* methods together, and that these two approaches are applied in a manner that reinforces, supports, and complements each other.

## The Inner Dimensions of al-Khidr's Actions

### The Damaging of the Ship

Al-Tabari focuses on the word وراءهم ("behind them") used when al-Khidr explains the inner meaning of the event related to the ship. According to a report from Qatadah, this word carries the meaning of امامهم ("in front of them"), and Qur'an 45/10 (Surat al-Jathiyah) is cited as an example for this interpretation. Then, he transmits the view of the Basran linguistic school, which holds that this word belongs to the category of azdad, meaning that it can be used both for "behind" and "in front," and he supports this with examples from Arabic poetry. He also conveys the opinion of the Kufans, who argue that such a usage cannot apply to people, but only to temporal concepts such as hour, day, or time. Al-Tabari notes that if someone were to ask, "How could a learned man make a hole in the ship he was on in order to protect it from a king who seizes every ship, whether defective or sound?" the answer would be as follows: "The verse intends the meaning of 'a king who seizes every sound ship.'" The proof of this is al-Khidr's statement, "I wanted to cause a defect in it," because this expression in the verse indicates that the king did not seize defective ships (al-Tabari 2001). Ibn Abi Hatim also transmits the same reports but does not add any additional commentary (Ibn Abi Hatim 1997).

Al-Razi reports that Imam al-Shafi'i, taking this verse as his point of departure, concluded that the miskin are in a more distressing condition than the faqir. Moreover, reasoning that the damage al-Khidr inflicted on the ship would cause less harm to its owners than its being seized, he seeks to answer the question, "Is it permissible to dispose of another's property for such a purpose?" and says: "This may perhaps have been permissible in that shari'ah. Indeed, in our shari'ah as well, if by giving some property to a highwayman the remaining goods can be saved, it is permissible. However, what is important here is that the damage inflicted should not render the ship unusable; otherwise this action would not be permissible." (al-Razi 1981).

Abu Hayyan likewise begins his explanation by focusing on the reading, derivation, and comparison of the word مساكين ("the poor") with the term faqir. Like the other exegetes, he also elaborates at length on the word wara'ahum. He transmits the view of the Kufan linguist al-Farra' (al-Farra' 1956), who held that such a usage is permissible only in connection with words related to time, and he cites the examples given by him.

In this section, al-Tabari elaborates in detail on the disagreement between linguistic schools and offers an interpretation primarily based on narrative reports. Ibn Abi Hatim transmits the same reports found in al-Tabari without adding any commentary or original contribution. Al-Razi brings the discussion into the realm of juridical and theological debate, while Abu Hayyan presents a linguistic and narration-centered interpretation, focusing particularly on metaphor, derivation, and literary analysis. Thus, al-Tabari's detailed treatment of linguistic schools and Abu Hayyan's narration-centered commentary demonstrate that, although the methods of riwayat and dirayah vary in emphasis, they were employed by all exegetes in different proportions. In this section, it is understood that the riwayat and dirayah tafsir methods cannot be distinctly separated from each other. The fact that al-Tabari engages with linguistic analysis, while Abu Hayyan provides narration-centered interpretations, clearly demonstrates this methodological convergence.

### The Killing of the Child

Al-Tabari, at the beginning of his discussion of this issue, mentions that the child was a disbeliever, whereas his parents were believers; he cites the qira'at that support this view and states that the child would have compelled his parents to disbelief. He explains that the Arabic words *khashya* (خَشْيَةً) and *khawf* (خَوْف) used in the verse can also mean "assumption" or "speculation" in Arabic usage. He reports that some Basran linguists interpreted *khashya* here to mean "dislike", on the grounds that God does not fear. Regarding the word *yubdiluhuma* (يُبَدِّلُهُمَا) in the verse, he explains that the Meccan, Medinan, and Basran qira'a scholars read it in the intensive

form (shaddah) as *yubaddilahuma* (يُبَدِّلُهُمَا), and they argued that this form appears in many places in the Quran. The Kufan *qira'a* scholars, on the other hand, read it in the light form (takhfif) as *yubdilahuma* (يُبَدِّلُهُمَا), and some linguists stated that both verbal forms carry the same meaning. Al-Tabari presents his own preference as follows: "In my view, the meanings of both *qira'a* are very close to each other, and both have been read by important *qira'a* scholars. Therefore, whichever of the two a reciter chooses, he will have read it correctly." (al-Tabari, 2001, p. 15/358). Ibn Abi Hatim gives the meaning of *hashya* in the verse based on a report from al-Suddi, interpreting it as "to show compassion, to feel pity." He also transmits the same reports cited by al-Tabari (Ibn Abi Hatim 1997).

Al-Razi reports that some held the view that the killed child had reached puberty (baligh) and engaged in behaviors such as highway robbery and evil acts, and that the parents, in an effort to protect him, were compelled to lie, which led them to sin. He also mentions that others believed the child had not yet reached puberty, but that God knew he would incline toward such evils in the future (al-Razi 1981).

Abu Hayyan, after stating that the killed child was a disbeliever, cites as evidence the *qira'a* of Ubayy b. Ka'b and the report of Ibn 'Abbas. He further explains that the word *hashya* (حَشْيَةٌ) is used with the meaning of "to regard as undesirable" (to dislike), and that it was considered undesirable (*kariha*) for the parents, due to their excessive love for their unbelieving child living in the same household, to follow his path. Abu Hayyan discusses the *qira'a* differences related to the word *yubdilahuma* (يُبَدِّلُهُمَا) and reports various views concerning the different readings and meanings of the words *zakah* (زَكَاةً) and *rahman* (رُحْمًا). Finally, he records with the expression "it was said" (*qila*) that the one given to the parents in place of the killed child was either a Muslim boy or a girl who would become the mother of a prophet (Abu Hayyan al-Andalusi 1993).

When the interpretations of al-Tabari, al-Razi, and Abu Hayyan in this section are compared, it is observed that the words *hashya* and *khawf* mentioned in the verse, as well as the *qira'a* differences, are examined both linguistically and through transmitted reports. Al-Tabari adopts a more conciliatory stance, emphasizing that the *qira'a* differences are close in meaning, and he highlights the righteousness of the new child given to the parents. Ibn Abi Hatim, in line with his general method, only transmits the reports and does not add original commentary. Al-Razi, on the other hand, explains the issue by referring to possibilities based on both the child's actions and God's knowledge, thereby bringing the relationship between destiny (*qadar*), sin, and divine wisdom into discussion. Abu Hayyan, on the other hand, focuses on the *qira'a* and linguistic details—especially clarifying the different meanings of the concept of *hashya*—and transmits various reports concerning the new child that was given.

### The Repair of the Wall and the Treasure Beneath It

Al-Tabari lists the views transmitted from Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn Jubayr, and Mujahid regarding the nature of the treasure beneath the wall: "It is knowledge; it is books containing knowledge; it is a flat tablet made of gold upon which wise sayings were inscribed." He then relates the opinion of 'Ikrima, who held that the treasure was in the literal sense, consisting of valuable goods, gold, or silver. Al-Tabari prefers 'Ikrima's view over the others and states: "The more accurate of the two interpretations is what 'Ikrima has said, for in the Arabic language *kanz* refers to anything of the nature of wealth that has been buried." He also reports that Qatada said regarding the treasure: "Treasure (*kanz*) was lawful for the communities before us, but unlawful for us. As for spoils (*ghanima*), they were lawful for us but unlawful for them." (al-Tabari 2001).

Al-Razi states that the scholars disagreed about the nature of this treasure and explains his own view as follows: "Some say that it consisted of wealth, and this is correct for two reasons. First, when the word *kanz* is mentioned, what comes to mind is wealth. Second, the continuation of the verse says: 'so that they may extract their treasure,' which indicates that the treasure is a type of wealth that can be taken out of its hiding place." As for the scholars who held that the treasure was knowledge, their reasoning is that a righteous person would not bury and hoard

wealth, as this practice is condemned in the Quran (al-Tawba 9/34). Abu Hayyan infers from the verse's description of the two children as orphans, and from the hadith "*There is no orphanhood after puberty*" (Abu Dawud, "Wasaya," 9), that they were both young children. He affirms that the treasure was buried wealth such as gold or silver, as stated by 'Ikrima and Qatada. He also transmits the reports from Ibn 'Abbas and Ibn Jubayr, according to which the treasure consisted of knowledge contained in buried books or a tablet inscribed with wise sayings (Abu Hayyan al-Andalusi 1993).

In this section, al-Tabari and Abu Hayyan, after transmitting the reports, turn to linguistic analysis, focusing on the original usage of the word *kanz* in Arabic and the expression in the continuation of the verse — "*so that they may extract (it)*" — to support the interpretation of the treasure as material wealth. Al-Razi, on the other hand, discusses the reasoning behind both views and emphasizes the lexical meaning of the word and the context of the verse, asserting that the interpretation of the treasure as wealth is the stronger view, highlighting rational and logical arguments in his commentary.

### Narrative

Al-Tabari, when concluding the narrative, offers the following interpretation: "The purpose of placing this story immediately after the verse, '*Your Lord is the Most Forgiving, the Possessor of mercy. If He were to impose punishment upon them for what they earned, surely, He would have hastened their punishment...*' (al-Kahf 18/58), is to teach that in granting respite to the polytheists and not punishing them immediately, there are other divine wisdoms that we do not know." He also transmits the following reports relevant to the matter: "Prophet Moses' statement regarding the incident of the wall was for himself, and he was asking for something worldly. As for the incidents of the ship and the child, his objections were for the sake of God." (al-Tabari 2001) and "I wished that Prophet Moses had been patient so that he would have narrated more stories to us." (al-Tabari 2001).

Al-Razi mentions at the end of the narrative that the judgments of the prophets are based on the outward (*zahir*) aspects of things, whereas al-Khidr's judgments are based on the inward (*batin*) reality of things. He also refers to the principle that when two harms conflict, the lesser harm should be undertaken to prevent the greater one. Moreover, al-Razi explains the wisdom behind the different subjects used with the verbs of willing/intention (*fa-aradtu* فَاَرَادْتُ, *fa-aradna* فَاَرَادْنَا, *fa-arada rabbuka* فَاَرَادَ رَبُّكَ) in al-Khidr's explanation of his actions. He states: "Since al-Khidr's act regarding the ship involved creating a defect, he attributed the intention to himself, saying '*I intended.*' In the case of the killing, in order to draw attention to the fact that this action was based on exalted wisdoms, he used the plural form '*We intended.*' And regarding the protection of the orphans' wealth and the actions that were purely for their benefit, he attributed the intention to God, saying '*Your Lord intended.*'" (al-Razi 1981).

Abu Hayyan likewise draws attention to the different subjects of the verbs of intention in al-Khidr's explanation. From al-Khidr's statement, "*I did not do it of my own accord,*" he infers that these actions, which outwardly appear contrary to normal standards, were performed by the command of God, and that this serves as evidence that al-Khidr was a prophet who received revelation. At the end of the narrative, Abu Hayyan notes that some "ignorant people", by looking at the incidents in the story, claimed that al-Khidr was superior to Prophet Moses, and they argued that "Some saints (*awliya'*) are superior to some prophets (*anbiya'*)." He states that such people are "ignorant and frivolous individuals." (Abu Hayyan al-Andalusi 1993).

In this section, al-Tabari and Ibn Abi Hatim attempt to make sense of the text through historical reports and narrations from the Companions and Successors. Al-Razi approaches the narrative on a conceptual and theoretical level, analyzing it through higher-level principles such as *Shari'ah* versus *Haqiqah*, the balance between harm and benefit, and self-discipline (*nafs*) and purification (*tazkiya*). Abu Hayyan, meanwhile, employs both *riwayah* and *dirayah*, supporting his linguistic and logical analyses with transmitted reports.

## Conclusion

This study was conducted with the aim of examining the application of *riwayah* and *dirayah* methods in classical Quranic exegesis. For this purpose, the long narrative of Prophet Moses and al-Khidr was examined in depth through four selected tafsirs. Among the tafsirs examined, only the work of Ibn Abi Hatim displays characteristics that are entirely *riwayah*-based. In his tafsir, the exegete does not present his own personal opinions but merely transmits reports. He follows a line generally aimed at understanding the lexical meanings of the verses, without employing critical analysis, *qira'at* discussion, preference (*tarjih*), personal reasoning (*ra'y*), or poetic citation (*istiṣhad*). Although al-Tabari's tafsir is classified among the *riwayah* tafsirs and contains far more transmitted reports than Ibn Abi Hatim's work, it is observed that he frequently employs the *dirayah* method as well. Al-Tabari first interprets a verse by referring to other Quranic verses and hadiths; if he does not find sufficient evidence there, he then refers to the reports of the Companions, the Successors, and other scholars. He subsequently summarizes the discussion and records any opposing views. Notably, his categorization and ordering of reports, his linguistic analyses, his frequent use of examples from Arabic poetry, his detailed presentation of the different *qira'at*, his frequent acts of preferring between various reports, *qira'at*, and linguistic interpretations along with providing justifications for these preferences, his commentaries on the issues, his answers to posed or possible questions, his presentation of the views of exegetes employing figurative interpretation (*ta'wil*), and his occasional agreement with or criticism of those views are examples of the *dirayah* aspects in his tafsir.

Al-Razi applies all the features of the *dirayah* method in his tafsir. He employs methods such as linguistic analyses, discussion of *qira'at* differences, deriving intellectual, theological, practical, ethical, and social principles from the verses, providing Quranic evidence for contemporary controversial issues, and answering possible questions. Al-Razi evaluates some reports found in the tafsir corpus through the lens of reason within the Quranic thought system. Nevertheless, he makes his position clear by accepting sound (*sahih*) reports without reservation in the face of authentic hadiths. He also pays significant attention to *qira'at*, derivation (*ishtiqaq*), and grammar (*nahw*), providing sufficient explanation in the relevant places. Abu Hayyan, on the other hand, adopts a *dirayah*-oriented approach focused on grammar and *qira'at*. In his tafsir, he frequently uses transmitted reports but does not cite their chains of transmission (*isnad*) or indicate their degrees of authenticity.

These findings demonstrate that the *riwayah* and *dirayah* methods are not separated by strict boundaries, but rather are used in a complementary manner. Although there are indeed differences between *riwayah* and *dirayah* tafsirs in terms of the subjects they emphasize, the methods they employ to examine these subjects, and the types of evidence on which they rely, it is absolutely clear that a tafsir of the desired richness cannot be produced within the *riwayah* method without the use of reasoning (*'aql*) and preference (*tarjih*), nor within the *dirayah* method without the use of transmitted reports (*riwayat*). This situation points to the importance of methodological flexibility and comprehensiveness in contemporary tafsir studies. This study contributes to the literature by questioning the categorical approaches to the distinction between *riwayah* and *dirayah* found in previous scholarship, and by demonstrating that, rather than constituting a sharp dichotomy, these methods exhibit mutual interaction and complementarity. It is acknowledged that the study has certain limitations, such as the inclusion of only four exegetes as the sample and the restriction of the analysis to a single narrative. Nevertheless, this research makes a significant methodological contribution by conducting an in-depth and comparative analysis of the selected exegetes' works. In this respect, it is considered that the findings of the study will provide a foundation for future research employing similar methods and serve as a model for studies encompassing a broader group of exegetes from different historical periods. In particular, in future studies, the comparative examination of exegetes possessing chronological diversity will be highly valuable for more clearly revealing the historical transformation of the *riwayah* and *dirayah* methods and for tracing the course of their methodological development.

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## Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper. No financial, personal, or institutional relationships have influenced the research or its outcomes.

## Author's Contribution Statement

1. **Mustafa Aydın** conceived and designed the overall framework of the study and was primarily responsible for the analysis and interpretation of the ḥadīth materials related to the Quranic account of Prophet Moses and al-Khidr. He examined the narrations transmitted in the canonical ḥadīth collections and relevant exegetical sources, identifying their thematic and methodological significance within both the riwāyah (transmissionbased) and dirāyah (reason-based) tafsīr traditions. He also contributed to the collection, classification, and critical evaluation of the textual data, and took the lead in drafting, editing, and finalizing the manuscript, including the submission and revision processes.
2. **İbrahim Yıldız** contributed to the conceptual development of the research and provided the exegetical analysis of the Quranic verses pertaining to the narrative of Moses and al-Khidr based on both classical and contemporary tafsīr sources. He also assisted in data interpretation, comparative textual analysis, and the overall refinement of the manuscript through critical review and scholarly feedback during the revision process.

## Ethics Statement

The research was conducted in accordance with the general principles of academic integrity and research ethics. All sources have been properly cited, and there was no form of plagiarism or data manipulation.

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