

PROPHET JOSEPH BETWEEN THE QUR'ANIC AND BIBLICAL NARRATIVES: A COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW

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Article history

Received date : 15-3-2023
Revised date : 20-3-2023
Accepted date : 1-7-2023
Published date : 20-7-2023

To cite this document:

Azzubaidi, M. S., & Mohamed Yusoff, H. (2023). Prophet Joseph Between The Qur'anic and Biblical Narratives: A Comparative Overview. *Journal of Islamic, Social, Economics and Development (JISED)*, 8 (54), 113 - 125.

Abstract:- *Since it was appealing for some Biblical scholars to incorrectly assume that the stories of Prophets of God narrated in the Holy Qur'an were merely copied from the Bible, the objective of the current study was to identify the significant life events of Prophet Joseph, peace be upon him (PBUH) as described in Chapter 12 of the Holy Qur'an, and compare them with those narrated in the Bible New English Translation (NET). Methods: Four significant stages of Prophet Joseph's life were identified and compared between the two scriptures, and the absolute percentage of similarities and differences was calculated. The first stage (vision of the bowing planets until he reached Egypt as an enslaved person). The 2nd stage (end of the 1st stage until his release from imprisonment). The 3rd stage, (end of the 2nd stage until he reunited with his younger brother). The 4th stage (the end of the 3rd stage until the arrival of the extended family to Egypt). Results: Approximately, 40% of Prophet Joseph's main life events mentioned in the Old Testament were consistent with that of the Qur'anic version of the story. However, the other 60% (majority) of the critical junctures of Prophet Joseph's life were found to be different in the Biblical narrative compared to that in the holy Qur'an. Approximately 34% of the crucial life details described in the Bible appeared to be incongruent with the Holy Qur'an. Moreover, another 26% of the critical life happenings narrated in one of the scriptures (Qur'an or bible) were absent from the other. With the 60% difference in the Prophet Joseph story's details between Biblical and Qur'anic narratives, it can be concluded that the information delivered in the Holy Qur'anic was not based on replicating the Biblical text.*

Keywords: *Biography; Joseph; Qur'an, Bible; Comparison*

Introduction

The significance of perusing the story of Prophet Joseph, peace be upon him (PBUH) in the Holy Qur'an lies in the presence of a substantial amount of lessons that humanity can learn. A recent study has reported that the biography of Prophet Joseph PBUH is one of the preferable stories of the Qur'an, attracting high respondents in English language teaching paradigms (Irwansyah, 2021). The story exemplifies the tremendous patience and kindness practiced by this chaste Prophet of God. Besides displaying the ways of arguments used to invite the non-believers to the religion of truth, it also demonstrated his kind approach to clarify their erroneous faith of idol worshipping. Moreover, some other pieces of the life story of this honorable Messenger of God also addressed the inside-family and interpersonal relationships, which provide additional lessons in moral conduct, especially in how he dealt with his brothers, superiors, and subordinates during the next part of his life.

Facts on the critical life junctures of Prophet Joseph PBUH were revealed in the twelfth chapter of the Holy Qur'an. At the end of this chapter, God declared that several details mentioned were unseen and unknown to the people of Prophet Muhammad's time (Qur'an, 12: 102). This hint from God in the Holy Qur'an was the motive to conduct this comparative study. Since a historical account of Prophet Joseph's life was already mentioned in the Old Testament, any repeated information about the same story, by right, should be well-known to people of subsequent generations. Therefore, the research question was, why would Allah SWT refer to certain parts of the story as "news of the unseen, revealed to you [O Muhammad]"? On the Biblical side, the biography of Prophet Joseph can be found within successive chapters of the book of Genesis of the Old Testament, starting from chapters 29 through 47.

Methodology

This comparative study identifies the percentages of similarities and differences between the Semitic scriptures, the Quran, and the Bible regarding the biography of Prophet Joseph PBUH. The critical life details considered for comparison in this research were those that considerably influenced the subsequent stages of his life. Points found contradicting each other between the two scriptures in the biography were involved in this comparison. These included the vision of the bowing planets to Joseph PBUH, to whom it was related, and the father's reaction to the dream. Subsequently, the malicious plot of the elder brothers against Joseph, the repeated plans of the landlady to trap Joseph, his chaste response, and the proof of his innocence was compared. Afterward, Joseph's PBUH life in prison with his fellow prisoners and the King of Egypt's vision was compared between the two scriptures. Then the attitude and actions of Joseph upon meeting his brothers in their repeated journeys to Egypt were compared. Finally, Joseph's PBUH stands towards the slavery of humankind were compared. Moreover, details that demonstrated lessons in moral values and interpersonal relationships were also considered in the comparison.

On the other hand, trivial and insignificant details were excluded from the comparison, especially if the details did not affect the flow of this Prophet's major life events. The comparison was based on two principal reference translations of the scriptures, The New English Translation of the Bible (NET, 2011) and the Saheeh International Translation (Assami et al., 1997) of the Holy Qur'an. The objective of this study was to reach an evidence-based conclusion regarding the allegation made by some Christian writers that the Qur'anic stories of the Prophets of God were plagiarized from the Bible (Pregill, 2007). In this article, the life story of Prophet Joseph PBUH is the one under study.

Results and Discussion

The Marriage of Jacob PBUH with Rachel, Joseph's mother, according to the Bible.

The Old Testament of the Bible reported Jacob PBUH proposing to marry the younger daughter of her father, Laban. Laban asked Prophet Jacob to remain at his service for seven years, working for his livestock as a form of dowry to endorse this marriage, which Prophet Jacob PBUH agreed to undertake and finished his term (Genesis, 29: 20). Before this marriage took place, Laban, the father-in-law to be, plotted a dishonest trick to let his elder daughter get married first before the actual wedding of Prophet Jacob with his fiancée, Rachel (Genesis, 29: 21-27). Therefore, according to the Bible, Laban, Rachel's father, deceived his son-in-law, Prophet Jacob, on his wedding night by letting Rachel's elder sister, whom Jacob did not intend to marry, spend the wedding night with Jacob. The story became more bizarre when the Bible reported that Prophet Jacob only discovered this deception the following day; the sunlight came up to find out that the bride was the wrong lady. The response of the father-in-law to the complaint about this trickery was simple. The father-in-law calmly justified that their tribal culture does not allow the younger daughter to get married before the elder one. Therefore, he had to arrange for the elder daughter's marriage, Rachel's sister, before Jacob could marry his intended bride (Genesis 29: 21-28).

Three logical and legitimate critiques arise here. First, it is doubtful that a groom would not be able to recognize his bride in the wedding bed for the whole night until the next day's sunshine. Second, Laban, the father-in-law, could have revealed this cultural norm earlier and informed the son-in-law of the intention of having the elder daughter get married first. Thirdly, the fact that the father-in-law kept Jacob engaged to his daughter, staying at the household of the future bride and serving for seven years before the actual marriage took place was another odd thing to happen in a decent family, especially in those ancient times, more than three thousand years ago. With that mentioned, and since the Holy Qur'an delivered no record of such a story, this can be considered the first point refuting the allegation of plagiarism rumored by some Christians against the Qur'an as being pirated from the Bible. Instead, the story of Prophet Joseph in the Holy Qur'an starts with having him privately narrate to his father his night vision of the eleven planets, the sun, and the moon prostrating before him (Qur'an, 12: 4-5).

Who Heard about the Dream?

The Qur'an informed us that the Prophet Joseph PBUH narrated his dream secretly to his father, Jacob only. No one else has attended this conversation (Qur'an, 12: 5).

[Behold! when Joseph said to his father, "O my father, indeed I have seen (in a dream) eleven stars and the sun and the moon; I saw them prostrating to me." Therefore, his father, Jacob, replied, asking him not to relate his vision to his brothers lest they will plot against him a plan. Indeed Satan, to man, is a manifest enemy. Since the dream implied that Joseph would have a bright and prosperous future, Jacob PBUH asked his son not to reveal the story of the dream to his brothers to avoid having their hearts filled with jealousy against his beloved son Joseph.

On the other hand, the Bible also mentioned the story of Prophet Joseph's dream (Genesis, 37: 9-11), but with a cornerstone difference. The Biblical narrative of the same story mentioned that Prophet Joseph informed his father about his dream in the presence of his elder brothers. Therefore, it was only in the Qur'anic narrative that Jacob PBUH ordered his son, Joseph, to keep this vision a secret. Furthermore, the Biblical version of the story portrayed his father,

Jacob, as expressing resentment to his son Joseph because of this dream, claiming that it was insulting to him to have the parents - represented by the sun and the moon in the dream - bowing down to him (Genesis, 37: 10). Nevertheless, in contrast to the Biblical version of the story, we find that in the Holy Qur'an, the father Jacob PBUH did not express any resentment towards his son. These differences between the Qur'an and the Bible at this juncture make the second evidence disproving the allegations raised by some Christians that the Qur'an has been copied from the Bible, Table 1.2 and 1.3.

Moral lessons learned from the aforementioned two Qur'anic verses concerning heart sicknesses of envy and jealousy. First, caution is recommended before announcing the achievements, successes, and bounties bestowed by God to people, for some people are more concerned and preoccupied with what others have than they do. Secondly, envy and jealousy are evil pathways designed by the devil, the enemy of every human. Thirdly, jealousy is the first step leading to hatred, which triggers people, even among brothers, to plan homicidal ideas Table 1.5.

Table 1: Comparison of the Bible and the Holy Qur'an Narratives of Prophet Joseph's Life Events, starting from his Vision When he was a Young Child Till he was Sold as a Servant in Egypt.

Part of the story	Qur'an	Bible	S/D
1. The dream of the planets bowing down to Joseph PBUH.	√	√	S
2. The dream related to	His father alone	His father and brothers	D
3. The father's reaction to the dream.	Asked Joseph to keep the dream a secret	reproached his son for reporting an insulting dream to his parents	D
4. Did Jacob trust his sons to safeguard his son when taking him out?	No	Yes	D
5. The plot of the elder brothers to get rid of Jacob.	√ prior plan	√ abrupt plan	D
6. The brothers' decision not to kill their little brother but to throw him into a well.	√	√	S
7. Who pulled him out of the well to be sold?	A caravan traveler	Joseph's brother	D
8. Joseph PBUH was sold as a servant in Egypt.	√	√	S

S = Similarity, D = Difference.

When Did the Elder Brothers Plan to Throw Joseph in a Well?

The plan of the elder brothers to get rid of their little brother Joseph was described both in the Holy Qur'an and the Bible. However, in the Qur'anic version, the brothers' plot took place in a meeting among them before they asked permission from their father, Jacob (Qur'an, 12: 9).

[Kill Joseph or cast him out to [another] land; the countenance of your father will [then] be only for you, and you will be after that righteous people.]

Nonetheless, the Bible tells us that the plan to dispose of Joseph PBUH by his elder brothers happened abruptly without an initial conversation to take any permission from his father to let him hang out with them. That is when they saw Joseph coming to them in the field (Genesis, 37: 18). [Now Joseph's brothers saw him from a distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him.]

With this difference mentioned, it became more apparent that there are critical differences between the Holy Qur'an and the Bible in the detailed account of the life of Prophet Joseph PBUH since its earliest stages. This adds a third piece of evidence that the Holy Qur'an was independent in delivering its information and invalidated the claim of plagiarism from the Bible.

Levels of Sinful Actions

Evil thoughts and sins are not equally wicked, but they are of different levels, i.e., some sinful thoughts and actions are less evil than others. The innocent life of the young Prophet Joseph has been spared by having his brothers follow the least evil suggestion from one of them (Qur'an, 12: 10). One among them said: "Do not kill Joseph but throw him into the bottom of the well; some travelers will pick him up if you would do (something)." This part agreed with the Biblical narrative (Genesis, 37: 21-22), Table 1.5-1.7.

Hateful People in The Shape of Kind Advisors

The notion that Jacob PBUH did not trust his sons for the safety of his beloved son Joseph could only be found in the Holy Qur'an. This adds a fourth difference that is not found anywhere in the Biblical version of the story. (Qur'an, 12: 11-12).

[They said, "O our father, why do you not entrust us with Joseph while, indeed, we are to him sincere counselors? Send him with us tomorrow so that he may eat well and play. And indeed, we will be his guardians."]

Another lesson from this part of the story of Prophet Jacob PBUH is that haters may approach their victims as advisors. Prophet Joseph's elder brothers approached their father to allow Joseph to spend time with them, vowing they would be his protectors and sincere advisors. This fact was repeated in the other verse of the Holy Qur'an, which described how Satan approached Adam PBUH to convince him to eat from the fruits of the forbidden tree.

[Then Satan whispered evil to him: he said, "O Adam! shall direct you to the Tree of Eternity and to a kingdom that never decays?"] (Qur'an, 20: 120).

[And he (Satan) swore (by Allah) to them (Adam and his wife), "Indeed, I am to you from among the sincere advisors."] (Qur'an, 7: 21).

Interestingly, outside the story of Prophet Joseph, the New Testament of the Bible warns readers against cunning people who pretend to be righteous advisors to have their proclamation accepted by the listeners. In reality, they are evil-wishers (Mathew, 7: 15).

[Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are voracious wolves.]

Hazard of Announcing Worries

At this level of Joseph's life, the Qur'an clearly showed that his father did not trust the elder brothers to safeguard their younger brother Joseph as implied in the abovementioned verses.

However, in the Biblical version of the story, there is no indication that the father has expressed such worries, table 1.4.

[(Jacob) said: "Indeed, it saddens me that you should take him, and I fear that a wolf would eat him while you are of him unaware."]. This led the elder brothers to use the same worries of their father as the reason for the death of their little brother Joseph PBUH (Qur'an, 12: 17).

They said: "O our father! We went racing with one another and left Joseph with our belongings, and the wolf ate him". This was another Qur'anic information not found in the earlier scriptures, i.e., the story detail was unknown to the people when the Holy Qur'an was revealed (Qur'an, 12: 102). Another communication lesson learned from the Qur'anic narrative is that revealing worries or fears to others is unsafe. Hateful people will utilize them against the person who revealed them later on. Jacob PBUH revealed his fears to his sons, who then used that same excuse to fabricate the story of the death of their little brother Joseph (Qur'an, 12: 11-13).

Who Grabbed Joseph Out from the Bottom of the Well?

According to the Holy Qur'an, a member of the traveling caravan pulled Joseph up from the bottom of the well while he was trying to take some water from it. It was a surprise for him that it came out with a young boy sitting on the bucket (Qur'an, 12: 19). However, the Biblical version of the story tells us that it was one of his elder brothers who grabbed him from the well to sell him to caravan travelers (Genesis, 37: 28). To investigate which of the two scriptural versions of this part of the story is the most accurate, we read the Biblical version informing that the happening took place after Joseph passed the age of seventeen years (Genesis, 37: 2) and that he was pulled out by his brother to sell him to the strangers of the caravan, while the Qur'anic version informed that the young child before the age of puberty "Ghulam" (Abolaji et al., 2020) was pulled out from the well by a stranger and nobody was around. Then, this member of the traveling caravan hid him as merchandise to be sold later upon their arrival to Egypt. In our opinion, believing that a 17-year-old young man would readily submit to his abusive brother selling him to a stranger without resistance or even expressing discontent does not make sense. Perhaps this could have been more realistic if the child was less than ten years old. The Biblical version mentioned that the stranger had bought this 17-year-old young man from his abusive elder brother. This point of contrast between the Qur'an and the Bible makes other evidence disproving the allegations raised by some Christians that the Qur'an has been copied from the Bible, table 1.7.

Joseph PBUH in Egypt was Tried by his Landlady.

Both the Holy Qur'an and the Bible agreed that the wife of Joseph's master in Egypt fell in love with Joseph PBUH and planned to seduce him to have sexual intimacy with him. Moreover, both scriptures are consistent that Joseph refused to fall into adultery (Genesis, 39: 7-12), table 2.1. Upon the arrival of his master back home, she blamed Joseph for trying to rape her.

Table 2: Comparing the Biblical and the Qur’anic Narratives on Prophet Joseph’s Life Events After He Arrived in Egypt Until the End of his Imprisonment Period.

	Part of the story	Qur’an	Bible	S/D
9.	The Landlady planned to seduce Joseph, and he refused.	√	√	S
10.	Joseph’s garment as proof.	For his innocence	For his guiltiness	D
11.	The landlady’s second attempt with her women group in town to show them the charming beauty of Prophet Joseph.	√	Not available	D
12.	Joseph PBUH was sentenced to prison.	√	√	S
13.	The two fellow prisoners’ dreams were interpreted.	√	√	S
14.	Joseph invited the prisoners to believe in and worship one God (Allah).	√	Not available	D
15.	The dream of the King of Egypt.	√	√	S
16.	Joseph interpreted the king’s vision.	While still in prison	After he was released	D

Joseph’s Garment: Evidence for or Against him?

The Holy Qur’an further presents the proof of Joseph’s innocence through a testimony made by a family member (Qur’an, 12:26-28). His garment was found to be ripped from its back part. This came in contrast to the Biblical narrative, which stated that she used the garment to accuse Joseph PBUH of attempting to rape her and that she convinced her husband about her fabricated story, table 2.2. Here is another lesson to learn from the Holy Qur’an: to observe Allah in your secret life so that Allah SWT will protect you and clear your reputation in return in your public life. The soul guided by the Lord SWT never betrays, even when oppressed and stressed. That is when Joseph PBUH said *[(I seek) the refuge of Allah. Indeed, He is my Lord, who has made good my residence. Indeed, wrongdoers will not succeed.]* (Qur’an, 12:23).

A Second Attempt by The Landlady to Trap Joseph PBUH

The Bible stated no further information about the following matters (after the landlady tried to seduce Joseph in her house). On the other hand, the Holy Qur’an added that the landlady plotted a second plan to show her group of lady friends the extraordinary beauty of this servant, Joseph, whom she fell in love with. Nevertheless, when Allah SWT intervened again with his mercy after the supplication of Joseph PBUH to turn away their seduction (Qur’an, 12: 33), He protected his devoted prophet and servant from falling into the major sin of fornication, Table 2.3. The Bible and the Holy Qur’an are congruent in that Joseph PBUH was eventually sentenced to prison for a few years (Genesis, 39: 20, Qur’an, 12: 33).

Joseph in Prison Inviting Fellow Prisoners to Believe in One God, Allah SWT

Both scriptures agreed that Joseph PBUH, while in prison, interpreted to two fellow prisoners their dreams, table 2.4 and 2.5. However, the Holy Qur’an did not miss to report a vital mission this great messenger of God carried out with the two prisoners. Just before Joseph PBUH started interpreting their dreams, he performed the prophetic responsibility God sent him. That is, to invite his attendants to the religion of truth and the oneness of Allah (Qur’an, 12: 37-40).

Another fruit harvested from the Holy Qur'an is that the inviter to the true path never rests on his mission, even in the most challenging situation. Wherever a messenger of Allah is situated, he ought to continue to preach to correct the false creed and propagate the oneness of Allah. On the other hand, the Bible contained no information about the Prophetic task undertaken by Prophet Joseph PBUH with the two prisoners, table 2.6.

Where was Joseph When He Interpreted the Dream of the King of Egypt?

The Bible and the Holy Qur'an have documented the King's request to interpret his vision, and none of his close workforce members could explain (Genesis, 41: 8; Qur'an, 12: 42-43). Moreover, both scriptures narrated that the cupbearer of the King of Egypt was the one who remembered at the end to mention to the King the skill that Joseph showed in interpreting dreams (Genesis, 41: 9, Qur'an, 12:45), table 2.7. However, a substantial difference was noticed when the Bible mentioned the immediate release of Joseph PBUH from prison directly to interpret the King of Egypt's dream (Genesis, 41: 14). Whereas the Holy Qur'an informs that Joseph explained the dream immediately to the cupbearer while he is still in prison. More than that, he refused to leave the prison until he got his reputation cleared from the allegation of sexual assault that the women charged against him before he was sentenced to jail (Qur'an, 12: 49), table 2.8. Indeed, the King of Egypt responded positively to Prophet Joseph's request and confronted the landlady with the allegations she fabricated to force Joseph to choose between adultery or prison. Moreover, only after the nobleman's wife has admitted the innocence of Joseph PBUH that he agreed to be discharged from the prison and meet the King of Egypt for further discussions (Qur'an, 12: 50-52). This moral attitude of the Prophet of God was only mentioned in the Qur'an after being unjustly sentenced for a crime he never committed. Even though missing from the Biblical narrative, this was an essential step in the life of this guided messenger of Allah since the mission of inviting people to the straight path of the religion of truth requires a well-known person for his chastity and uprightness reputation, table 2.6.

Joseph's Reaction to Meeting His Brothers on Their First Journey to Egypt

Both the Bible and the Holy Qur'an are in harmony that the King of Egypt has appointed Joseph PBUH as a minister of land revenues (Qur'an, 12: 55, Genesis, 41: 40-41). This meant that Joseph PBUH became the commander-in-chief for the distribution of food stores during the seven years of famine, table 3.1. Also, both scriptures stated that Joseph PBUH identified his elder brothers when they arrived in Egypt to receive dietary products for their families during the drought. At the same time, they could not recognize him as their missing brother, table 3.2. However, the Holy Qur'an stated that Joseph PBUH treated them courteously, justly, and with full hospitality (Qur'an, 12: 59). Contradictorily, the Bible stated that Joseph treated them rudely and accused them without any evidence of being evil infiltrators to the land of Egypt with malicious intentions (Genesis, 42: 9), table 3.3. The Biblical narrative further portrayed Joseph as unrightfully detaining one of the brothers and holding him hostage to guarantee that the others will return to Egypt, bringing their youngest brother (Genesis, 42: 16-19), table 3.6. The Holy Qur'an, on the other hand, presented Joseph PBUH as a fair leader who would never unjustly detain or hold an innocent person hostage without evidence (Qur'an, 12:79). These insulting and unjust behaviors do not match with the manners of an honorable messenger of God, chosen to propagate His true religion.

Table 3: Comparing the Biblical and the Qur’anic narratives on Prophet Joseph’s life events from his release from prison until he met his younger brother.

Part of the story	Qur’an	Bible	S/D
17. The king of Egypt appointed Joseph PBUH as Minister of agricultural affairs.	√	√	S
18. Joseph’s brothers met him on their first trip to Egypt and could not recognize him.	√	√	S
19. Joseph’s behavior with his brothers.	Kind and showed hospitality	Harsh, rude, and doubtful	D
20. Joseph sent them back with foodstuff and returned their money inside their sacks.	√	√	S
21. Joseph compelled them to bring their youngest brother next trip.	√	√	S
22. Joseph imprisoned one of them as a hostage to guarantee their return.	No	yes	D
23. Jacob hesitates to send his youngest son.	√	√	S
24. Jacob asked them to pledge in front of Allah for the safe return of their youngest brother.	√	Not available	D
25. Jacob asked them to take gifts with them to the commander-in-chief.	Not available	√	D
26. Second journey of the brothers with their little brother.	√	√	S
27. They drank with Joseph until they all became drunk.	Not available	√	D

S = Similarity, D = Difference.

Joseph’s Younger Brother Arrives in Egypt with His Brothers on Their Second Trip

Although both the Holy Qur’an and the Bible congruently described Jacob’s initial hesitation, then approval of sending his youngest son with his brothers to Egypt for the second trip, table 3.7, the Biblical version stated that upon the gathering of all brothers, Joseph PBUH could not keep hiding his real identity from his brothers. He revealed himself to them and celebrated with his brothers for their reunion until they all got intoxicated with wine (Genesis, 43: 34), table 3.11. The Biblical narrative continued to portray the brothers’ return from this second journey to deliver the good news to their father, Jacob PBUH, who did not initially believe that his son Joseph was still alive (Genesis, 44: 26-27). Therefore, according to the Bible, the third journey was the final arrival of the whole family with Jacob to Egypt. However, according to the Holy Qur’an, the second trip for the brothers with their youngest was followed by two other journeys. According to the Holy Qur’an, Joseph PBUH did not reveal his true identity to his brothers at this stage. Instead, he kept his younger brother with him and allowed the others to return to their father. The reaction of Jacob, the prophet of God, was that he lost his sight out of shock

and forwarded his sadness and grief in his supplication to Allah. However, he never gave up his hope to meet his son Joseph again, i.e., he still believed that Joseph PBUH was alive (Qur'an, 12: 86-87). This contradicts the Biblical narrative, which stated that it took Jacob a while to believe that Joseph was still alive, table 4.4. Neither did the Bible mention Jacob losing his vision nor his supplication to God to bring Joseph back to him. With those differences mentioned, it becomes much more evident to a researcher the weakness of the allegation that the Qur'anic stories were copied from the Bible.

Table 4: Comparing the Biblical and the Holy Qur'anic Narratives Concerning Prophet Joseph's Life Events from the Time He Met His Younger Brother Until the Arrival of the Entire Family in Egypt.

	Part of the story	Qur'an	Bible	S/D
28.	Joseph's plan to keep his brother in Egypt by inserting his royal cup into his little brother's sack.	√	√	S
29.	Joseph's brothers pled to keep any of them as servants and let their little brother return to his father.	Joseph refused and sent the rest back to their father	He revealed his identity and sent them all back home	D
30.	The elder brother decided to stay in Egypt.	√	Not available	D
31.	Jacob's reaction to the news of his arriving sons.	Became blind due to the loss of three sons, yet strongly believed Joseph was still alive	Hardly believed that Joseph was still alive	D
32.	Third journey to Egypt	Brothers trip back to beg Joseph to release their youngest brother	is the final one with the whole family except Joseph's mother, who died earlier.	D
33.	Joseph revealed his identity to his brothers and forgave his brothers' sins against him	during the 3 rd journey	during their 2 nd journey	D
34.	Joseph asked his brothers to return and wipe his father's face with his shirt to cure blindness.	After their 3 rd journey	Not available	D
35.	Jacob sensed the smell of Joseph and predicted the news of meeting him again.	√	Not available	D
36.	Jacob miraculously regained his vision after contact with Prophet Joseph's shirt.	√	Not available	D
37.	The final arrival of Joseph's family in Egypt	His eleven brothers and his parents bowed to him for honor and respect	Only his eleven brothers bowed down to Joseph. (unfulfilled prophecy)	D
38.	Joseph promoted slavery of people to the King of Egypt	Not available	√	D

S = Similarity, D = Difference.

Was the Prophecy of Joseph's Dream Fulfilled?

The Holy Qur'an informed that upon the arrival of his parents with all Joseph's brothers, they bowed down out of respect before Joseph PBUH. This was when Joseph PBUH remembered his old dream and reminded his father about its interpretation that came true after many years (Qur'an, 12: 100), Table 4.10. Yet, the Bible only mentioned only ten brothers bowed down before him during their first journey (Genesis, 42: 3,6) and eleven brothers without their parents on the second journey to Egypt (Genesis, 43: 26). The Old Testament further reported the demise of Joseph's mother a long time before the whole family arrived in Egypt (Genesis, 35: 19). Therefore, it can be concluded that, based on the Qur'anic version of the story, the dream's prophecy was fulfilled including the parents (the sun and the moon) bowed down before Joseph PBUH; whereas the Biblical narrative conveyed the death of the mother, and there was no mention of the father, Jacob bowing down before Joseph after the final journey to Egypt.

Did a Revered Prophet of God Promote Slavery?

The Holy Qur'an consistently set up a system to end slavery that was rampantly practiced worldwide by the people of ancient times. This system can be observed by carefully following different verses of the Holy Qur'an. The urge to end slavery was introduced by having God ordaining the release of servants from slavery as repentance from a sinful act or solving a problem. This can be noticed in God's command to the one who accidentally led to the death of another person to release an enslaved person from his slavery as compensation for the accidental death of another person (Qur'an, 4:92). Another example the Holy Qur'an gave is in cases of a person who broke his word of promise at the oath he/she took for himself/herself. In this case, Allah commanded the freeing of an enslaved person as an expiation for breaking the promise (Qur'an, 5:89). In another circumstance, we find the divine command to set an enslaved person free as a penalty to those who utter words to turn their wives unlawful to them by "Zihar". In that case, freeing a slave is compulsory before the husband is allowed to touch his wife again (Qur'an, 58:3). This is the divine approach expressed in the Holy Qur'an to eradicate slavery from the face of the earth. The messengers of God are the best who would implement and encourage this Godly plan of ending slavery. Astonishingly, in the Old Testament of the Bible, during years of hardship and famine in Egypt, it is reported that Prophet Joseph started exchanging poor people's lands for the food supplies he provided from the kingdom stores. Then, after the poor people lost their money savings and lands, the Bible informed that Joseph started enslaving those poor people for the King of Egypt in exchange for the food products Joseph provided them (Genesis, 47:21), Table 4.11. The inconsistency between the Qur'anic approach to terminate slavery from the face of the earth and the Biblical narrative that portrayed a Prophet of God behaving opportunistically with the poor people is another evidence that the Holy Qur'an motivated humanity towards establishing human rights, selflessness, justice, and esteemed moral values many centuries before the modern civilization claimed.

Although there was as much as 40% scriptural similarity in the main junctures of Prophet Joseph's life, 60% of the critical life details were noticeably dissimilar, as seen in Figure 1. More than half of the dissimilarities were due to absolute contradictions between the two scriptures regarding that specific discussion point, while less than half of these differences were because of the presence of specific details in one of the scriptures and their absence from the other.

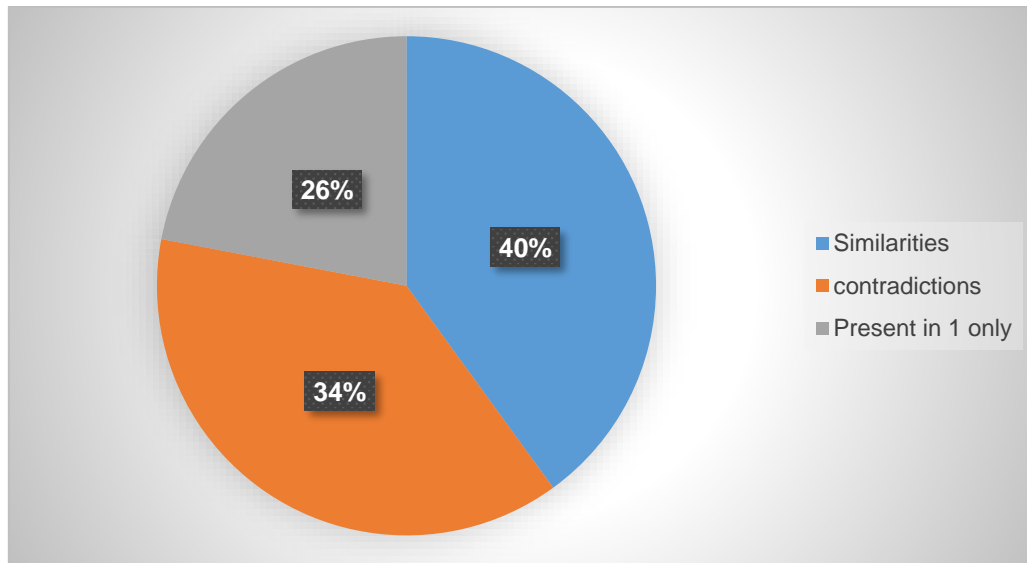


Figure 1: Percentage of similarities and differences (contradictions and single-source events) between the Qur'an and the Bible regarding Prophet Joseph's major life events.

Conclusion

Several evidence-based unequivocal conclusions can be made through the present scriptural comparative overview concerning the Biblical and the Qur'anic narratives of the significant life events of Prophet Joseph PBUH. It can be reasoned that this significant amount of differences strongly disproves the allegation that the Holy Qur'an was copied from the Bible. Moreover, as much as it is observed that the Bible engaged more with the textual and historical pattern of the story, including the names of persons, their ages, and the names of places where events have occurred. However, the Holy Qur'an paid little or no attention to those trivial historical details. The Qur'anic narrative instead focused on the lessons in creed, moral values, and religious benefits that can be learned from the story of this great messenger of God, PBUH.

Although the Bible presented Joseph PBUH as a Messenger of God, it also presented him as a wine drinker, a host of low hospitality to his guests who judged them without evidence, and a slavery-promoting person. On the other hand, none of these immoral characters were attributed to this righteous messenger of God in the Holy Qur'an. A perpetual Qur'anic fact is to consider messengers of Allah as the chosen ones among all people of their time. Therefore, the Holy Qur'an considers it entirely inappropriate and insulting to attribute such behaviors to a chosen Prophet of God.

Acknowledgment

The authors are immensely grateful to UniSZA staff, Dr. Siti Yusrina Nadeha binti Jamaluddin, for her outstanding English proofreading effort of the final article text.

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