

## **Intertextuality and Late Antiquity in Michael E. Pregill's Interpretation of the Worship of the Golden Calf in Surah Thāhā: 83-97.**

*Intertekstualitas dan Late Antiquity Era dalam Interpretasi Michael E. Pregill tentang Penyembahan Anak Sapi Emas dalam Surah Thāhā: 83-97.*

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### **Abstract**

Michael E. Pregill argues that the story in Surah Thāhā: 83-97 reflects an interpretation trend of a story in the Bible, thriving among Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity, about Israelites who worshipped the golden calf. Pregill also argues about the intertextuality between the Qur'an and Bible. This study aims to comprehensively examine Pregill's interpretation of Surah Thāhā: 83-97 as it responds to the differences in detailed stories of golden calf worship in the Qur'an and Bible and various interpretations of Al-Sāmīrī. Primary data of this qualitative study included a book entitled *The Golden Calf between Bible and Qur'an: Scripture, Polemic, and Exegesis from Late Antiquity to Islam*. Relevant data were collected and analyzed through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. According to Pregill, Al-Sāmīrī was a literary work of the Qur'an using biblical materials; then, Qur'an applied it to Harun's name and emphasized his role as the Israelites' guardian. The intertextuality between Qur'an and Bible was perceived from the possibility of using Ethiopic Bible materials to retell the event. In response to interpretation trends focusing on covenant, priesthood, and idolatry themes, Pregill argues that the Qur'an has affirmed Harun's position as the Priest under Moses the Prophet.

Keywords: Late Antiquity Era; Intertextuality; Michael E. Pregill; Qs. Thāhā: 83-97; The Worship of the Golden Calf

### **Abstrak**

Dalam interpretasi terhadap Qs. Thāhā: 83-97, Michael E. Pregill berargumen bahwa bentuk kisah dalam 15 ayat tersebut mencerminkan tren interpretasi kisah penyembahan anak lembu emas oleh kaum Israel dalam Alkitab yang berkembang di antara komunitas Yahudi dan Kristen era Late Antiquity. Pregill juga berargumen mengenai adanya hubungan intertekstualitas antara al-Qur'an dengan Alkitab. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengkaji interpretasinya terhadap Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 secara komprehensif, karena interpretasinya dapat merespon perbedaan rincian kisah penyembahan anak lembu emas antara al-Qur'an dan Alkitab, dan ragam interpretasi tentang sosok Al-Sāmīrī. Data primer kajian kualitatif ini yaitu buku "*The Golden Calf between Bible and Qur'an: Scripture, Polemic, and Exegesis from Late Antiquity to Islam*". Data yang relevan dikumpulkan dan dianalisis melalui proses kondensasi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan kesimpulan/verifikasi. Istilah Al-Sāmīrī, menurut Pregill, adalah bentuk seni sastra dari al-Qur'an dalam menggunakan materi Alkitab lalu al-Qur'an mengaplikasikannya menjadi sebutan untuk Harun sekaligus menekankan perannya sebagai penjaga kaum Israel. Intertekstualitas al-Qur'an dengan Alkitab terlihat dari kemungkinan penggunaan materi Ethiopic Bible untuk menceritakan kembali peristiwa tersebut. Terhadap tren interpretasi yang berfokus pada tema perjanjian, imam, dan pemberhalaan, Pregill berpendapat

bahwa al-Qur'an memperjelas kedudukan Harun sebagai Imam di bawah Nabi Musa.

Kata Kunci: Late Antiquity Era; Intertekstualitas; Michael E. Pregill; Qs. Thāhā: 83-97; Penyembahan Anak Lembu Emas.

## Introduction

Michael E. Pregill's book, "*The Golden Calf between Bible and Qur'an: Scripture, Polemic, and Exegesis from Late Antiquity to Islam*," has made significant contributions in two areas. *First*, it offers a fresh perspective on the interpretation of Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 by examining the literary art embedded in the term *Al-Sāmīrī*, the intertextual relationship between the Qur'an and the Bible, and the form of the story in Qs. Thāhā: 83-97, which reflects the trend of interpreting the story of the worship of the golden calf during Late Antiquity. Through the story, Pregill explores the journey of the story's reception from before the time of the Bible's recording to the Qur'an's reception and reinterpretation of the story, and the interpretation of the narrative among Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the Bible and the Qur'an.<sup>1</sup> *Second*, Pregill's study addresses the lack of in-depth research on the reception of the Bible and the history of interpretation of biblical stories among Jews and Christians from Antiquity to the Middle Ages, which includes the Qur'an and Islamic traditions.<sup>2</sup>

This paper specifically examine Michael E. Pregill's interpretation of Qs. Thāhā: 83-97, focusing on two key aspects. First, it will address the differences in the details of the story of the worship of the golden calf between the Qur'an and the Bible, particularly the difference in the person responsible for the worship of the golden calf - Harun in Exodus 32 and *Al-Sāmīrī* in Qs. Thāhā: 83-97.<sup>3</sup> Second, the paper explore the various interpretations put forward by *mufassir* to identify the figure of *Al-Sāmīrī*.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, it is important to examine Michael E. Pregill's interpretation of the story of the worship of the golden calf by the Israelites in Qs. Thāhā: 83-97.

The purpose of this study is to conduct a comprehensive examination of Michael E. Pregill's interpretation of Qs. Thāhā: 83-97, including its driving factors and implications. This research is guided by three research questions: (1) what is the form of Michael E. Pregill's interpretation of Qs. Thāhā: 83-97?; (2) what factors influenced Michael E. Pregill's interpretation?; and (3) what are the implications of

1 Michael E. Pregill, *The Golden Calf between Bible and Qur'an: Scripture, Polemic, and Exegesis from Late Antiquity to Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), p. 20-21 and 103.

2 Pregill, p. 22.

3 Gabriel Said Reynolds, *The Qur'an and the Bible* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2018), p. 496-499.

4 Shari L. Lowin, *The Making of a Forefather: Abraham in Islamic and Jewish Exegetical Narratives* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006), hlm, 166-169; M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Mishbāh : Pesan, Kesan, and Keserasian al-Quran Edisi 2021 Vol. 7* (Tangerang: PT. Lentera Hati, 2021), p. 649.

Michael E. Pregill's interpretation? These questions are organized into three parts, with the first part discussing the Pregill's interpretation of Qs. Thāhā: 83-97, the second part examining the methods used by Pregill in his interpretation, and the third part exploring how Pregill's interpretation sheds light on the connection between the story of the worship of the golden calf in the Qur'an and the Bible, as well as the historical context of Late Antiquity that influenced the story.

Based on these three research questions, this study argues that Michael E. Pregill's interpretation of Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 can enrich our understanding of two areas. *Firstly*, Pregill's methods of interpretation and the outcomes of his analysis can provide a useful model for interpreting certain Qur'anic verses, particularly those with similarities to biblical stories. *Secondly*, the implications of Pregill's interpretation can facilitate a comprehensive understanding of his reading of Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 when it is linked with the story of the Israelites' worship of the golden calf in the Bible, and the interpretation approach that situates Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 in the context of the Late Antiquity period.

To support the argument presented above, this qualitative research draws on primary data from Michael E. Pregill's book, "The Golden Calf between Bible and Qur'an: Scripture, Polemic, and Exegesis from Late Antiquity to Islam", with a specific focus on the seventh and eighth chapters, as well as the introductory and conclusion chapters, which may complement Pregill's interpretation of Qs. Thāhā: 83-97. Secondary data sources used in this study include research related to the story of the worship of the golden calf in the Qur'an and the Bible, stories in the Qur'an, the relationship between the Qur'an and Late Antiquity, and intertextuality. The research analysis process involves simultaneous activities of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.<sup>5</sup>

## **Background of Study: Late Antiquity and Intertextuality in Qur'anic Stories**

### ***Late Antiquity***

Late Antiquity refers to the period of transition before the Middle Ages, which began in the early fourth century during Constantine's reign and ended in the late fifth century with the collapse of Roman imperial rule in the West and in the late seventh century in the Near East.<sup>6</sup> While the boundaries of this era are not standardized, subsequent studies have expanded its definition. This period saw

5 Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Salanda, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, 3 ed. (USA: SAGE Publications Inc., 2014), p. 31-33.

6 Gillian Clark, *Late Antiquity: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 1.

the compilation of the Qur'an, which had a significant impact on the emergence of Islam.<sup>7</sup> Based on Syriac literature from the Late Antique era, *Sīrah* literature, Islamic history, and the Qur'an, there is a strong connection between the tradition and communities in the Near East region and the pre-Islamic Arab culture.<sup>8</sup>

Regarding the study of the Qur'an, several scholars have proposed a model of reading that places the Qur'an in the context of the Late Antiquity era. *First*, Angelika Neuwirth discussed the originality of the Qur'anic text historically<sup>9</sup> and analyzed Qs. al-Ikhlās.<sup>10</sup> *Second*, Andrew C. Smith examined the story of the Prophet Moses with Pharaoh and his wizards in Qs. Al-A'rāf: 103-126, Qs. Yūnus: 75-92, Qs. Thāhā: 41-76, and Qs. Asy-Syu'arā': 10-51.<sup>11</sup> *Third*, Juan Cole analyzed the meaning of the term *islām* in the Qur'an.<sup>12</sup> This model of reading suggests that the Qur'an, in the early stages of its formation, was a form of oral communication with the audience consisting of the learned people of the Late Antique era.<sup>13</sup> *Fourth*, Fred McGraw Donner proposed three steps for seeking the historical truth of the Qur'an, beginning with analyzing the texts of the Qur'an, then comparing the clues obtained from the Qur'an with *Sīrah* literature, and finally paying attention to the religious phenomena/events in the "Late Antique Near East".<sup>14</sup> Additionally, it has been suggested that certain material from the Qur'an that appears to be different from the Bible on the same theme is a form of creative elaboration of the Qur'an, rather than a form of fabrication of the Qur'an. This form of creative elaboration is also part of the known form of antique interpretation from *rabbinic*, the New Testament, and ecclesiastical practices. Thus, the Qur'an can be seen as an innovative and active participant in the

7 Clark, *Late Antiquity: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 1.

8 Emran Iqbal El-Badawi, *The Qur'an and the Aramaic Gospel Traditions* (London dan New York: Routledge, 2014), p. 1-2.

9 Adrika Fitrotul Aini and Asep Nahrul Musadad, "Konteks Late Antiquity and Analisis Struktur Mikro sebagai Counter atas Skeptisisme Orisinalitas Teks Al-Quran: Refleksi atas Pemikiran Angelika Neuwirth," *Subuf* 10, no. 1 (September 8, 2017): 173-192.

10 Angelika Neuwirth, "Two Faces of the Qur'an: Qur'an and Mushaf," *Oral Tradition* 25, no. 1 (2010), p. 150-153; Roudhotul Jannah, "Universalitas Ketahuiand Perubahan (Pembacaan Al-Qur'an Pra-Kanonisasi Angelika Neuwirth Terhadap Surat Al-Ikhlās)," *rausyan Fikr: Jurnal Ilmu Studi Ushuluddin and Filsafat* 15, no. 2 (2019).

11 Andrew C. Smith, "Moses and Pharaoh's Magicians: A Discursive Analysis of the Qur'anic Narratives in the Light of Late Antique Texts and Traditions," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 20, no. 1 (2018): 67-104, diakses Juli 4, 2022.

12 Juan Cole, "Paradosis and monotheism: A late antique approach to the meaning of islām in the Quran," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 82, no. 3 (2019).

13 Angelika Neuwirth, "The 'Discovery of Writing' in The Qur'an: Tracing An Epistemic Revolution in Late Antiquity," *Nun : Jurnal Studi Alquran dan Tafsir di Nusantara* 2, no. 1 (2016), diakses Juli 7, 2022., p. 31-32.

14 Fred McGraw Donner, "The Historical Context," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'an.*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 33-35.

interpretation debates that developed in the Late Antique era.<sup>15</sup>

### *Intertextuality in the Study of the Qur'an*

Intertextuality is the concept that a text is created by combining previous texts that intersect and blend into each other. Moreover, a text must be perceived as inseparable from its wider cultural and social construction.<sup>16</sup> In terms of reading, a previous understanding of a text affects present reading activity, while in writing, a writer's work is inevitably influenced by prior readings of other authors.<sup>17</sup> As a theoretical framework, intertextuality may facilitate comprehension of how certain activities impact subsequent, similar activities.<sup>18</sup>

Intertextuality has been employed as a method for analyzing Tafseer and stories in the Qur'an.<sup>19</sup> This method has also been used as a framework for examining how an interpreter utilizes Biblical sources to interpret Qur'anic verses<sup>20</sup> and to draw conclusions about the interpreter's views on the works of other interpreters.<sup>21</sup> Intertextuality in Qur'anic interpretation can be seen through two approaches:

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- 15 Angelika Neuwirth, "Locating the Quran and Early Islam in the 'Epistemic Space' of Late Antiquity," in *Islam and Its Past: Jahiliyya, Late Antiquity, and the Quran* (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 183-184.
- 16 Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 35-36.
- 17 Hasanuddin WS, *Transformasi Budaya and Produksi Sosial Teks: Kajian Intertekstualitas Teks Cerita Anggun Nan Tungga Magek Jabang* (Bandung: ANGKASA, 2017), p. 39.
- 18 Lois Denissa et al., "Fenomena Intertekstualitas Fashion Karnaval di Nusantara," *Panggung* 26, no. 4 (2016).
- 19 Fatimah Fatmawati, "Penafsiran Sab' Samawat dalam Kitab Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-Azim Karya Ibnu Katsir (Kajian Intertekstualitas Julia Kristeva)," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Ushuluddin* 18, no. 2 (2019); Umi Wasilatul Firdausiyah, "Kajian Semanalisis Hingga Intertekstualitas Julia Kristeva: Analisis atas Teks Al-Quran tentang Eksistensi Hujan," *Journal of Islamic Civilization* 4, no. 1 (2021); Samratul Aini, "Kisah Nabi Yunus dalam Al-Qur'an and Al-Kitab; Pendekatan Intertekstual Julia Kristeva," *El-Maqra': Jurnal Ilmu al-Qur'an, Hadis and Teologi* 2, no. 2 (2022); Roma Wijaya, "Makna Toleransi Dalam Al-Qur'an and Bibel (Analisis Intertekstualitas Julia Kristeva)," *Allais: Journal of Arabic Language and Literature* 1, no. 2 (2022); M. Riyan Hidayat, "Kisah Yajuj Majuj dalam Tafsir Al-Azhar : Analisis Intertekstualitas Julia Kristeva," *J-Alif: Jurnal Penelitian Hukum Ekonomi Syariah and Budaya Islam* 6, no. 1 (2021); Chilyatus Saadah, "Kajian Interteks dalam Manuskrip Tafsir Jalalayn Karangasem Seand Rembang," *Al Itqan: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an* 5, no. 1 (2019); Mohd Sholeh Sheh Yusuff, Mohd Shahid Azim Mohd Saufi, and Yusuf Othman, "Bacaan Intertekstual Terhadap Tafsir Nur Al-Ihsan: Kajian Menurut Kaedah Ekspansi," *Jurnal Dunia Pengurusan* 2, no. 2 (2020): 1-11.
- 20 Rahmatullah Rahmatullah, "Hermeneutika Intertekstualitas Muqâtil bin Sulaymân," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-ilmu Al-Qur'an and Hadis* 20, no. 2 (2019): 126-142.
- 21 Ihsan Nurmansyah and Adib Sofia, "Paralel, Transformasi and Haplologi Tafsir Tujuh Surah Karya Muhammad Basiuni Imran dengan Karya Tafsir Muhammad Rasyid Ridha: Kajian Intertekstualitas," *Al-Bayan: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Al-Qur'an and Tafsir* 6, no. 2 (2021); Ziska Yanti, "Kajian Intertekstualitas Ayat Ahl Al-Kitab dalam Tafsir al-Misbah karya Quraish Shihab dengan Tafsir al-Mizan karya Husein Thabathaba'i," *El-Maqra' Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an, Hadis and Teologi* 2, no. 1 (2022), diakses Juli 4, 2022; Said Agil Husin Al Munawar, Muhammad Hariyadi, and Muhammad Ulyn Nuha, "Tarjih Penafsiran Huruf Muqattha'ah Al-Qur'an Perspektif Intertekstualitas," *Al-Amin: Jurnal kajian Ilmu and Budaya Islam* 5, no. 2 (2022); Nabila El Mumtaza Arifin, Luqmanul Hakim, and Faizin Faizin, "Studi Intertekstualitas

interpreting related Qur'anic verses together and interpreting Qur'anic text with the aid of contemporary scientific texts.<sup>22</sup>

### *Stories in the Qur'an*

The term "story" encompasses a wide range of definitions and meanings.<sup>23</sup> Within the context of literary works, a story is the product of its creator's imagination regarding one of four possibilities. *First*, it may be a product of the imagination about certain events involving an unknown character. *Second*, it may be a product of the imagination about events that have not yet occurred but involve known characters. *Third*, it may be a product of the imagination about a known character, with events only recounted in certain parts deemed significant. *Fourth*, it may be a product of the imagination about real events that appear to be fictional due to the addition of characters or fantastic events.<sup>24</sup>

The stories in the Qur'an have been analyzed using various approaches, such as hermeneutics,<sup>25</sup> linguistics,<sup>26</sup> literature,<sup>27</sup> rhetoric, narratology, reception,<sup>28</sup> and literary zoology.<sup>29</sup> Regarding the literary approach to the Qur'anic stories, it is argued that the authenticity of a story in the Qur'an is not based on its historical

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Tafsir Al-Thabari dalam Tafsir Ibnu Katsir tentang Kisah Bani Israil Tersesat Selama Empat Puluh Tahun," *An-Nida'* 44, no. 1 (2020).

- 22 Khafidhoh Khafidhoh, "Penafsiran Intertekstualitas: Telaah Konsep Hermeneutika Komaruddin Hidayat," *Al-Adabiya: Jurnal Kebudayaan and Keagamaan* 14, no. 01 (2019): 103–117.
- 23 Kelli Jo Kerry-Moran and Juli-Anna Aerila, "Introduction: The Strength of Stories," in *Story in Children's Lives: Contributions of the Narrative Mode to Early Childhood Development, Literacy, and Learning* (Switzerland: Springer Nature Switzerland AG, 2019), p. 2.
- 24 Muhammad Ahmad Khalafallah, *Al-Qur'an Bukan "Kitab Sejarah": Seni, Sastra and Moralitas dalam Kisah-Kisah al-Qur'an*, trans. Zuhairi Misrawi and Anis Maftukhin (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2002), p. 101.
- 25 Daandg Darmawan, "ANALISA KISAH YUSUF DALAM ALQURAN DENGAN PENDEKATAN HERMENEUTIKA," *Al-Bayan: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Al-Qur'an and Tafsir* 1, no. 1 (2016): 8–16.
- 26 Wiland Hidayat, "Representasi Makna Ideologis Kisah Ashâb al-Kahf: Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes Dalam Surah Al-Kahf," *Mutawatir* 8, no. 1 (2020); Zunly Nadia, "Telaah Struktural Hermeneutik Kisah Nabi Ibrahim dalam Alquran," *Mutawatir : Jurnal Keilmuan Tafsir Hadith* 10, no. 1 (2020): 117–143, diakses Juli 6, 2022; Ian Richard Netton, "Towards a Modern Tafsir of Sûrat al-Kahf: Structure and Semiotics," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2010): 67–87. moral and humanity sometimes gives the representation of messages that will be delivered. In many chapters of the Qur'an, Allah has given beautifully messages through the stories. The messages that will be delivered through the stories are the representation of religion purposed as the one of mankind servitude parts that called by ulu al-albab and ulu al-absar. In this context, the content of the message in the story of ashab al-kahf has an important message for human (ummah
- 27 M. A.S.Abdel Haleem, "The Qur'anic Employment of the Story of Noah," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 8, no. 1 (2008): 38–57; A. H. Johns, "Shuhayb, Orator of the Prophets: Reflections on Qur'anic Narrative," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 13, no. 2 (2011): 136–148.
- 28 Leyla Ozgur Alhassen, *Qur'anic Stories: God, Revelation and the Audience* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021), p. 1.
- 29 Muhamad Agus Mushodiq et al., "Urgensi Zoologi Sastra Alquran: Studi Kasus Pada Seni Kisah Zoomorfik Al-Farasy Surat Al-Qari'ah," *Al Quds : Jurnal Studi Alquran and Hadis* 5, no. 1 (2021): 1.

accuracy but on its purpose of imparting the value of truth through the narrative. Additionally, the Qur'anic adjective "*al-haqq*" is often used to connote work that adheres to the principle of truth, as well as to describe statements that are verifiably true. Accordingly, if a story in the Qur'an, regardless of its factual correspondence, is told to convey a message of virtue, religion, and morality to its audience, then it is deemed true based on the use of the adjective "*al-haqq*" in certain Qur'anic verses.<sup>30</sup>

Previous studies on the story of the Israelites' worship of the golden calf in the Qur'an and the Bible can be categorized into two main focuses. The first focus is on the story of the worship of the golden calf in the Bible, which has been examined in various research studies with different perspectives and approaches,<sup>31</sup> including studies of its interpretation.<sup>32</sup> The second focus is on the story of the worship of the golden calf in the Qur'an, which includes studies on the differences between the story in the Qur'an and the Bible, as well as research on the interpretations of the story by classical and modern Islamic scholars,<sup>33</sup> the identification of the figure of *Al-Sāmīrī*,<sup>34</sup> and the distinctive phrases and combinations of phrases in the story.<sup>35</sup>

30 Khalafallah, *Al-Qur'an Bukan "Kitab Sejarah"*: Seni, Sastra and Moralitas dalam Kisah-Kisah al-Qur'an., p. 7-9.

31 Nissim Amzallag, "Beyond Idolatry – The Transgression of the Golden Calf Revisited," *Old Testament Essays* 33, no. 2 (2020); Ignacio Ramos-Gay, "Animality and Biblical Masculinities in Conflict: Moses and the Golden Calf (Exodus 32)," *Men and Masculinities* 23, no. 5 (2020); Tarcicio Gaitán Briceño, Emigdio Mendoza Fandiño, and Piedad Gañán Rojo, "The destruction of the golden calf (Ex 32:20): A materials science perspective," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 42, no. 1 (2021); James W. Watts, "Aaron and the Golden Calf in the Rhetoric of the Pentateuch," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130, no. 3 (Januari 1, 2011): 417–430; Robert A. Di Vito, "The Calf Episodes in Exodus and Deuteronomy: A Study in Inner-Biblical Interpretation," in *Golden Calf Traditions in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, ed. Eric F. Mason and Edmondo F. Lupieri (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2019), 1–25; Richard J. Bautch, "The Golden Calf in the Historical Recitals of Nehemiah 9 and Psalm 106," in *Golden Calf Traditions in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, ed. Eric F. Mason and Edmondo F. Lupieri (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2019), 49–58; Andiel Assefa and Kelley Coblenz Bautch, "Did the Sheep Worship the Golden Calf? The Animal Apocalypse's Reading of Exodus 32," in *Golden Calf Traditions in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, ed. Eric F. Mason and Edmondo F. Lupieri (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2019), 59–72; Youn Ho Chung, *The Sin of the Calf: The Rise of the Bible's Negative Attitude Toward the Golden Calf* (New York and London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2010).

32 Thomas H. Tobin SJ, "Philo of Alexandria's Interpretations of the Episode of the Golden Calf," in *Golden Calf Traditions in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, ed. Eric F. Mason and Edmondo F. Lupieri (Brill, 2019), 73–86; Andrew J. Hayes, "The Incident of the Golden Calf in Pre-Islamic Syriac Authors," in *Golden Calf Traditions in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, ed. Eric F. Mason and Edmondo F. Lupieri (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2019), 238–263.

33 Ismail Albayrak, "The Qur'anic Narratives of the Golden Calf Episode," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 3, no. 1 (2001).

34 Tolga Savaş Altinel, "An evaluation of the identity of Sāmīrī in the Qur'ān," *Ilahiyat Studies* 9, no. 1 (2018). the Qur'ān copies biblical stories and, not infrequently, does so in an incorrect way. The Qur'ānic story of the Golden Calf, with the Samiri (Samaritan

35 Cecilia Palombo, "Formulae and Repetition in the Medinan Qur'an: The Story of the Golden Calf between Meccan and Medinan Suras," in *Unlocking the Medinan Qur'an*, ed. Nicolai Sinai, vol. 19 (Brill, 2022), 120–163.

## Michael E. Pregill's Interpretation of the Story of the Golden Calf in Qur'an Thāhā: 83-97.

Michael E. Pregill has drawn attention to five verses when interpreting Qs. Thāhā: 83-97. One of these verses, Qs. Thāhā: 88, contains the phrase *ijlan jasadal lahū khuwārun*, which is interpreted as “a statue of a low-voiced (deep) calf.” Pregill suggests that the word *ijl* is clear in meaning, referring to a “calf,” while the words *jasad* (body, form) and *lahū khuwārun* (which literally means “to have a low voice”) are less clear. According to Pregill, *jasad* is usually understood as an apposition or explanatory term for *ijl*, emphasizing the physicality of the calf. However, some interpreters and translators have also rendered *jasad* as an adjective, such as “a corporeal calf,” or as a noun, such as “a calf, a body.” Pregill notes that some have even translated *jasad* as “image” or “statue” in reference to the fact that the calf is an idol.<sup>36</sup>

The phrase that Michael E. Pregill often misinterprets is the phrase “*lahū khuwārun*”. This phrase is commonly understood to mean that the golden calf statue magically makes a low (deep) or mooing sound when it is created. However, Pregill argues that the low (deep) voice referred to in the phrase is a characteristic possessed by calves in general and not a special feature of the statue. He also contends that this interpretation makes more sense in the context of the Qur'anic story, as there is no information regarding visible or truly living golden calves in Qs. Al-A'raf and Qs. Thāhā, and in terms of grammar, as the phrase combines possessive and verbal noun types of words, indicating a fixed characteristic of an entity or thing rather than an action performed at a certain time.<sup>37</sup>

Michael E. Pregill's interpretation of Qs. Thāhā: 87 and 95 suggests that *Al-Sāmīri* and Harun are the same person,<sup>38</sup> which led him to understand the question posed in Qs. Thāhā: 95 similarly to those in Qs. al-hijr: 57 and Qs. az-Zāriyāt: 31, provoking the messengers to acknowledge their true identity and purpose.<sup>39</sup> Pregill's understanding of the phrase *qabdatu qabdatam* in Qs. Thāhā: 96 is not literal, but rather metaphorical, with “to sample” and “to do something for a little while” being the suggested metaphors, while the word *aśar*, also found in verse 84, is not interpreted literally as “path,” but metaphorically as an exemplary moral teaching or guidance.

In verses *fāzhab* and *wa inna laka mau'idal and tukblafab(ū)* in verse 97, Michael E. Pregill suggests that the term “curse” is not explicitly mentioned. Instead,

<sup>36</sup> Pregill, p. 323 and 327.

<sup>37</sup> Pregill, p. 323-324.

<sup>38</sup> Pregill, p. 335.

<sup>39</sup> Pregill, p. 342.



Pregill interprets the word *izhab* (*faẓhab*) as a more neutral imperative of “go, go forth” used to assign someone. Further, he interprets the combination of the words *akhlafā* and *maʿw'id* in the verse to mean shirking or abandoning duties, especially covenant obligations. Thus, according to Pregill, the verse *wa inna laka mau'idal and tukhlafah(ū)* means “you have an obligation that you cannot neglect” or “you have a commitment that you will not be forgiven for neglecting.” Additionally, Pregill suggests that Qs. Thāhā: 97 pertains to two characteristics of the Israelite priestly class: their claim as descendants of Harun and their obligation to maintain a strict standard of ritual purity. This is because the phrase *lā misās(a)* appears to him to relate more plausibly to ritual purity than to exile. Therefore, the phrase *lā misās(a)* signifies that Harun and his descendants will attain holy status and become a separate group.<sup>40</sup>

The phrase “*wa inna laka mau'idal and tukhlafah(ū)*” is interpreted by Michael E. Pregill as referring to the appointment of Harun and his descendants as Imams for all eternity, set apart as a separate group within the great community of the people of Israel. This appointment was a consequence of Harun’s involvement in the “making of the golden calf”. Additionally, Pregill suggests that the mention of Maryam<sup>41</sup> as “*ukht hārūn*” in Qs. Maryam: 28 can be understood as a special relationship between Maryam and Harun based on their shared status of chastity.<sup>42</sup>

### Factors Shaping Pregill’s Interpretive Patterns.

Pregill’s interpretation of the five verses in Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 is based on several factors that influenced his thinking. To aid understanding of these factors, they can be divided into four parts, as follows:

#### *Intertextuality Studies.*

Michael E. Pregill’s interpretation of *lahū khuwārūn* is based on the absence of any indication of a sign of life in the golden calf in Qs. Al-A’rāf: 142-157 and Qs. Thāhā: 83-97. The interpretation of *ijlan jasadān* as “an image of a calf” is grounded on two foundations. *Firstly*, based on Angelika Neuwirth’s intertextuality study between the Qur’an and Psalm, Pregill connects a phrase from the Qur’an, which refers to a low-voiced calf statue (image of a lowing calf), with a phrase from Psalm, which describes an image of a grass-eating ox. *Secondly*, Pregill contends that the phrase *ijlan jasadān* corresponds to the phrase most commonly used to refer to calves in the Bible, namely *ēgel massēkā*, which means a statue of a calf. Pregill’s application

<sup>40</sup> Pregill, p. 364-369.

<sup>41</sup> Pregill, p. 370-373.

<sup>42</sup> Pregill, p. 377.

of intertextuality studies is also evident in his interpretation of the mention of *Al-Sāmīrī* in the Qur'an, which he argues is part of the Qur'an's literary art form, as it draws on material from the Bible regarding the story of the worship of calves in Samaria and applies it to the designation "*Al-Sāmīrī*" for Harun.<sup>43</sup>

Michael E. Pregill's interpretation of intertextuality studies is based on a paradigm of the relationship between the Bible and the Qur'an, which involves a strong adaptation of the Qur'an to the many discourses surrounding religion, culture, and politics in the Late Antiquity era, rather than a passive transmission of data or material from the Bible. This paradigm, based on the work of scholars such as Angelika Neuwirth and Emran El-Badawi, views the Qur'an as an active and creative participant in the era, engaging in reinterpretations of materials from the Bible and its interpretations to produce a unique and distinctive Qur'anic discourse. Pregill applies this paradigm to his interpretation of the relationship between Exodus 32 and Qs. Thāhā: 83-97.<sup>44</sup>

### ***References to Commentators and Translators.***

In terms of the verse "*qabattu qabdatam min aṣarir-rasūli fa-nabaḏtuhā*", Michael E. Pregill cites the metaphorical interpretation of Abū Muslim al-Isfahānī<sup>45</sup> with regard to *aṣar*, *qabattu qabdatam*, and *nabaḏa*, which is also supported by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and Maulana Muhammad Ali. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī agrees with this interpretation for several reasons, including that the angel Gabriel is never referred to as *rasūl* in the Qur'an, and it is unlikely that someone like Sāmīrī was granted miracles to bring the golden calf to life.<sup>46</sup> Michael E. Pregill also draws on the interpretations of the word *jasad* by previous interpreters and translators,<sup>47</sup> and uses the view of Abū Muslim al-Isfahānī in understanding the verse "*basurtu bima lam yabsuru bihi*", interpreting it as "I realized, unlike them, that this would all end badly."<sup>48</sup>

### ***Language Analysis.***

Michael E. Pregill's metaphorical interpretation of *nabaḏa* is supported by the

43 Pregill, p. 346-348 and 440.

44 Pregill, p. 36-40.

45 The opinion of Abū Muslim al-Isfahānī is also utilized by Michael E. Pregill in understanding the verse "I was inspired with knowledge that they did not have, and I knew that what they had done was wrong." In another part of the book, Michael E. Pregill interprets the verse segment as follows: "I realized, unlike them, that all of this would end badly." Pregill, p. 338 and 388.

46 Pregill, p. 329-332

47 Pregill, p. 326-327.

48 Pregill, p. 330, 338, and 393.

use of the verb *qazāfa* in verse 87, which describes the act of “throwing” gold jewelry, and further substantiated by the fact that *nabaḥa* in the Qur’an always denotes the attitude of throwing out something undesirable, such as a rejection of divine guidance in Qs. Al-Baqarah: 100-101.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, the meaning of “throwing” is also indicated through the word *alqā* in verse 87, although Pregill interpreted it as a pun that links it to the colloquialism of “tossing an idea around” and “I was just throwing it out there,” thus interpreting the phrase *fa-kadhālika alqā Al-Sāmīrī* as “then we have thrown gold, because it is *Al-Sāmīrī* who has suggested it.”<sup>50</sup> Additionally, in his interpretation of *Al-Sāmīrī*, Pregill draws on the information that the term refers to the Hebrew word *shômēr*, meaning watchman/guardian,<sup>51</sup> or the Arabic word *samīr*, meaning “one who stays awake at night,” or both, to emphasize Harun’s role as a protector or guardian of the Israelites.<sup>52</sup>

The results of Michael E. Pregill’s interpretation of fragments of *faḥḥab* and *wa inna laka mau’idal and tukhlaḥab(ū)* are based on a semantic analysis of the words *iḥḥab*, *akhlafa*, *maw’id*, as well as words derived from the same root as *akhlafa* and *maw’id* in the Qur’an.<sup>53</sup> Michael E. Pregill supports his semantic analysis by citing examples in the Qur’an of the word *aṣar* that are metaphorically interpreted as “examples that have been established by the Prophets, ancestors, or leaders”, among which are Qs. al-Mā’idah: 46 and Qs. az-Zukhruf: 22.<sup>54</sup>

### ***Verse by Verse Interpretation.***

Michael E. Pregill argues that Harun may be the answer to the question of *Al-Sāmīrī*’s expected reason for establishing the *aṣar* of Prophet Moses, despite Harun being overlooked in the story of the conversation related to the *aṣar*, because Harun acted as the representative of the Prophet Moses during the time he was in Sinai instead of *Al-Sāmīrī*, based on Al-A’rāf: 142 and Qs. Thāhā: 92.<sup>55</sup> Pregill also suggests that the phrase *lā misās(a)* in Qs. Thāhā: 97 relates to ritual purity and can be compared to *lā yamassuhu illa al-muabharūn* in Qs. al-Wāqī’ah: 77-79. Additionally, Qs. an-Nisā’: 160, Qs. ‘Āli ‘Imrān: 50, and Qs. al-Mā’idah: 5 imply that the strict laws of the Torah were a form of Divine prohibition to the Jews for their sins, and the appointment of Harun and his descendants to the position of Imam (priesthood)

49 Pregill, p. 334.

50 Pregill, p. 335.

51 Pregill, p. 349-350.

52 Pregill, p. 353.

53 Pregill, p. 365-369.

54 Pregill, p. 329-332.

55 Pregill, p. 335-336.

may have been a consequence of Harun's role in the "making of calves".<sup>56</sup>

### **Implications for the Interpretation of Qur'anic Verses Thāhā: 83-97.** *Intertextuality between the Qur'an and the Bible.*

Michael E. Pregill's interpretation of Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 suggests that the story shares similarities with several other stories, including Exodus 32:7-8, Hosea 8:5-6, 2 Kings 17:21, Exodus 32:1-5, Psalm 106:20-21, and Exodus 32:20-24,<sup>57</sup> with the exception of verses 86, 89, and 96. Pregill argues that *fa-nasiya* in verse 88 likely refers to the Israelites, based on the merger of Psalm 106:20-21 and Exodus 32:4 seen in this verse. This interpretation serves as the foundation for Pregill's discussion on the intersection of the Bible, the Qur'an, the *midrash*, and interpretation. Pregill's interpretation challenges the assumption of Western scholars who view the person in charge in Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 as an error in the Qur'an and suggest a direct influence of the *midrash* on the emergence of the term *Al-Sāmīrī*. Pregill argues that these scholars rely too heavily on the explanation of Islamic commentators that *Al-Sāmīrī* is from the community of "the Samaritans" and thus conclude that his mention in Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 is an "odd mistake" because "the Samaritans" did not exist during the Mosaic Age. Pregill further notes that the material from the *midrash* includes assimilated material from the Qur'an and tafsir, and that some of the *midrash* sources cited by Western scholars were written after the advent of Islam.<sup>58</sup>

Michael E. Pregill presented an argument regarding the three influences of the Ethiopic Bible on Qs. Thāhā: 83-97, including the phonetic similarity between the term *sāmīrī* in the Qur'an and the term *samāryā* in the Old Testament Ethiopic Bible and the term *samrawi* in the New Testament Ethiopic Bible; the use of the term *ijlan* in Qs. Thāhā: 88, which is closer to the term *lāhm* used in both Exodus 32:4 and Psalm 106:20 in the Ethiopic Bible; and the similarity of word positions between the terms *lāhm sebko* in Exodus 32:4 Ethiopic Bible and *ijlan jasadān* in Qs. Thāhā: 88, with *sebko* and *jasad* serving as nouns and opposition to the words *lāhm* and *ijl*.<sup>59</sup>

### **Differences in the Story of the Golden Calf in the Qur'an and the Bible.**

Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 presents a unique form of storytelling regarding the Israelites' worship of the golden calf that differs from the Bible in several ways.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Pregill, p. 370-373.

<sup>57</sup> Pregill, p. 392-393.

<sup>58</sup> Pregill, p. 16, 19, and 41-42.

<sup>59</sup> Pregill, p. 402-405.

<sup>60</sup> Pregill, p. 392-393.

*Firstly*, the story’s order differs in relation to Harun’s warning that the golden calf is not a deity but rather tangible evidence of God’s existence, and that the Israelites must remember their true God. In Qs. Thāhā:88 and 90, Harun’s warnings came before the Israelites referred to the calf as their Lord, whereas in Exodus 32:4-5, Harun’s warning followed.<sup>61</sup> *Secondly*, the story’s focus in Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 is different, highlighting Harun’s role as the protector or guardian of the people of Israel, and his decisions he was not supposed to make.<sup>62</sup>

Table 1. Comparison Quotations between Qs. Thāhā: 88-90 by Michael E. Pregill with Exodus: 4-5 and Psalm 106: 20-21.

<p>(Qs. Thāhā: 88a) He brought forth for them <u>an image of a calf, [an animal] that lows . . .</u></p>	<p>(Exodus 32: 4a) He took [the gold] from their hands and fashioned it with a tool and made of it <u>an image of a calf . . .</u> (Psalm 106: 20) They exchanged their glory for <u>an image of an ox, [an animal] that eats grass . . .</u></p>
<p>(Qs. Thāhā: 88b) . . . and they said: “This is your god and the god of Moses,” and they forgot [their true God].</p>	<p>(Exodus 32: 4b) . . . and they said: “This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt . . .” (Psalm 106: 21) They forgot God their savior, who did great things in Egypt.</p>
<p>(Qs. Thāhā: 90) Harun had said to them beforehand: “O people, although you may be tempted by it, in fact, your Lord is al-Rahmān, so follow me and obey my command.”</p>	<p>(Exodus 32: 5) When Harun saw . . . he built an altar and said, “Tomorrow is a festival for THE LORD. . . .”<sup>61</sup></p>

This form of storytelling in Qs. Thāhā: 83-97, which differs from that in the Bible, indicates two things. *First*, the Qur’an uses relevant material from the Bible to convey its message to the first audience of the Qur’an, namely, that even people who have been properly guided can make mistakes, and hence the people of the Prophet Muhammad must learn from this story, as stated in Qs. Thāhā:99.<sup>63</sup> *Second*, the Qur’an reflects on the trend of interpretation of the story in the Bible among

61 Pregill, p. 385-389.

62 Pregill, p. 434.

63 Pregill, p. 429 and 431.

the Late Antiquity-era Jewish and Christian communities, which focuses on themes of covenants, the priesthood, and idolatry, and clarifies Harun's position as a Priest under Moses as a Prophet.<sup>64</sup>

These two indications of storytelling form in Qs. Thāhā: 83-97, which differ from the Bible, reflect Michael E. Pregill's particular attitude towards the position of the Bible and the Qur'an in the context of the Late Antiquity era. Michael E. Pregill saw the Qur'an as a document that was very original and was at a level equivalent to the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament in conducting a reception and reinterpretation of the narratives and core concepts of the ancient Israelites, rejecting the idea of the Qur'an as a derivative work. The storytelling in Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 is an exemplary form of the Qur'an, which responds to many of the stories, figures, and concepts in the biblical tradition and the Middle Eastern tradition in a dynamic and complex way, rather than accepting them passively.<sup>65</sup>

### **A Critical Analysis of Michael R. Pregill's Interpretation.**

Michael E. Pregill's observations on the disparity in story sequence between Qs. Thāhā: 88 and 90 and Exodus 32: 4-5 are consistent with Muhammad Ahmad Khalafallah's notion of the difference in story order between Qs. Hūd: 77-83 and Qs. Al-hijr: 61-75, which involves omitting the time element of occurrence in the Qur'anic account.<sup>66</sup> Therefore, not only can the absence of the time element in storytelling happen within the Qur'an's verses, but also between the Qur'an and the Bible. Thus, Khalafallah's idea of the authenticity of the Qur'anic story<sup>67</sup> can be used to account for the variation in the story order between Qs. Thāhā: 88 and 90 and Exodus 32: 4-5. The structure of the story in the Qs. Thāhā versions: 88 and 90, is part of the Qur'an's message, as explained by Pregill, and thus, the story sequence in Qs. Thāhā can be considered accurate, albeit different from the Exodus version's story order in 32:4-5.

Michael E. Pregill's examination of Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 presents another instance of interpreting Quranic verses within the Late Antiquity period, a method previously employed by scholars like Angelika Neuwirth for Qs. al-Ikhlās<sup>68</sup>, Andrew C. Smith for the story of Moses with Pharaoh and his magicians in Qs. Al-A'rāf: 103-126,

<sup>64</sup> Pregill, p. 322 and 443.

<sup>65</sup> Pregill, p. 20-21, 29-30, 37 and 41.

<sup>66</sup> Khalafallah, *Al-Qur'an Bukan "Kitab Sejarah": Seni, Sastra and Moralitas dalam Kisah-Kisah al-Qur'an.*, p. 104-106.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7-9.

<sup>68</sup> Neuwirth, "Two Faces of the Qur'an: Qur'an and Mu'af.", p. 150-153.

Qs. Yūnus: 75-92, Qs. Thāhā: 41-76, and Qs. Asy-Syu'arā': 10-51<sup>69</sup>, and Juan Cole on the definition of the term *islām* in the Quran. This implies that in the future, an approach that situates Quranic verses, particularly those containing material from the Bible, in the context of Late Antiquity could become a prevalent reading model.

The findings of the study on Michael E. Pregill's interpretation indicate that the term *Al-Sāmīrī* in Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 may refer to the Hebrew word *shômēr*, meaning a watchman or guardian, or the Arabic word *samīr*, meaning "one who stays awake at night," or it could be a combination of both to emphasize Harun's role as the protector or guardian of the Israelites.<sup>70</sup> This contrasts with the results of Tolga Savaş Altinel's research, which suggest that the term *Al-Sāmīrī* is likely derived from the Ancient Egyptian word *sā-mar*, meaning "beloved son." The letter *yā* in the term *Al-Sāmīrī* is a form of ownership in Arabic, which implies that the term probably means "a descendant of a beloved son, his followers or his representatives." Moreover, the word *sā-mar* suggests two possibilities about the identity of the figure of *Al-Sāmīrī*, but neither possibility refers to the figure of Harun.<sup>71</sup>

Finally, in order to validate Michael E. Pregill's interpretation of Qs. Thāhā: 83-97, it is necessary to examine other stories found in both the Quran and the Bible. Comparing the accounts in the two scriptures can confirm the accuracy of Pregill's reading, which takes into account the interpretation trend among Jewish and Christian communities during the Late Antiquity era in examining Qs. Thāhā: 83-97. Furthermore, conducting comprehensive research on the literary style of the Quran in using material from the Bible in comparison to other stories in the Quran is required to complement Pregill's findings. A study of other stories in the Quran can also be conducted to reinforce the idea of the connection between the Quran and the Ethiopic Bible.

## Conclusion

Michael E. Pregill's analysis of Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 has led to important findings regarding the literary art of the Qur'an, intertextuality between the Qur'an and the Bible, and the form of the story in Qs. Thāhā: 83-97, which reflects the interpretive trend of the story of the worship of the golden calf by the Israelites in the Bible

69 Smith, "Moses and Pharaoh's Magicians: A Discursive Analysis of the Qur'anic Narratives in the Light of Late Antique Texts and Traditions."

70 Pregill, *The Golden Calf between Bible and Qur'an: Scripture, Polemic, and Exegesis from Late Antiquity to Islam.*, p. 349-350 and 353.

71 Altinel, "An evaluation of the identity of Sāmīrī in the Qur'an."the Qur'an copies biblical stories and, not infrequently, does so in an incorrect way. The Qur'anic story of the Golden Calf, with the Samirī (Samaritan, p. 122-138.

among Jewish and Christian communities during the Late Antiquity era. The term *Al-Sāmīrī* in Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 is a form of literary art in the Qur'an that uses material from the Bible about the story of the worship of the calf in Samaria and applies it as a designation for Harun, while emphasizing his role as a protector or guardian of the Israelites. One form of intertextuality between the Qur'an and the Bible can be seen in the possibility of the Qur'an using material from the Ethiopic Bible to retell the story of the worship of the golden calf as in Qs. Thāhā: 83-97. In response to the interpretive trend of the Late Antiquity era focusing on themes of covenant, priesthood, and idolatry, the Qur'an clarifies the position of Harun as an Imam under Moses as a Prophet.

The study indicates that Michael E. Pregill's findings on the differences in the sequence of events between Qs. Thāhā: 88 and 90 and Exodus 32:4-5 reinforce the idea put forth by Muhammad Ahmad Khalafallah that the Quran can disregard chronological order in narrating a story to achieve its desired purpose. Moreover, examining Pregill's interpretation of Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 can enrich our understanding of how Quranic interpretation can engage with differences in the details of a story between the Quran and the Bible without adopting a negative perspective. Additionally, the research highlights the potential for studying the literary artistry of Quranic stories while taking into account the possible historical and cultural contexts that underlie their composition. Finally, this study contributes to a more diverse understanding of Western approaches to Quranic studies.

The research presented in this paper is limited to an examination of Michael E. Pregill's interpretation of Qs. Thāhā: 83-97 as presented in his book, *The Golden Calf between Bible and Qur'an: Scripture, Polemic, and Exegesis from Late Antiquity to Islam*. The paper does not address other aspects of Pregill's thinking, such as his views on the story of the worship of the golden calf in Qs. al-Baqarah: 51-54 and Qs. Al-A'raf: 142-157. Furthermore, Pregill's book also includes a discussion of the story of the worship of the golden calf in the Bible and the interpretations of Jewish and Christian religious scholars. The exclusion of these other aspects does not preclude further research on comparative studies of specific themes in the scriptures.

### **Supplementary Materials**

The data presented in this study are available in [insert article or supplementary material here] (Usually the datasets were analyzed from library research can be found in the whole data references ).

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### Authors' contributions

All listed authors contributed to this article. N.A.A.A.A wrote the original draft, reviewed and edited it, N.L.N.N.N wrote the formal analysis, compiled the resources, conceptualised the study, and managed the project administration. I.R was responsible for the methodology and validation and supervised the project

### Data availability statement

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

### Conflicts of Interest

None of the authors of this study has a financial or personal relationship with other people that could inappropriately influence or bias the content of the study.

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