



*AL-ISRĀ'ĪLIYYĀT* IN SELECTED CONTEMPORARY  
QUR'ĀNIC EXEGESES: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF  
THE STORIES OF PROPHET DĀWŪD AND PROPHET  
SULAYMĀN

BY

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## ABSTRACT

*Al-Isrā'iliyyāt* is a familiar element in the study of Qur'ānic exegesis. It has been well established in Islamic Scholarship that most of the content of *Isrā'iliyyāt* are myths and deceptions, which have originated from Biblical accounts, and deviated versions of previous scriptures. Having existed in Qur'ānic literatures up until now, the question of legitimacy always arises in every single *Isrā'iliyyāt* found in Qur'ānic commentaries. Based on a qualitative study by examining both Qur'ānic and Biblical accounts, this study seeks to understand the compatibility of *Isrā'iliyyāt* accounts with the Islamic worldview, since this will be incorporated into Qur'ānic exegesis and into Islamic literature in general. The story of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān will be the focus of this study, as they are well-known prophets in both traditions. Four stories will be highlighted which are, the story of Prophet Dāwūd and Jālūt, Prophet Dāwūd and the wife of Auryā, the wisdom of Prophet Sulaymān and Prophet Sulaymān's encounter with Bilqīs. These stories will be approached both from the Biblical and Qur'ānic perspective. Inevitably, the incorporation of *Isrā'iliyyāt* elements will surely have an influence on Muslims and Islamic culture for generations. Perhaps, this research will help us to understand the current outlook towards *Isrā'iliyyāt* as a means to develop the skills to deal with its negative elements and preserve its positive elements. This study will also provide a platform for the next generation to pursue the proper approach and methodology in dealing with *Isrā'iliyyāt* in Qur'ānic exegeses. This study would serve to remind future researchers that the incorporation of *Isrā'iliyyāt* content must always conform to Islamic 'Aqīdah (doctrine) and the principles of *Tawhīd* and this embraces the fact that the messengers of Allah SWT must always be honoured and respected in description.

## ملخص البحث

إن الإسرائيليات معروفة في دراسة تفسير القرآن الكريم. كما يُعتقد بشدة، إن مضمون الإسرائيليات أكثره من الأساطير والخداع، الذي مصدره الكتب المقدسة لليهود والنصارى، وهى روايات منحرفة عن كتاب الله. إن وجود الإسرائيليات في دراسات التفسير القرآنية قديماً وحديثاً واقع لا مرية فيه، لكنه السؤال هل هذه الإسرائيليات الموجودة مقبولة في التفسير القرآني. هذه الدراسة دراسة نوعية ستفحص كلاً من المراجع الإسلامية والكتب المقدسة معاً، وتهدف إلى فهم الإسرائيليات الموجودة في تفسير القرآن الكريم والأدب الإسلامي بشكل عام. وستركز هذه الدراسة على قصة سيدنا داود وسيدنا سليمان عليهما السلام حيث أنهما معروفتان لدى المسلمين وأهل الكتاب. ستقوم هذه الدراسة بالنظر في أربع قصص وهى قصة سيدنا داود مع جالوت، وقصة سيدنا داود مع الخصمين، وقصة حكمة سيدنا سليمان وأخيراً قصة لقاء سيدنا سليمان مع بلقيس ملكة سبأ. وتناولت هذه الدراسة كل هذه القصص من منظور الكتاب المقدس والقرآن الكريم. فبالإضافة إلى الإسرائيليات تؤثر في ثقافة كل جيل من أجيال المسلمين. ربما، هذه الدراسة تساعد على فهم الإسرائيليات، وتطوير المهارات في التعامل مع هذه الأمور. وإن تتبع الاتجاهات السليمة والمنهج الصحيح في اندماج الإسرائيليات في علم التفسير القرآني ضرورة. فلا يكتفى بفهم ملامح الإسرائيليات فحسب، ولكن لابد من الإنتباه إلى الاتجاهات الأخرى التي هي أكثر أهميتها، وهى العقيدة الإسلامية ومبادئ الإسلام نفسه.

## APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Qur'ān & Sunnah).

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Supervisor

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage (Qur'ān & Sunnah).

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Knowledge and Human  
Sciences

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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Signature.....

Date.....

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*Dedicated to*

*My inspiring and beloved parents*

*Haji Yussop Bin Haji Ahmad*

*&*

*Hajah Hasmah Binti Haji Jukin*

*&*

*My family*

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## TRANSLITERATION TABLE

Arabic	Roman		Arabic	Roman
ب	b		ط	t
ت	t		ظ	z
ث	th		ع	'
ج	j		غ	gh
ح	h		ف	f
خ	kh		ق	q
د	d		ك	k
ذ	dh		ل	l
ر	r		م	m
ز	z		ن	n
س	s		ه	h
ش	sh		و	w
ص	ṣ		ء	'
ض	ḍ		ي	y

### Transliteration Table: Vowels and Diphthongs

Arabic	Roman		Arabic	Roman
اَ	a		أَ، آَ، آِ	an
أُ	u		أُو	un
إِ	i		إِ	in
آَ، آِ، آِ، آِ	ā		أَو	aw
أُو	ū		أَي	ay
إِ	ī		أُو	uww, ū (in final position)
			أَي	iiy, ī (in final position)

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

*Al-Isrā'īliyyāt* has infiltrated into the science of Qur'ānic exegeses since the beginning of its development during the middle of the 2nd Century of the Hijrah. It refers to the narrations from the People of the Book (*Ahl al-Kitāb*) which are utilized by Qur'ānic commentators to interpret the related verses of the Qur'ān. The reason for that is that the Qur'ānic commentators believe that there are certain similarities in those narrations in some particular issues where elements of the Qur'ān can be detected and referred to by other heavenly Books: *Tawrāt* (Torah) and *Injīl* (Gospels). Indeed, most of those narrations refer to the explanation of Jewish stories in the Qur'ān. This includes the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān.

*Al-Isrā'īliyyāt* involve numerous tales, which evolve and circulate among the Jewish community until today. It consists of Biblical legendary heroes like King Solomon, Elijah and Moses, etc. These tales are constantly changing as the Jews believe that they are adaptable; they can be adjusted and modified depending on a particular situation. As propagated by the Jews and the Christians, it aims to oppose the truth and the sacred values of Islam. This propaganda will continue and grow as evidenced in the Jewish and Christian literature today.

Nevertheless, many Qur'ānic commentators used *Isrā'īliyyāt* sources in their Qur'ānic exegeses. This would imply that there are certain methodologies used when incorporating *Isrā'īliyyāt* in their Qur'ānic exegeses.

*Isrā'īliyyāt* in Qur'ānic commentaries also includes the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān. Both Prophets Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān are very

significant in the Islamic tradition, as well as in the Jewish tradition. The ancient prophets' contributions and struggles in the expansion of the Tawhidic faith and to safeguard its traditions are significantly recognized by the Qur'ān. However, the sources in understanding their stories in the Qur'ān are limited. Other than the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*, the only relevant sources are found in Biblical sources, known as *Isrā'īliyyāt* in Muslim scholarship.

One of the sources which relates closely to Islamic tradition involves the narrations from the People of the Book (*Ahl al-Kitāb*) especially when their stories concur with Qur'ānic accounts & Islamic tradition. In Judaism, Prophet Dāwūd (known as David) is the king of the Jewish people. In Christianity, David is known as the ancestor of Jesus' adoptive father Joseph. The Hebrew Bible has credited Prophet Sulaymān as being the founder of the First Temple in Jerusalem, and portrays him as being superior in wisdom, wealth, and power.

Thus, this research seeks to study the development of *Isrā'īliyyāt* and how it is incorporated into the science of Qur'ānic exegeses. For the discussion on *Isrā'īliyyāt's* incorporation in contemporary Qur'ānic exegeses, this study will focus and analyse the well-known stories of Prophet Dāwūd which are; (1) the story of Prophet Dāwūd's killing Jālūt in the historically significant wars between the Israelites and the Philistines, where the bravery of David was recognized by his people, (2) the story of Prophet Dāwūd with the two disputant men. It will also focus on the two stories of Prophet Sulaymān which are; (1) the story about the wisdom of Prophet Sulaymān, and (2) his encounter with the Queen of Saba'. All the stories are referred from both Qur'ānic *tafsīr* and Biblical accounts and will later be analyzed within Islamic perspectives. The research will also analyse the perceptions and views of today's writers on *Isrā'īliyyāt*.

## 1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

*Al-Isrā'īliyyāt* has been a significant element in the science of Qur'ānic exegeses. The question of *Isrā'īliyyāt*'s reliability continues at the present time, as we can see the presence of *isrā'īliyyāt* in modern writings related to Qur'ānic exegeses. The content of *Isrā'īliyyāt* has been changing from time to time. According to the Jews and Christians, these changes are made in order to adapt to the contemporary situation. The Jews and Christians altered and modified the scriptural stories to suit their current ideologies and perspectives.

The stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān without exception are manipulated by the contemporary Zionists as part of their anti-spiritual propaganda. Muslims, on the other hand, should pay more attention and exercise extreme caution before adopting Zionist-inspired stories or narratives relating to scriptural accounts, particularly in matters of Qur'ānic exegeses, as this distortion of truth will project adversely on the Islamic faith, its worldwide and its literature.

This research will study *Isrā'īliyyāt* and the impact of its applications in contemporary Qur'ānic exegeses. This research will also examine and explain the features of several Qur'ānic exegeses and the use of different methodologies in dealing with *Isrā'īliyyāt*, focusing on the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān. It will explore *Isrā'īliyyāt*'s development, which has been evolving ever since, and to identify the features of *Isrā'īliyyāt* in contemporary Qur'ānic exegeses. Furthermore, this research will focus discussion on the Jewish and Christian tradition relating to the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān. Besides this, the researcher will study the positive and negative impacts of *Isrā'īliyyāt* on Qur'ānic exegeses, particularly when it deals with the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān.

## 1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions of this study are as follows:

- 1) What is *al-Isrā'īliyyāt* and its role in the Qur'ānic exegeses?
- 2) How did *Isrā'īliyyāt* penetrate the Qur'ānic exegeses?
- 3) How do *Mufasssirūn* incorporate *Isrā'īliyyāt* into Qur'ānic exegeses and what are the methodologies used in dealing with *Isrā'īliyyāt*?
- 4) How do *Isrā'īliyyāt* portray Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān and how does the Qur'ān portray them?
- 5) How do contemporary Qur'ānic exegeses deal with the *Isrā'īliyyāt* with regard to the story of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān?
- 6) How do contemporary Muslims view *Isrā'īliyyāt* and what are the benefits of *Isrā'īliyyāt*?

## 1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

- 1) To examine *al-Isrā'īliyyāt* from an Islamic perspective and its role in Qur'ānic exegeses.
- 2) To investigate the emergence of *Isrā'īliyyāt* in Qur'ānic exegeses.
- 3) To examine how the contemporary *Mufasssirūn* incorporates *Isrā'īliyyāt* into the Qur'ānic exegeses as well as to study effective methodologies in dealing with *Isrā'īliyyāt*.
- 4) To explore Jewish/Christian traditions, particularly the Bible as well as Islamic references to the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān.

- 5) To examine *Isrā'īliyyāt* influences which have appeared in the story of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān which exists in several contemporary Qur'ānic exegeses.
- 6) To examine contemporary Muslims' views on *Isrā'īliyyāt* and the benefits of its acceptance or rejection.

#### **1.4 SIGNIFICANCE TO THE RESEARCH**

The research would prove useful to scholars involved in Qur'ānic exegeses as it will highlight and examine the concept of *Isrā'īliyyāt* and discuss major approaches and methods that Muslims' scholars have adopted in dealing with the possible dangers of using *Isrā'īliyyāt* narratives in contemporary Qur'ānic exegeses. It will, therefore, provide a platform for scholarly engagement between Jewish-Christian tradition and Islamic tradition, through the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān. The positive and negative impact of *Isrā'īliyyāt* on Qur'ānic exegeses will also be examined so that people can benefit from it and take good judgment towards it.

#### **1.5 SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH**

The study will focus on the development of *Isrā'īliyyāt* in the field of Qur'ānic exegeses, as exemplified in the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān. It will be a study on verses related to Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān as presented in contemporary Qur'ānic exegeses, where the focus is more to reveal the features of *Isrā'īliyyāt* in several contemporary Qur'ānic exegeses. This includes: *Maḥāsin al-Ta'wīl* by al-Qāsimī, *Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān* by Sayyid Quṭub and *Tafsīr al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr* by Ibn 'Āshūr. The study will relate to Jewish and Christian



traditions, particularly the Bible and other non-Muslim writings, as their stories are mentioned in the Bible in a very distinctive way.

The stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān will be the focus of the study as both of them are mentioned side by side most of the time in the Qur'ān. They are also focused in this research because of their father and son relationship and more importantly as the prophets of Allah. Most importantly, both have significant roles in the Jewish and Christian traditions.

Two stories of Prophet Dāwūd and two stories of Prophet Sulaymān: the story of Prophet Dāwūd who killed Jālūt, the story of Prophet Dāwūd and the two disputant men, the story of the wisdom of Prophet Sulaymān and finally Prophet Sulaymān's encounter with the Queen of Saba' will be examined in both Biblical and Islamic accounts. These four stories will be the main discussion of this research whilst other stories related to Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān which are available in Biblical accounts, but not available in the Qur'ānic perspective or vice versa, will not be examined.

## **1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW**

Several researches have been done on the subject of *Isrā'iliyyāt* and its impact on the Qur'ānic exegeses, which show how important this subject is. However, most of the researches concentrated on the study of the authenticity of the narrated stories and more or less on the general view of *Isrā'iliyyāt* in the Qur'ānic exegeses and *Ḥadīth*. Due to that, the researcher here will focus on the narrated *Isrā'iliyyāt* regarding the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān as an in-depth study, specific and elaborative. The researcher will refer to some references regarding the subject,

generally referring to writings on the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān as well as other references which are related to the study either directly or indirectly. The researcher will also refer to sources and works written by Muslims as well as non-Muslims, in cases when the researcher finds the stories relevant.

Muḥammad Hussain al-Dhahabī's *al-Isrā'īliyyāt fī al-Tafsīr wa-al-Ḥadīth*<sup>1</sup>, explains the connections of the Qur'ān with other holy books. He identifies the definition of *Isrā'īliyyāt*, how it came into the picture in Qur'ānic exegeses and its impact on Muslims' beliefs and the sanctity of Islam. He categorizes *Isrā'īliyyāt* into several categories, and outlines some rules and methodologies in using *Isrā'īliyyāt* in Qur'ānic exegeses together with several well-known examples. He mentions brief biographies of some well-known narrators of *Isrā'īliyyāt* in categories, which are the *Ṣahābah*, *Tābi'īn* and *Tābi'ī al-Tābi'īn*. He identifies several Qur'ānic exegeses that use *Isrā'īliyyāt* in their exegeses.

A quite similar study also was made by Abū Shuhbah in his book *al-Isrā'īliyyāt wa-al-Maudhū'āt fī kutub al-Tafsīr*<sup>2</sup>. Unlike al-Dhahabi, he mentioned *Isrā'īliyyāt* on the stories of prophets in chronological order from Prophet Ādam to Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). He also added the relations of *Isrā'īliyyāt* with *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*. Both succeeded in giving many beneficial remarks, especially on the correct methodology in dealing with *Isrā'īliyyāt*.

However, these two books are meant to study the nature of *Isrā'īliyyāt* in general. The researcher tries to identify the modern type of *Isrā'īliyyāt* and tends to differentiate between the classical and modern *Isrā'īliyyāt*. Furthermore, the

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<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad Hussain al-Dhahabī, *Al-Isrā'īliyyāt fī al-Tafsīr wa al-Ḥadīth*, (Al-Qāhirah: Maktabah Wahbah, 1990).

<sup>2</sup> Muḥammad Bin Muḥammad Abū Shuhbah, *Al-Isrā'īliyyāt wa al-Maudhū'āt fī Kutub al-Tafsīr*, (Bayrūt: Dār Al-Jail, 1992).

researcher aims to relate the study of *Isrā'īliyyāt* to selected contemporary Qur'ānic exegeses, which were not mentioned by both authors. The researcher feels that this is important in order to clarify the modern mindset in dealing with *Isrā'īliyyāt*, especially for authors in the modern era. This is what the researcher aims to do in this research, as it is a continuation on previous studies, referring to both traditional and modern writings.

Al-Khālidi wrote in his book *Isrā'īliyyāt Mu'āṣarah*<sup>3</sup>, in which he explained the definition of *Isrā'īliyyāt* and its relation with the Jews. He classified *Isrā'īliyyāt* into two types which are ancient and contemporary, and provided several definitions in relation to it. He observed *Isrā'īliyyāt* in several areas; thought, individual, community, politics and economy. He also clarifies rules in narrating *Isrā'īliyyāt* and how scholars and Qur'ānic interpreters could agree or disagree on the inclusion of *Isrā'īliyyāt* in Qur'ānic exegeses.

In his conclusion, he identified several reasons that contribute to the spread of *Isrā'īliyyāt* in which he later suggested several ways to confront it. However, the author did not analyse in detail other books of modern *tafsīr*, which are related to the studies of contemporary *Isrā'īliyyāt*. Unfortunately, this book focuses more on the movement and development of the *Isrā'īliyyāt* itself. The researcher, however, will focus to relate the study to the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān analytically through several Qur'ānic exegeses.

Āmāl Muḥammad 'Abdu al-Rabī' in his book *al-Isrā'īliyyāt fī Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī Dirāsah fī al-Lughah wa-al-Maṣādir al-'Ibriyyah*<sup>4</sup>, focused his study on one of the

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<sup>3</sup> Ṣalāḥ 'Abd al-Fattāḥ al-Khālidi, *Isrā'īliyyāt al-Mu'āṣarah*, ('Ummān: Dār 'Ummār, 1991).

<sup>4</sup> Āmāl Muḥammad 'Abd al-Raḥmān Rabī', *Al-Isrā'īliyyāt fī Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī Dirāsah fī al-Lughah wa al-Maṣādir al-'Ibriyyah*, (Al-Qāhirah: Al-Majlis Al-'Alī Li Al-Shu'ūn Al-Islāmiyyah, 2001).

classical Qur'ānic exegeses which is *Tafsīr* al-Ṭabarī and explained how important it is to know Qur'ānic interpreters' methodologies in order to understand particularly on the issues of *Isrā'iliyyāt* in Qur'ānic exegeses. He explained that *Isrā'iliyyāt* that do not contradict the *Sharī'ah* is acceptable in Qur'ānic exegeses, as many scholars like Ibn Taimiyyah, Ibn Ḥajar, Ibn Kathīr and others agreed on it. Other Qur'ānic interpreters also agreed on it which showed in their Qur'ānic exegeses, such as *Bahru al-Muḥīṭ* by Ibn Ḥayyān, *Anwār al-Tanzīl wa-Asrār al-Ta'wīl* by al-Baiḍāwī as well as contemporary interpreters like Muḥammad 'Abduh and al-Marāghī. It is also a study of several important references written in Hebrew, which relates to the study of Qur'ānic exegeses such as journey accounts and chapters in the book of *Talmūd*.

Later, the author focused on the textual study of the *Isrā'iliyyāt* which include several aspects; consistency, general, specific, addition and exaggeration in *Isrā'iliyyāt* text. He concluded, particularly on the definition of *Isrā'iliyyāt*, important sources of *Isrā'iliyyāt*, Ibn Jarīr's view on *Isrā'iliyyāt* in his Qur'ānic exegeses, comparative study on the textual, language and narrator of *Isrā'iliyyāt* and lastly with some recommendation for later studies, especially on *Isrā'iliyyāt* in Qur'ānic exegeses.

According to Ramzī Na'nā'ah, in his book titled *al-Isrā'iliyyāt wa Atharuhā fī Kutub al-Tafsīr*,<sup>5</sup> he viewed that the decreasing effort and commitment on the development of sunnah and its related studies, as well as the leniency of some Qur'ānic exegetes and historians on the infiltration of *Isrā'iliyyāt* in Islamic literature are because of the exposition and widespread of *Isrā'iliyyāt* in Islamic literature. He mentioned that *Isrā'iliyyāt* in Qur'ānic exegeses have existed since the time of Ibn

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<sup>5</sup> Ramzī Na'nā'ah, *al-Isrā'iliyyāt wa Atharuhā fī Kutub al-Tafsīr*, (Dimashq: Dār al-Qalam, 1970).

Jarīr al-Ṭabarī to the time of Rashīd Riḍa. He also explained in his book about the emergence and growth of *Isrā'iliyyāt* in works of *tafsīr*. He related between the study of both *tafsīr* and *Isrā'iliyyāt* and mentioned on how *Isrā'iliyyāt* blends into Islamic literature. The sources of *Isrā'iliyyāt* and its nature were also studied by the author as well as the distortion and alteration made by the Jews. However, the author did not relate the study to any of the stories mentioned in the *Qur'ān*. Unlike the author, the researcher intends to study the features of *Isrā'iliyyāt*. The researcher will also further relate and analyse *Isrā'iliyyāt* with the study on the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān.

According to Sa'd Yūsuf, in his book titled *al-Isrā'iliyyāt wa al-Mawdhū'āt fī Kutub al-Tafsīr Qadīman wa Ḥadīthan*<sup>6</sup>, the need of sound *tafsīr* is crucial as it is a necessity in *Sharī'ah*. The book discusses important topics related to *Isrā'iliyyāt* in terms of its nature, classifications and famous narrators of *Isrā'iliyyāt* from the time of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). He also explained on the importance of Qur'ānic exegetical works and the connection between *tafsīr* and *Isrā'iliyyāt*.

The book generally discusses common false narrations of *Isrā'iliyyāt* that are usually mentioned. The author also related several stories of important figures and Qur'ānic stories from various opinions of *tafsīr*. This was followed by his studies on those narrations where he presented the opinions of several Qur'ānic exegetes such as al-Shanqīṭī, Al-Albānī, Ibn Kathīr and others in order to prove the falsity of those narrations that ought to be rejected in Qur'ānic *tafsīr*. This critical study is very much needed as to avoid confusions and ongoing falsity in Qur'ānic exegetical works as well as Islamic literatures in the future. For example on the narration of *Isrā'iliyyāt* on

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<sup>6</sup> Sa'd Yūsuf Maḥmūd Abū 'Azīz, *al-Isrā'iliyyāt wa al-Mawdhū'āt fī Kutub al-Tafsīr Qadīman wa Ḥadīthan*, (al-Qāhirah: al-Maktabah al-Tawfīqiyyah, 2001).

the story of Prophet Nūḥ during his time, in building the ark as commanded by Allāh to prepare for the coming major flood. It is mentioned that his ark has wings and even the size is mentioned in the detail. This narration was discussed by the author where in the end, he presented the most accepted opinion from reliable Qur'ānic exegetes namely Ibn Kathīr, al- Rāzī and al-Ālūsī. According to the mentioned Qur'ānic exegetes, these sorts of narations are very strange and there is no necessity in knowing them.<sup>7</sup>

Contrary to the author, the researcher will focus on the nature of *Isrā'iliyyāt* in a general context and apply the study on the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān. The researcher chooses to study the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān within the three selected *tafsīr* of al-Qāsimī, Sayyid Quṭb and Ibn 'Āshūr. This is to investigate the modern methodology on the application of *Isrā'iliyyāt* in Qur'ānic exegeses.

Husnī Yūsuf al-Aṭīr in his book titled, *al-Bidāyāt al-'Ulā li al-Isrā'iliyyāt fī al-Islām*<sup>8</sup>, he explained the existence of *Isrā'iliyyāt* in the Islamic world and Islamic literature. The author stated that *Isrā'iliyyāt* have long existed before the appointment of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). According to him, *Isrā'iliyyāt* contain both true and false stories, which have long circulated in the Arab countries, as they lived in a homogenous race and belief at that time. After the coming of Islam, these narrations of *Isrā'iliyyāt* were filtered and cleaned where truths based on revelation were able to be distinguished from the *Isrā'iliyyāt* narrations. However, after the spread of Islam to other countries, the narrations of *Isrā'iliyyāt* become apparent as Islamic literature becomes embedded and blended with the previous religion and belief of those who

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 112.

<sup>8</sup> Husnī Yūsuf al-Aṭīr, *al-Bidāyāt al-'Ulā li al-Isrā'iliyyāt fī al-Islām*, (Maktabah al-Nāfīdhah, 2004).

later converted to Islam. This situation continues until the present time. Therefore, this proves that Islamic literatures are not absent from the narrations of *Isrā'īliyyāt*.

With regard to the sources of *Isrā'īliyyāt*, the author explained that the narrations of *Isrā'īliyyāt* were produced from the interpretations of *Tawrāt* and *Injīl* by the Jews and Christians. He later divided the studies into several periods of time starting from the interpretations of *Tawrāt* and *Injīl* before and after the delegation of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), the period of the Companions and the generations after that until today.

However, the author did not identify or recognise the modern *Isrā'īliyyāt* nor distinguish them between the classical and modern *Isrā'īliyyāt* exegeses. This is what the researcher tries to examine, in order to find out the differences between the two. The author does not also relate any *Isrā'īliyyāt* to any of the stories to affirm his study. This is what the researcher will apply in the study on several common *Isrā'īliyyāt*, on the stories of Prophet Dāwūd and Prophet Sulaymān, which will be examined.

'Abdullāh al-Ghumārī's *Qiṣṣatu Dāwūd 'Alaihi al-Salām*<sup>9</sup> is one of the books, which analysed the story of Prophet Dāwūd from the Qur'ānic perspective based on *Ḥadīth Ṣaḥīḥ*. Such study is very beneficial as it helps people to know the true story of Prophet Dāwūd. In the introduction to the book, he explains the importance of Qur'ānic interpretation, code of ethics that Muslims may observe in their approach of the Qur'ān; especially when dealing with Biblical figures, such as Dāwūd and Sulaymān. Immediately, after the introduction he examined the Qur'ānic verses regarding the story of Prophet Dāwūd one by one. He, firstly, mentioned the verse followed by several *Ḥadīth* relevant to that particular verse. The views of scholars

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<sup>9</sup> 'Abdullāh Bin Muḥammad al-Ghumārī, *Qaṣaṣ al-'Anbiyā'i: Qiṣṣatu Dāwūd 'Alaihi al-Salām aw al-Qaulu al-Maḥmūd fī Sharḥi Qiṣṣati Dāwūd*, (Bayrūt: 'Ālamu Al-Kutub, 1986).

were also mentioned like Ibn Jarīr, Ibn al-‘Arabī, al-Rāzī and others. Extraordinary characteristics of Prophet Dāwūd that are mentioned both in the Qur’ān or *Ḥadīth* were also discussed and examined. This includes his melodic voice while reciting the words of Allāh and others. Although the book was exclusively about Prophet Dāwūd, Prophet Sulaymān was also mentioned in certain parts as both of them are related with each other. The author did address several *Isrā’īliyyāt* related to the story, but did not elaborate on it in detail. In the conclusion, he identified several lessons from the stories of Prophet Dāwūd.

Ahmad Ṭāhūn ‘s book *Sulaymān al-Hakīm ‘alaihi al-Salām*<sup>10</sup> is a study on the story of Prophet Sulaymān based on strong evidence; the Qur’ān, *Ḥadīth*, scholars’ opinions as well as *Isrā’īliyyāt*. This book did not just touch on the literary significant side but was also meant for the reader to have a good picture and lesson from the story of Prophet Sulaymān. The author explained in brief about Prophet Sulaymān as the noble messenger of Allāh in the introduction, and later immediately started with his story with the ants and the bird called *Hudhud*. The main focus of this book is on the story of Prophet Sulaymān with the ants, the bird called *Hudhud* and Princess Balqīs. Although this book is about Prophet Sulaymān, the author also mentioned Prophet Dāwūd in several parts especially on the story of Sulaymān’s kingdom which he inherited from his father, Prophet Dāwūd. Overall this book provided a good explanation on the story of Prophet Sulaymān. However, the author did not elaborate more on his relationship with Prophet Dāwūd as both of them are mentioned side by side in the Qur’ān.

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<sup>10</sup> Aḥmad Bin Muḥammad Ṭāhūn, *Sulaymān al-Hakīm ‘Alaihi al-Salām wa Balqīs Malikatu Saba’ wa Durūs ‘Abdu min al-Namlati wa al-Hudhud Dirāsatu ‘Ilmiyyah Adabiyyah Ijtimā’iyyah*, (Al-Qāhirah: Maktabah al-Turāth al-Islāmiyyah, 1993).