

# Is Islam Based on Mythology and Folklore?

Ash Shaikh Mir Asedullah Quadri

**Citation:** Ash Shaikh Mir Asedullah Quadri, "Is Islam Based on Mythology and Folklore?", CIFIA Global Journal, Vol 9, January 2025

## Abstract

This article expounds the concept of mythology through a philosophical and scholarly lens, distinguishing Islamic theology from the mythological narratives prevalent in other religious traditions. By defining key aspects of mythology and its functions, the article elucidates how Islamic doctrine, rooted in divine revelation and historical accuracy, stands apart from symbolic or allegorical myths. Through detailed case studies from Islamic history and a comparative analysis of mythological elements in various religions, the study highlights the rigorous methodologies employed in Islamic scholarship to preserve and validate its teachings. The philosophical implications of distinguishing factual historical events from mythological narratives are examined, emphasizing their impact on individual faith, societal norms, and interfaith dialogue. This exploration highlights the unique nature of Islamic revelation and its integral role in guiding both personal and communal life, while addressing and refuting critiques of historical reliability and interpretative methods. The article concludes by reaffirming the solidity of Islamic theology and its distinctive approach to intertwining faith with historical reality.

**Keywords –** Islamic Theology, Mythology, Historical Validation, Revelation, Comparative Religion

---

## Introduction

Formulating and holding onto mythological beliefs occupies a central place in human practices through history. Mythology, in its essence, serves not just as a repository of tales and folklore but as a medium through which societies articulate their deepest values, cosmological understandings, and existential inquiries. In this paper, we shall conduct a nuanced exploration of mythology through a philosophical lens, specifically distinguishing the theological framework of Islam from the mythological traditions prevalent in other religions.

The distinction between what constitutes mythology and what stands as theological doctrine is very important. Mythologies often present symbolic narratives that function allegorically to impart moral, ethical, and spiritual truths. These narratives, while deeply informative about the human condition, often lack the empirical historicity and direct divine attribution claimed by scriptural religions like Islam. Unlike the mythological frameworks observed in many traditions, which are characterized by their metaphorical

interpretations and often esoteric origins, Islamic doctrine is distinctively rooted in the concept of divine revelation that is both historical and factual, as encapsulated in the Qur'an and authenticated Ahadith.

This exploration is crucial for attaining a deeper understanding of Islam's unique position in the comparative study of religion. By delineating the factual basis of Islamic teachings against the backdrop of global mythological narratives, this paper shall elucidate the philosophical and epistemological underpinnings that distinguish Islamic theology from the broader context of mythology. Through this scholarly endeavour, we engage with complex philosophical questions about the nature of truth, the functions of religious narratives, and the ways in which sacred texts configure our understanding of the divine and the human quest for meaning.

## Nature of Myths

Myths, as integral components of cultural narratives are imbued with multiple layers of meaning that reflect the complexities of human experience and understanding. They serve as repositories of wisdom, moral guidance, and metaphysical speculation, often presented through a narrative framework that transcends ordinary life. This section explores the intrinsic characteristics of myths, highlighting their role in expressing universal truths and shaping human consciousness.

### Definition and Characteristics

A myth can be defined as a traditional story, particularly one concerning the early history of a people or explaining a natural or social phenomenon, and typically involving supernatural beings or events. Myths often symbolize human experience. They are articulate profound descriptors of human life, emotions, and existence, encoding these experiences in symbolic forms that are universally accessible.

Myths can be interpreted in various ways, from the literal to the allegorical, each layer offering different insights into the human condition and the nature of the universe. They often carry moral or ethical lessons, teaching values and virtues through the actions of imaginary deities, heroes, or mythical creatures.

### Mythical Stories vs. Historical Facts

Unlike historical accounts, which aim to record actual events as accurately as possible, myths function to convey the phenomena of human existence on a more universal scale. A myth is not dependent on factual accuracy but on its ability to resonate with human emotions and existential realities.

They address fundamental questions about creation, virtue, evil, and mortality, often through narratives that resonate across cultures and epochs and convey archetypal themes. Myths often employ imaginative supernatural elements to express ideas that cannot be easily conveyed through ordinary narrative forms. This use of the supernatural facilitates a deeper engagement with the mysteries of life and existence.

## The Role of Myths in Social Resonance

Myths can play a crucial role in shaping the identity and cohesion of societies. They reinforce social norms and values by embodying the ideals of a culture. They help in transmitting these values across generations, thus ensuring societal continuity and unity based on a sense of belonging and identity. Through shared narratives, members of a culture or religious group gain a sense of common origin and purpose. Many myths are integral to religious rituals and ceremonies, providing the narrative structure that lends these practices their symbolic and pseudo-spiritual significance.

## Functions of Myths

Myths perform many functions within societies, transcending their fundamental form i.e., storytelling to become fundamental tools through which cultures explain, teach, and preserve their worldview.

### Cosmological Function

Myths often provide narratives about the origins of the world and the cosmos, explaining how the universe and its various components came into existence. These stories typically involve imaginary supernatural beings or deities and serve to place human existence within a broader cosmic framework. In many indigenous cultures, myths of a *world turtle* or a *cosmic egg* describe the universe's foundation, offering insights into these cultures' perceptions of the cosmos and their place within it.

### Sociological Function

As discussed in the previous section, myths can legitimize social structures and political orders by tracing their origins to divine will or a cosmic order. This function helps maintain social stability and justifies the roles and powers of different classes within society. A good example of this can be found in the so called *divine right* of kings, a common theme in European myths, where monarchs are depicted as chosen by God in order to reinforce and justify their authority.

### Psychological Function

Myths contribute to the psychological development of individuals by providing models of behaviour and ideal characteristics. They address fundamental psychological conflicts and human desires, aiding in personal growth and understanding. Hero myths of imaginary characters like those of *Hercules* or *Gilgamesh*, deal with themes of courage, sacrifice, and overcoming adversity, serving as templates for personal development.

### Eschatological Function

Many myths address what happens after death and the end of the world. These narratives help individuals and cultures confront and process the concept of mortality and their confusion as to what lies beyond. A

good example of this can be found in Norse mythology's *Ragnarok*, an epic battle leading to the end of the world, followed by a rebirth, thus providing an imaginary framework for understanding death and renewal.

### Pedagogical Function

Myths are often deployed as educational tools, transmitting cultural knowledge, moral lessons, and survival information to younger generations. Albeit controversial for its use in the education system, many believe that this function of mythology ensures the continuity of cultural norms and values. For instance, parables and fables, such as *Aesop's Fables*, use animals and mythical creatures to teach moral lessons about honesty, perseverance, and other virtues. We can also see many right wing and/or conservative governments around the world, deploying mythological teachings on school level state syllabi as a means of incorporating their cultural values into the minds of the upcoming generations, often imposing it upon students of all faiths alike in order to decimate the traditions of other whilst instilling the traditions of the ruling elite.

### Pseudo Therapeutic Function

Myths often allow individuals to experience a form of pseudo-catharsis by identifying with the characters and the trials they undergo. This sense of identification often leads individuals to find comfort when in the midst of internal conflicts and emotional issues. The myth of Oedipus, for instance, with its themes of destiny, guilt, and redemption, often resonates with the audience to explore deep emotional and psychological challenges within an imaginary narrative framework.

## Philosophical Interpretations of Myths

Myths have been a subject of deep philosophical inquiry. Philosophers have investigated myths to understand their underlying meanings and implications for knowledge, belief, and understanding. This section examines significant philosophical perspectives on myths, highlighting how these narratives have been interpreted through various philosophical lenses.

### Mircea Eliade: Myths as Sacred History

Eliade posited that myths serve to reveal the sacred history, showing how the divine interacts with the world. For him, myths break the profane temporal experience and link humans to a transcendent, timeless reality. Eliade argued that ritual re-enactments of myths serve to abolish time, returning the participants to the mythical time when the events (allegedly) originally occurred. This reconnection with the sacred time is seen as a form of renewal and re-sanctification of the world.

### Joseph Campbell: The Monomyth and Hero's Journey

Campbell introduced the concept of the "*monomyth*" or hero's journey, which he argued is a universal narrative framework shared across diverse cultures. This framework includes stages such as the call to adventure, facing challenges, death and rebirth, and the return with a boon.

Campbell believed myths are essential for understanding the human. He viewed the hero's journey as a metaphor for the individual's journey of self-discovery and transformation.

### Carl Jung: Myths and the Collective Unconscious

Jung's theory of the *collective unconscious* posits that myths are expressions of *archetypes*, which are primordial imagination of themes that derive from the shared experiences of the human race. These are universal imaginary experiences, manifesting across different cultures and historical periods.

Jung argued that myths allow individuals to connect with these deep psychological structures, facilitating insights into their personal and collective psyche. Myths, in this view, are often deployed as tools for psychological integration and understanding.

### Paul Ricoeur: Myths as a Language of Faith

Ricoeur explored the hermeneutic interpretation of myths, viewing them as a language through which fundamental truths about human existence are communicated. He emphasized the need to interpret myths beyond their literal meanings to uncover deeper existential insights. For Ricoeur, myths articulate a kind of "*first philosophy*," a pre-philosophical understanding of the world that shapes the foundational beliefs and existential orientations of a culture.

### Ludwig Wittgenstein: Myths and Life Forms

Wittgenstein suggested that myths are part of the "*language games*" that constitute different forms of life. In this view, myths are not just stories but are integral to the language and practices that define a culture's way of life. Myths, according to Wittgenstein, are expressions of a culture's worldview, embedded in the practices and language of the people, shaping and reflecting their life experiences and philosophical outlook.

## Sources of Islamic Teaching

Having covered Mythology in-depth, we shall now shift the focus of this exploration towards Islam. Islamic doctrine is based on texts considered divine and immutable by Muslims around the world. These sources not only provide spiritual guidance but also form the legal and ethical foundation of Islamic life. This section outlines the primary sources of Islamic teaching, i.e., the Qur'an and the Hadith.

### The Qur'an: The Primary Source

For Muslims, the Qur'an is the *word of God (Allah)*, revealed to Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) over approximately 23 years. Unlike mythological texts, which are unanimously considered as the product of human creativity or cultural evolution, the Qur'an is a direct divine communication, unaltered since the time of its revelation.

The Qur'an is written in Arabic and comprises 114 chapters (*suras*) of varying lengths. It covers a wide range of topics, including theology, morality, guidance for personal conduct, and legal principles. Its verses (*ayat*) are considered signs of God's wisdom and a source of true spiritual knowledge.

The preservation of the Qur'an began during the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) lifetime, with numerous companions memorizing the entire text and others writing down revelations on various materials. After the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) passing, the Quran's compilation began during the caliphate of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) and culminated during the caliphate of Hadhrat Uthman's (رضى الله تعالى عنه).

### Hadith: The Secondary Source

Hadiths are the recorded sayings, actions, and approvals of the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). They serve as a practical guide for interpreting the Qur'an and implementing its teachings in daily life. Hadiths not only elucidate the Qur'anic text but also provide detailed context for its revelations.

Hadith collection was a meticulous process carried out by scholars who used rigorous criteria to evaluate the reliability of transmitters and the continuity of transmission chains (*isnad*). Prominent Hadith collections include Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, who are considered the most authentic in Hadith literature.

Hadiths are crucial for understanding the practical aspects of worship, Islamic law (Sharia), ethics, and spirituality. They address situations in offering explanations on legal and moral guidance contained in the Quran.

### Interaction Between Qur'an and Hadith

The Ahadith (plural of Hadith) elaborate and complement the teachings found in the Qur'an, offering practical examples of how the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) implemented divine commandments. Scholars use a methodology called *ijtihad* to interpret the texts and apply them to contemporary issues, ensuring that Islamic teachings remain relevant across different times and cultures.

## The Concept of Revelation in Islam

Revelation in Islamic framework is the manner in which divine guidance is communicated to humanity. This section explores the distinct nature of Islamic revelation, its features, and its implications for the faithful.

### Definition and Importance of Revelation

In Islamic theology, revelation (*Wahy*) is the method through which Allah imparts His divine wisdom to prophets. Unlike mythological narratives created over time through cultural accumulation or philosophical speculation, Islamic revelation is the direct and literal word of God, devoid of human alteration. Revelation serves as a guide for all aspects of human life, from legal prescriptions and moral conduct to spiritual enlightenment and societal governance.

## Modes of Revelation

The most common form of revelation in Islam involved the Angel Jibreel (عليه السلام), who conveyed the words of Allah directly to Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). This method underscores the purity and unaltered nature of the revelation, as Jibreel (عليه السلام) transmitted the divine message without any distortion. Some revelations came to the Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) through direct inspiration, an internal experience perceived only by the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم).

## Features of Islamic Revelation

The Quran's language is characterized by its clarity and eloquence, which are seen as evidence of its divine origin. The text is clear and accessible to those who seek to understand its message. From the time of its revelation to the present, the text of the Qur'an has remained unchanged, preserved through both memorization and written records. This contrasts sharply with many mythological texts, which often evolve over time and through various interpretations.

## Purpose and Impact of Revelation

Islamic revelation aims not only to guide individual behaviour but also to establish a just and moral societal order. The laws and ethics derived from the Qur'an and Hadith influence various aspects of life, including family relations, economic dealings, and governance. Beyond legal and ethical guidelines, the revelation seeks to spiritually enrich humanity, offering a path to transcendental understanding and closeness to the divine.

Islamic tradition includes rigorous methods for verifying the authenticity of revelations, particularly the Hadiths. Scholars assess chains of transmission and the credibility of narrators to ensure that the teachings adhered to are genuinely rooted in prophetic guidance.

Unlike mythological systems, where stories may serve symbolic or allegorical purposes, the concept of revelation in Islam is intended to convey literal truths and divine principles, providing a clear, actionable framework for living a life in submission to Allah's will.

## Historical Validation in Islam

Islamic doctrine is not only grounded in the divine revelations of the Qur'an and the Hadith but is also supported by a robust system of historical validation that ensures the authenticity and accuracy of its teachings.

## The Emphasis on Historical Validation

In Islam, maintaining the purity of the Prophet Muhammad's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) teachings is paramount. Historical validation serves to protect the integrity of Islamic knowledge from distortions, interpolations, and

fabrications. Accurate historical records are crucial for the correct understanding and practice of Islam, ensuring that both jurisprudence and theology are based on verifiable and authentic sources.

### Methodologies Employed in Historical Validation

A unique feature of Islamic scholarship is the *isnad* system, which tracks the chain of narrators for each hadith. Scholars rigorously evaluate the reliability of each narrator in the chain, assessing their character, memory, and integrity. This methodology ensures that only hadiths with strong, unbroken chains of trustworthy narrators are accepted.

In addition to *isnad*, scholars also analyse the text (*matn*) of a hadith for consistency with established Qur'anic principles and other authenticated hadiths. This dual analysis helps identify any potential inconsistencies or anachronisms that could indicate a spurious or fabricated report.

### Criteria for Authenticity

Narrators in the *isnad* chain must be known for their piety, accuracy, and honesty. The biographical evaluation of narrators, known as 'science of men / narrators' (*'ilm al-rijal*), is a critical component of hadith authentication. The chain of transmission must be continuous, with no missing narrators between Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) and the compiler of the hadith. The content of a hadith must not contradict other established Qur'anic or hadith texts. This coherence across sources serves as further validation of a hadith's authenticity.

The rigorous historical validation process lends credibility and authority to the hadiths, which form the basis for many Islamic legal rulings and theological concepts. By employing strict criteria for authenticity, Islamic scholars guard against the incorporation of false teachings into the Islamic tradition, preserving the original teachings of Islam as practiced and conveyed by Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم).

The need for historical validation has led to the development of various specialized fields within Islamic scholarship, such as hadith studies, jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and historiography. The commitment to accuracy and authenticity reflects a broader Islamic intellectual tradition that values critical inquiry, scholarly debate, and the pursuit of knowledge.

## Case Studies from Islamic History

To illustrate the distinct nature of Islamic theology in comparison to mythological narratives, in this section we will discuss the key historical events in Islam that have been substantiated through rigorous scholarly methods. These events, central to the faith, highlight Islam's emphasis on historical accuracy and divine truth.



## The Revelation of the Qur'an

The revelation of the Qur'an to Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) over a period of approximately 23 years is a foundational event in Islamic history. Multiple eyewitness accounts from the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) companions, who meticulously recorded and memorized the revelations, support the historical occurrence of this event. The preservation and compilation of the Qur'an were carried out with extraordinary precision, with the final text corroborated by numerous contemporaneous sources.

Unlike many religious texts that are attributed to divine inspiration but lack direct eyewitness accounts or were written centuries after the purported events, the Qur'an's revelation is well-documented and contemporaneous, underscoring its historical credibility.

## The Hijra (Migration) of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم)

The migration of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) and his followers from Makka to Madina in 622 CE marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar and was a turning point in Islamic history. The Hijra is not only detailed in Islamic texts but also corroborated by non-Islamic sources of that era. It is recognized for its social and legal implications, influencing the development of Islamic jurisprudence and community life.

The Hijra is a historically verifiable event with significant documentary evidence. Unlike mythological migrations that often include imaginary supernatural elements or allegorical interpretations, the Hijra is documented as a concrete, strategic decision in response to socio-political conditions.

## The Battle of Badr

The first major military encounter between Muslims and their Quraysh adversaries took place in 624 CE. The Battle of Badr was pivotal for the establishment of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula. Accounts of the Battle of Badr are found in numerous Ahadith and the biography (sira) of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). These sources detail the participants, tactics, and outcomes, and their authenticity is supported by chains of transmission and cross-referencing with other historical data.

Unlike mythological battles that often feature imaginaries deities, or fantastic creatures, the Battle of Badr is a historical conflict with documented human participants and strategies. The miraculous aspects, such as divine intervention reported in Islamic texts, are interpreted within the context of faith but do not detract from the historical core of the event.

## Mythological Elements in Other Religions

While Islamic narratives are grounded in historical events verified through stringent methodologies, many other religious traditions embrace mythologies that serve symbolic or allegorical purposes rather than factual recounting.

## Hindu Mythology

Hinduism is rich in myths that encompass a wide range of deities, demons, heroes, and sages. These stories are often found in texts like the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, and the Puranas. Hindu myths frequently illustrate moral and philosophical lessons, the nature of dharma (duty/righteousness), and the cosmic struggle between good and evil. These narratives also provide explanations for cosmic and natural phenomena through the deeds of imaginary male and female deities. Unlike the concrete historical foundation of Islam, Hindu mythology often embraces a cyclic concept of time, reincarnation, and a pantheon of imaginary deities with human-like traits and emotions, serving more as metaphysical allegories than historical accounts.

## Greek Mythology

Ancient Greek mythology, encapsulated in texts such as Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, features a complex array of imaginary male and female deities, and heroes whose adventures often explain natural phenomena, human qualities, and cultural practices. These myths were integral in shaping ancient Greek perceptions of virtue, heroism, and the divine, often reflecting the Greeks' explorations of human nature and morality.

Greek myths, with their anthropomorphic deities and fantastical elements, serve primarily as cultural and philosophical explorations rather than divinely revealed guides for life and morality, as seen in Islamic texts.

## Norse Mythology

Norse mythology, recorded in the Eddas and sagas, narrates the stories of imagined deities such as Odin, Thor, and Loki, culminating in the apocalyptic battle of Ragnarök. These narratives explore themes of fate, bravery, and the transient nature of existence, reflecting the harsh realities of the Norse environment and social structure. The mythological framework of Norse religion, with its emphasis on inevitable doom and heroic destiny, contrasts with Islam's focus on ethical monotheism, accountability, and the eternal life hereafter based on one's deeds.

## Egyptian Mythology

Ancient Egyptian religion was filled with deities and myths that explained the creation of the world, the functioning of nature, and the rituals associated with death and the afterlife. Myths such as the Osiris myth, which involves themes of death, resurrection, and judgement, played a crucial role in Egyptian religious rites and the concept of the afterlife. While both Egyptian mythology and Islam share an emphasis on the afterlife, Egyptian myths incorporate complex rituals and magical practices that are absent in Islamic teachings, which emphasize moral behaviour and divine judgement rather than ritual efficacy.

## Truth and Meaning

The quest for truth and the search for meaning are central to the philosophical inquiry within religious contexts. In Islamic theology, the emphasis on historically verifiable truths stands in contrast to the often symbolic or allegorical truths found in mythological narratives. In this section, we will examine how the distinction between factual and mythological narratives influences the interpretation of truth and the extraction of meaning in religious practices.

### Defining Truth in Religious Contexts

In Islamic doctrine, *truth* is conveyed as an *objective reality*, established through divine revelation and historical validation. This contrasts with the *symbolic truth* prevalent in mythological narratives, where the focus is on deeper, often moral or existential insights conveyed through allegory and metaphor.

For Muslims, the Qur'an is the ultimate truth, providing clear guidance and laws directly from God. This concept of truth is not open to personal interpretation but is intended to be understood and applied as revealed.

### Interpreting Meaning in Texts

While Islamic texts are primarily interpreted based on their apparent (literal) meanings, certain verses and hadiths may also hold deeper, allegorical meanings, particularly those dealing with the unseen or the hereafter. This duality allows for a comprehensive understanding that encompasses both direct guidance and spiritual depth.

Most religious traditions use mythological stories to express truths metaphorically. These narratives often require interpretative efforts to extract moral and philosophical lessons applicable to various life contexts.

### The Implications of Distinguishing Between These Approaches

The emphasis on historical verifiability in Islam provides a sense of *certainty* and *clarity* to its adherents, guiding not only spiritual beliefs but also practical daily actions. In contrast, the interpretative nature of mythological truths can offer flexibility but may also lead to greater ambiguity in moral and ethical guidelines.

Understanding the nature of truth affects theological doctrines and philosophical outlooks. For Muslims, adhering to the divine truth of the Qur'an and Sunnah shapes a worldview that values submission to God's will and recognition of an objective moral order. Conversely, religions that embrace mythological narratives may foster a worldview that values personal interpretation and the subjective experience of the divine.

### Challenges in Interpreting Religious Texts

**Balancing Historical Context and Contemporary Relevance:** One of the challenges in Islamic scholarship is interpreting texts that were revealed in a specific historical context while ensuring their relevance to contemporary issues. This requires a sophisticated understanding of both the letter and the spirit of the

texts. In Islamic texts, there are certain events or account of miracles that may be easily misconstrued as mythological by a less discerning eye. However, Muslims distinguish these incidents as acts of divine power rather than mythological tales.

## Refutation and Critiques

In this section, we will address and refute the scholarly critiques posed by some scholars regarding the historical integrity and methodological rigour of the Islamic tradition. Each critique will be examined in light of Islamic scholarly tradition and evidence.

### Refutation of Critiques on Historical Reliability

Critics often question the authenticity of the Qur'an and Hadith based on their transmission methods. In response, Islamic scholarship emphasizes the meticulous preservation practices, both oral and written, that have been historically documented. The use of multiple independent chains of transmission (isnad) for Hadith and the memorization of the Qur'an by countless individuals across generations ensures a high degree of reliability unmatched in other historical documents.

While some claim discrepancies between Islamic texts and archaeological findings, numerous archaeological discoveries have indeed corroborated historical accounts found in Islamic texts. Examples include the descriptions of ancient civilizations in the Qur'an that were unknown to historians until modern archaeological findings confirmed their existence.

### Refutation of Critiques on Interpretation Methods

It is argued that interpretations of Islamic texts are subjective and vary widely. However, Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) and principles of tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis) provide a structured and disciplined methodology for interpretation, heavily relying on consensus (ijma), analogy (qiyas), and the primary texts themselves. This framework minimizes subjective interpretations and ensures consistency and fidelity to the original messages.

The distinction between mythological and miraculous narratives in Islamic texts is clear. Miracles are understood as historical but divine interventions by God, which serve specific purposes within the prophetic missions and are not mere allegories or symbolic tales. These events are documented with chains of transmission that ensure their authenticity.

### Refutation of Theological and Philosophical Challenges

#### The Problem of Evil

Critics challenge the reconciliation of divine omnipotence and benevolence with the existence of evil, as depicted in some Islamic narratives. In response, Islamic theology asserts that divine wisdom is often beyond human understanding and that trials and tribulations are tests of faith and means for spiritual growth.

The existence of evil is also seen as a necessary consequence of free will, which is essential for the moral testing of humanity.

### Modernist vs. Traditionalist Perspectives

The debate between modernist reinterpretations and traditionalist adherence is seen as a strength of Islamic intellectual tradition. It allows for a dynamic engagement with contemporary issues while maintaining a grounded link to traditional texts and interpretations. This balance ensures that Islamic teachings remain relevant and accessible in various cultural and temporal contexts.

### Refutation of Methodological Debates

While some advocate for a purely historical or symbolic interpretation of religious texts, Islamic scholarship incorporates both approaches where appropriate. Historical contexts are crucial for understanding certain passages, while symbolic interpretations are applied to texts dealing with metaphysical themes. This dual approach enriches the understanding without compromising the text's integrity.

The rigorous methodologies in Islamic scholarship ensure that faith practices are not based on flawed or unfounded interpretations. The structured approach to jurisprudence and exegesis in Islam safeguards against arbitrary or erroneous practices, ensuring that the faith's practices are firmly rooted in authenticated texts and sound reasoning.

## Conclusion

This article has explored the significant distinctions between Islamic theology and mythological narratives found in other religious traditions, focusing on the factual basis and historical validation that underpin Islamic teachings. Through a series of detailed analyses, we have examined how Islamic teaching is distinctly rooted in divine revelation, supported by rigorous scholarly methodologies that ensure the accuracy and authenticity of its sacred texts.

Unlike mythological narratives that often rely on allegorical or symbolic statements, Islamic teachings are grounded in historical events that are verifiable through well-documented and critically examined sources. The preservation techniques and methodological rigor applied to the Qur'an and Hadith exemplify Islam's commitment to maintaining the purity and precision of its teachings.

The distinction between factual historical narratives and mythological elements in religious texts carries profound philosophical implications. In Islam, the emphasis on verifiable truth reinforces a worldview where divine guidance directly informs ethical behaviour and societal norms, offering a clear path to spiritual fulfilment and moral conduct.

The factual basis of Islamic teachings not only strengthens individual faith but also fosters societal cohesion by providing a consistent legal and moral framework. This contrasts with the diverse interpretative

possibilities that mythological narratives offer, which can lead to a more varied understanding of core spiritual and moral values presented in them.

The scholarly critiques and methodological challenges discussed reveal the dynamic and evolving nature of religious studies. By addressing these critiques head-on, Islamic scholarship demonstrates its resilience and adaptability, affirming its relevance in contemporary discourse while remaining firmly rooted in its traditional foundations.

The exploration conducted in this article underscores the uniqueness of Islam's approach to blending historical fact with divine revelation, setting it apart from other religious traditions that often incorporate mythological frameworks. This distinction does not merely influence theological discussions but extends to how adherents live out their faith in everyday life, shaping their interactions with the world and each other.

## Bibliography

1. Ash Shaikh Mir Asedullah Quadri. Tafseer Al-Asedi.
2. Ash Shaikh Mir Asedullah Quadri. Irshad Al-Asedi.
3. Ash Shaikh Mir Asedullah Quadri. Cognition of Tawheed - A Guidebook for Fusus Al Hikam (Vols. I-XI).
4. Ash Shaikh Mir Asedullah Quadri. Fiqh Al Akbar.
5. Ash Shaikh Mir Asedullah Quadri. Islamic Wisdom.
6. Ash Shaikh Mir Asedullah Quadri. Islamic Insight Part 1 and Part 2.
7. Ash Shaikh Mir Asedullah Quadri. Belief in Allah.
8. Ash Shaikh Mir Asedullah Quadri. God Really Merciful?
9. Ali, A. Y. (1991). *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary*. Brentwood, MD: Amana Corporation.
10. Asad, M. (1980). *The Message of the Qur'an*. Gibraltar: Dar al-Andalus.
11. Brown, J. A. (2009). *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications.
12. Campbell, J. (2008). *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Novato, California: New World Library.
13. Eliade, M. (1954). *The Myth of the Eternal Return*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
14. Esposito, J. L. (2011). *What Everyone Needs to Know about Islam*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
15. Geertz, C. (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.
16. Jung, C. G., & Kerényi, C. (1963). *Introduction to a Science of Mythology: The Myth of the Divine Child and the Mysteries of Eleusis*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
17. Motzki, H. (2002). *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence: Meccan Fiqh Before the Classical Schools*. Leiden: Brill.
18. Nasr, S. H. (2003). *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary*. New York: HarperOne.
19. Neusner, J. (1994). *Comparative Religions: A History of Religious Foundations*. New York: HarperCollins.

20. Ricoeur, P. (1974). *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
21. Watt, W. M. (1974). *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

## About the Author



Ash Shaikh Mir Asedullah Quadri is well known all over the world for his explanation of Islamic Tawheed, Sahih Iman, Sahih Islam and Sahih Ihsan. He is a scholar, historian, and poet. He is the author of *Tafseer-e-Asedi*, *Irshad Al Asedi*, *Fusus Al-Iman* and over 1000 books on various Islamic subjects. He has written many research articles on religion, history, and other subjects. He is also the Editor in Chief of CIFIA Global Journal.