

CRITICAL STUDY OF *AL-DAKHIL* FROM THE PATH OF *ISRA'ILYAT*

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Abstract

This study critically examines the phenomenon of *al-dakhil* within the context of *Isra'iliyat* narratives that have permeated the traditions of *tafsir* (Qur'anic exegesis) and *hadith*. *Al-dakhil* refers to interpretations lacking valid foundations, including weak (*da'if*), fabricated (*mawdu'*) reports, erroneous *ta'wil* (interpretation), and ideologies inconsistent with core Islamic teachings. These narratives often stem from external sources primarily Jewish and Christian traditions, and are integrated into Islamic discourse, sometimes without critical scrutiny. Employing a qualitative methodology with a hermeneutic approach, this research explores the impact of *Isra'iliyat* on the development of Qur'anic exegesis and the resulting scholarly debates. The findings reveal that while *Isra'iliyat* has occasionally been used to supplement understanding of certain Qur'anic verses, its authenticity is frequently questionable, both in terms of *sanad* (chain of transmission) and *matan* (content). The study underscores the necessity for *mufasssirs* (exegetes) to exercise discernment when engaging with *Isra'iliyat*, ensuring that interpretations remain faithful to Islamic principles. By highlighting the risks of uncritical acceptance of external narratives, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the importance of methodological rigor and doctrinal integrity in Islamic scholarship.

Keywords: *Al-dakhil*; *Isra'iliyat*; The Qur'an; *Tafsir*; *Hadith*

INTRODUCTION

In the development of Islamic thought, the study of history and interpretation related to external sources, especially those of the scholars of the book, has become a topic widely discussed among scholars. One of the phenomena that emerged along with the development of the tradition of interpretation and hadith is the phenomenon of *Al-dakhil*, namely the entry of elements that have no legitimate basis into the teachings and understanding of Islam (Khumaeroh, 2025). One of the main routes through which these elements entered was *Isra'iliyat*, which refers to narrations and stories originating from Jewish and Christian traditions (Badri, 2021).

Isra'iliyat has a long history in Islamic tradition, especially in the context of exegesis and hadith. Narrations originating from these sources, whether directly related to religious teachings or not, are often accepted without criticism despite many contradicting Islamic principles. These *Isra'iliyat* stories initially entered the exegesis and hadith through interaction with Jews and Christians after the Prophet Muhammad migrated to Medina, which then spread and influenced the understanding of Muslims toward religious teachings (Rusydi, 2011).

This condition poses a significant challenge in maintaining the purity of interpretation and hadith from unauthentic influences. Therefore, a critical study of *Al-dakhil* from the *Isra'iliyat* path is essential to understand its impact on the understanding of Islamic teachings and avoid deviations in the Islamic scientific tradition. Attitudes towards the *Isra'iliyat* narrations also vary; if it is by Islamic law, the narration can be acknowledged and accepted, but if it is contradictory, it must be rejected or at least placed in a position of *tawaqquf* (not deciding whether it is right or wrong) until there is further explanation (Suri & Akhyar, 2020).

A critical study of *al-dakhil* from the *Isra'iliyat* path in the interpretation of the Qur'an is a significant concern in the study of the science of interpretation due to the numerous non-authoritative narrations that enter into the interpretation, especially from Jewish and Christian traditions. First, Azhar Amrullah Hafizh's research highlights the phenomenon of *Isra'iliyat*'s entry into authoritative *tafsir* books, such as al-Qurtubi's work, where these narrations are often included without criticism, thereby potentially eroding the authenticity of the Qur'an (Hafizh, 2015). Second, a study of *Tafsir at-Tabrir wa at-Tamwir* by Ibn 'Asyur shows the story of the Prophet Moses and Khidir in QS. Al-Kahfi 60-82 also contains elements of *Isra'iliyat* and the importance of critical analysis of these sources to prevent

distortion of meaning (Ikhwatul et al., 2022). Third, research on the *Tafsir Djuḡ 'Amma al-Abrar* by Mustafa Baisa found that the subjectivity of the interpreter, the lack of verification of the *sanad*, and the careless use of *Isra'iliyat* can give rise to negative implications, although in Baisa's case, the *Isra'iliyat* used is still classified as *maskut 'anh* and does not conflict with Islamic values (Chamidah, 2021).

Fourth, research on the *al-dakbil* criticism method emphasizes the need for *sanad* and *matan* criticism of *Isra'iliyat*, highlighting parameters such as the narrator's lies, confessions of falsification, and the invalidity of narrations as leading indicators for rejecting doubtful *Isra'iliyat* narrations (Iqbal, 2024). Fifth, a study of *Ibn Katsir*'s method shows that there are two typologies of commentators: those who are critical and those who accept Israel without criticism; where *Ibn Katsir* is known to be selective and often comments on and criticizes the truth of the history of Israel that he includes, so that he does not make Israel as evidence, but merely additional knowledge (El-Karimah, 2024). Therefore, a critical study of *al-dakbil* from the *Isra'iliyat* path is crucial to maintain the purity of *Al-dakbil*'s interpretation and ensure that every narration used is genuinely authentic and does not conflict with the fundamental principles of Islam.

This study aims to examine the phenomenon of *Al-dakbil*, which entered the Islamic treasury through the *Isra'iliyat* route, by paying special attention to identifying the features and characteristics of the narrations originating from these sources. This study will analyze the extent to which these foreign elements influence the development of interpretation and hadith and formulate the strategic steps needed to maintain the purity of Islamic teachings so that they remain by the principles of sharia. The findings of this study can provide a significant contribution to efforts to keep the authority and validity of Islamic teachings from external influences that are not in line with Islamic values.

METHODS

The study method applied is qualitative research with a hermeneutic approach, which focuses on interpreting texts (Creswell, 2010). The purpose of this study is to analyze interpretations that contain *Isra'iliyat* elements and to critique their existence and impact on Islamic interpretation. The approach taken is a critical approach, which is used to evaluate the extent to which *Isra'iliyat* influences existing interpretations, considering that this topic is

often a subject of debate in the world of interpretation regarding its truth and relevance in Islamic interpretation.

For data collection, a documentation study method (Suwendra, 2018) is employed, which involves gathering information from various classical and modern interpretations that incorporate elements of *Isra'iliyat*, such as *Tafsir al-Tabari*, *Tafsir al-Qurtubi*, and *Tafsir al-Razi*, as well as contemporary interpretations like *Tafsir al-Maududi* and *Tafsir al-Shanqiti*. The data is also supplemented with a literature review from scientific journals and related books that discuss *Isra'iliyat* in the context of interpretation. Meanwhile, for data analysis, the thematic analysis method is employed, which aims to identify the primary themes related to *Isra'iliyat* in interpretation and analyze their impact on understanding the Qur'an's text. The analysis process is carried out systematically through the stages of coding, categorization, and data interpretation (Sugiyono, 2017), thus producing a comprehensive understanding of the role and influence of *Isra'iliyat* in the Islamic exegetical tradition.

RESULTS

A GLIMPSE OF *ISRA'ILYAT*

The word *Israel* comes from the Hebrew language, which consists of two elements: *Isr*, meaning "servant" or "lover," and *El*, meaning "God." Therefore, etymologically, *Israel* is interpreted as a servant of God. Another opinion put forward by al-Suhailiy states that the Prophet Jacob was called *Israel* because one night while traveling in the context of migration towards Allah, he encountered a vision. The mention of the Prophet Jacob with the title *Israel*, which means "servant" or "lover of Allah," reflects his spiritual closeness to Allah and emphasizes his role as a sincere and steadfast prophet in the struggle to uphold Allah's teachings. This title was bestowed upon the Prophet Ya'kub by Allah after he returned from the land of Aram as an acknowledgment of his sincerity and steadfastness in striving to achieve Divine pleasure (Mawardi, 2022).

The Old Testament records the change of the name of the Prophet Ya'kub to Israel, as written in Genesis 35:9-10. This passage states that after Jacob returned from *Padang-Aram*, God appeared to him and blessed him, then said that his name would no longer be called Ya'kub but Israel. This name change has a deep theological significance, where Israel is interpreted as "one who wrestles with God" or "servant of God," reflecting the spiritual closeness and struggle of the Prophet Jacob in upholding the Divine will. Furthermore, when

the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt, God sent the Prophets Moses and Aaron, descendants of the tribe of Levi, as messengers to free them from the oppression of Fir'aun. However, the teachings they brought were not explicitly named Judaism, either before or after their time (Marhaban, 2010).

The naming of the teachings brought by the two prophets as Judaism only emerged after the reign of Prophet Dawud and Prophet Sulaiman, who came from the tribe of Judah. Historically, the Israelites had never had a prophet with as much authority and power as Prophet Dawud and Prophet Sulaiman. These two prophets played a crucial role in strengthening the Israelites' position and establishing a robust government structure, ultimately leading the nation to its pinnacle of glory. While Prophet Musa and Prophet Harun played a role in freeing the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, Prophet Dawud and Prophet Sulaiman succeeded in strengthening the Israelites' position in the regional arena at that time. However, after the death of Prophet Sulaiman, there was internal conflict among the Israelites regarding the struggle for power and wealth related to government. This conflict led to the decline of the Israelites' position, which had previously been respected, causing them to become weak in the eyes of other nations. As a result, the nation of Israel became known as an entity full of conflict and instability (Said et al., 2019).

God always sent prophets to purify the teachings of the Israeli people. However, whenever a prophet was sent to resolve disputes and provide guidance, they often faced significant obstacles due to deep hatred, envy, and malice among the tribes of Israel. The term "Jews" was used to refer to the Israeli people at the time of the birth of Prophet Isa AS, while the followers of Prophet Isa AS. Those who believe in him are known as "Christians," which comes from the name of the region where the Prophet Isa's family originated, namely *Nazareth*. Both Jews and Christians are included in the category of people in the book. From an Islamic perspective, those who believe in Jews and Christians are also considered people of the Book, as reflected in figures such as Abdullah ibn Sallam and Wahb ibn Munabbih (Asnawi, 2020).

In addition to the term *Isra'iliyat*, there is also the term *Nasraniyat*, although the number is relatively small. Therefore, both are often considered as part of *Isra'iliyat* without the need for a clear separation. *Nasraniyat* generally contains teachings on advice, morals, psychological aspects, and refinement of character. Scholars agree that *Isra'iliyat* originated from the Jewish tradition, which was influenced by the habits and dominance of Jews in spreading stories

whose truth cannot be verified. The hostile attitude towards Islam and Muslims by some Jewish groups is emphasized in the Qur'an, especially in Surah Al-Maidah verse 82. This view is supported by historical evidence that shows the friendly attitude of Christians since the early development of Islam in Mecca.

An example is the protection given by the ruler of *Habasyah* (Ethiopia) to Muslims who migrated to avoid persecution from the polytheists of Mecca. A similar attitude is also reflected in the response of the Christian rulers to the Prophet Muhammad's letter of preaching, which was sent to kings outside the Arabian Peninsula, such as *Muqauqis* and *Heraclius*. Even though they did not accept the Prophet's call, they still respected his messenger; *Muqauqis* even sent gifts to the Prophet Muhammad, which were well received (Ghoni, 2017).

The Jews, as people of the book, often interacted with Muslims, and their civilization was considered superior to that of others. However, they were also known for their deceitfulness, which was dangerous to Islam. Therefore, the term *Isra'iliyat* is often associated with the Jews (Rahman, 2020). In the Qur'an, the word *Isra'il* is mentioned 41 times, twice referring directly to the Prophet Ya'qub, namely in QS. Ali Imrān, verse 39, and Surah Maryam, verse 58, while the rest are related to his descendants. The character of the Children of Israel, as recorded in the Qur'an, is not only a historical account but also a warning for Muslims to remain vigilant against their behavioral patterns and deceit and not to follow in their footsteps (Suri & Akhyar, 2020).

In addition to the terms *Isra'iliyat* and *Nasraniyat*, there is also another similar term, namely *Al-dakbil*. Etymologically, the word *Al-dakbil* originates from the Arabic word *dakbala*, meaning "to enter." Al-Rāgib al-Asfahāni explains that *al-dakbāl* refers to something destructive that enters the body, mind, or offspring. Terminologically, *Al-dakbil* refers to interpretations that do not have a strong basis, such as the narrations of *Isra'iliyat*, weak (*da'if*) and false (*maudu'*) hadiths, false interpretations (*ta'wil batil*), and baseless thoughts from contemporary interpreters. From this definition, it can be understood that the scope of *Al-dakbil* is broader than that of *Isra'iliyat*, although the two are interrelated. Therefore, it can be concluded that all *Isra'iliyat* are included in the category of *Al-dakbil*, but not all *Al-dakbil* can be categorized as *Isra'iliyat* (Himayah et al., 2024).

Isra'iliyat are narrations originating from the people of the book, both those related to their religious teachings and those that have no direct connection to that religion. *Isra'iliyat*

narrations are often associated with Jews because most of the narrators were Jews who later converted to Islam. Al-Zahabi explained that although outwardly, *Isra'iliyat* shows the influence of Jewish and Christian culture in the interpretation of the Qur'an, this term also includes all ancient stories, tales, and fables inserted into the interpretation and hadith, the origins of which come from Jewish and Christian traditions in a broader sense (Al-Zahabi, 2003).

DISCUSSION

The Influence of *Al-dakhil* Fi *Al-Tafsir* and *Isra'iliyat*

The polemic regarding *Al-dakhil* in *tafsir*, especially about *Isra'iliyat*, is often considered to hurt the world of Qur'anic interpretation. However, not all *Isra'iliyat* in *tafsir* have detrimental consequences. One example of *Al-dakhil* in the form of *Isra'iliyat* that has a positive impact is the story of the Prophet Moses and Khidir. In this narrative, *Al-dakhil*, in the form of *Isra'iliyat*, functions as a complement that enriches the understanding of the implied meaning of the verses. Therefore, the existence of *Isra'iliyat* in this context does not need to be questioned because its influence does not pose a risk to fundamental aspects such as faith, worship, or knowledge. Thus, there is no danger for individuals who study or understand interpretations that contain these elements as long as they are done with a critical attitude and a contextual understanding (Ghozali, 2025).

In QS Al-Kahfi verses 60-82, Imam Baidhawi's commentary on *Anwar al-Tanzil wa Asrar al-Ta'wil* explains that after they got off the ship, Khidhir met a child whom he then killed by twisting his neck, banging his head against a wall, or laying him down. Khidhir's actions were carried out without any apparent reason or consideration in the narrative. However, in Baidhawi's commentary, this narration is not accompanied by a clear *sanad* or source, so its origin cannot be ascertained and is included in the category of *al-dakhil* (unfounded interpretation), which contains elements of *israiliyyat* (Fauzi, 2023).

Although the origins of this history are unclear, Imam Baidhawi's use of the word *qila* (said) in interpreting the incident of Khidhir's murder of the child indicates that he was quoting an *israiliyyat* story in his interpretation. Thus, it can be concluded that the interpretation of this verse incorporates *al-dakhil* in the form of *israiliyyat* history, which originates from Baidhawi's interpretation, especially when he interpreted the murder incident by Khidhir without explicitly citing the *sanad* or source of the narration. The *al-dakhil*

phenomenon in this interpretation emerged during the *tabi'in* period and was influenced by the dynamics of politics and power at that time.

Imam Baidhawi, in his commentary *Anwar al-Tanzil wa Asrar al-Takwil*, mentions that the country referred to in the verse is Antakya. However, some opinions mention *Ablah*, a city in *Basrah*, or *Bajrawan* in Armenia. However, Baidhawi did not include the sanad or source of the narration, which is characteristic of his style, where he tends to use concise language without providing further notes or references. In interpreting verses containing elements of *israiliyyat*, Baidhawi often uses the term *qila* (said) or *ruwiya* (narrated). According to Al-Zahabi, the use of these terms indicates that Baidhawi is aware of the weaknesses in the quality of the *israiliyyat* narrations he quotes. It is evident in his interpretation of the name of the country in the verse, where he uses the word *qila* as a sign of the presence of elements of *israiliyyat* (Sari, 2021).

Imam Baidhawi explained that the ship was used by poor people who worked at sea to earn a living. Poor people here are defined as those who have little wealth but not enough to meet their living needs. They are called *masakin* (plural) because they consist of ten brothers, five of whom work at sea. Khidhir damaged the ship because behind them was a king named Jalandhar, also known as Jalandi bin Karkar or Manwar bin Julnandi al-Azdi, who intended to seize their ship. If the boat continued to sail, the ship would be captured by the king (Baidhawi, 2003). In his interpretation, Baidhawi inserted a history of *israiliyyat*, which can be proven by the use of the word *qila* in his account of the history, which shows that the history contains elements of *israiliyyat*.

Thus, in the interpretation of this verse, there is *al-dakbil* in the form of an *israiliyyat* story that originates from Baidhawi's interpretation, specifically when he interpreted the ship's owners as ten poor people. Baidhawi and Jalaluddin al-Mahalli did not clearly state the origin of the story, so this *israiliyyat* story was left without further explanation. It raises the ambiguity of whether the information is an acceptable *israiliyyat* or vice versa. The phenomenon of *al-dakbil*, in this interpretation, occurred in the era of the *tabi'in* and was influenced by the background of political factors and power.

In searching for Baidhawi's interpretation, which is the source of interpretation in *Jalalain's* interpretation, a similar interpretation was found. Imam Baidhawi explained that Allah will replace the child with a child who is full of love for his parents. It is said that his successor was a daughter who married a Prophet and gave birth to another prophet, who

Allah then chose to be the leader of a nation among nations. In his interpretation of this verse, Baidhawi is shown to include the story of *israiliyyat*, as evident from the use of the word *qila* (said) in his account. However, this history is not accompanied by any clear sanad or sources, so it gives the impression that what is written is the *mufasssir's* personal opinion.

In this verse, there is *al-dakhil* in the form of *israiliyyat* history, as interpreted by Baidhawi and Jalaluddin al-Mahalli, such as the interpretation of the name of the country Antakya and the story of a house wall as high as one hundred cubits. This story is similar to differences of opinion regarding the number of *ashabul kahfi*, which Allah emphasizes that only He knows. Therefore, Muhammad was ordered not to debate the matter seriously. This *al-dakhil* phenomenon emerged during the *tabi'in* era and was influenced by political factors and power.

Attitudes Towards the Influence of *Al-dakhil Fi Tafsir* and *Isra'iliyat*

Tafsir is a science that studies the interpretation of the Qur'an (Al-Shabuni, n.d.). As a field of science related to religion, *tafsir* necessitates a profound understanding of the Qur'an's texts and their application in the context of Muslim life. However, in its development, *tafsir* cannot be separated from external influences that influence the understanding of the Qur'an, including the impact of *ad-dakhli fi tafsir* (foreign input in interpretation) and *Isra'iliyat* (stories from Jewish and Christian traditions).

The influence of *al-dakhil* in interpretation refers to the inclusion of foreign elements in the interpretation of the Qur'an that do not come from authentic Islamic sources, such as the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad or the *ijma'* of *ulama*. This *al-dakhil* is often in the form of opinions or interpretations originating from cultures or thoughts outside Islam that are inserted into the interpretation of the Qur'an. One form of this influence is the introduction of Greek philosophy into the early history of Islam, particularly during the Abbasid Dynasty. Muslim philosophers such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), and Al-Kindi combined elements of Greek philosophy with the interpretation of the Qur'an. However, this influence has been criticized because it is considered to contain interpretations that deviate from the original meaning of the Qur'an, given the differences in paradigms between Greek philosophy and Islamic teachings. The process of integrating Greek philosophy into the Islamic tradition through translation, adaptation, and assimilation enriched Islamic thought but also posed challenges in maintaining the purity of Qur'an interpretation (Wahda & Santalia, 2024).

Isra'iliyat is a term that refers to stories or narratives originating from Jewish and Christian traditions that are included in the interpretation of the Qur'an. Many of these stories relate to previous prophets such as Prophet Adam, Prophet Moses, and Prophet Isa. The source of *Isra'iliyat* is often found in narrations attributed to narrators who tend to accept stories from Jews and Christians without conducting in-depth verification of their truth. Therefore, the existence of *Isra'iliyat* in the interpretation of the Qur'an requires special attention regarding its validity and authenticity (Taufiq & Suryana, 2020).

Most scholars believe that *Isra'iliyat* can only be accepted if it is based on the principles of Islamic teachings and does not conflict with *Al-dakhil* or the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad. On the other hand, if *Isra'iliyat* contains elements that contradict Islamic teachings, then the story must be rejected. Thus, the attitude towards *Isra'iliyat* in the *tafsir* tradition must be critical and selective to maintain the purity and authenticity of Qur'an interpretation.

Attitude towards *Ad-Dakhli* in *Tafsir* and *Isra'iliyat*

1. Selective and Critical Thinking

The primary attitude that a mufassir must adopt is to be selective and critical of *al-dakhil* in *tafsir* and *Isra'iliyat*. An in-depth evaluation is necessary to determine whether the foreign influence aligns with the principles of Islamic teachings. If this influence can enrich our understanding of the Qur'an without conflicting with religious teachings, then it can be accepted on a limited basis. On the other hand, if the influence is contrary to Islamic principles or has the potential to be misleading, it must be firmly rejected. Therefore, interpreters are obligated to maintain the authority of *Al-dakhil* and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet as the primary and authentic sources for interpretation, ensuring the purity and authenticity of the interpretations conveyed (Ulinnuha, 2017).

2. Prioritizing Valid Islamic Sources

The second attitude that exegetes must adopt is to prioritize authentic Islamic sources, such as the Qur'an, the Prophet's Hadith, and the consensus of the scholars (*ijma' of the ulama*). The interpretation of the Qur'an should be based on an accurate and authentic understanding of the Qur'an and Hadith without being influenced by external views that are irrelevant or contradictory to Islamic principles. Suppose there is a difference between the interpretation based on authentic Islamic sources and the interpretation involving *Isra'iliyat* or *al-dakhil*. In

that case, the interpretation referring to the Qur'an and Hadith must be prioritized as the primary reference.

3. Avoiding Misleading Influences

The third attitude that needs to be taken is to avoid influences that can lead Muslims astray. In the history of interpretation, several stories of *Isra'iliyat* have been proven to be contrary to Islamic teachings, for example, the story of the Prophet Ibrahim, who almost sacrificed his son Ismail in a place that was not by Islamic teachings. Influences like this must be watched out for so as not to damage Muslims' understanding of the Qur'an.

4. Following the Correct Interpretation Methodology

The final approach is to follow the correct and valid methodology of interpretation. Interpreters must pay attention to the historical context, language, and structure of the Qur'an and ensure that their interpretations are free from those influenced by external factors that contradict Islamic principles. A valid methodology of interpretation is based on an authentic understanding of the Qur'an and Hadith. It is supported by complementary sciences such as Arabic, hadith studies, and Islamic history (Abduh, 1923).

Overall, the attitude towards the influence of *al-dakbil* in *tafsir* and *Isra'iliyat* in the Islamic *tafsir* tradition must be selective and critical. Although external influences, whether originating from Greek philosophy or Jewish and Christian traditions, can contribute to enriching the understanding of the Qur'an, these influences must first be evaluated for their suitability for authentic and valid Islamic teachings. This critical approach is crucial for maintaining the purity of the Qur'an's interpretation and ensuring that Muslim understanding remains aligned with the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the fundamental principles of Islam.

CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of *Isra'iliyat* in the study of *tafsir* has a significant influence on the development of the science of *tafsir* while also giving rise to various challenges and debates among scholars. *Isra'iliyat*, which refers to narrations originating from Jewish and Christian traditions, is often used in *tafsir* to explain or complement the understanding of the verses of the Qur'an. However, the authenticity of these narrations is frequently questioned, both in terms of *sanad* and *Matan*, thus requiring critical study and in-depth verification. From a critical perspective, scholars of *tafsir* have various attitudes towards the use of *Isra'iliyat*. Some

scholars accept these narrations on the condition that their contents do not conflict with the principles of Islamic teachings. On the other hand, some scholars reject the use of *Isra'iliyat* due to concerns about the possibility of deviation from the creed and the inclusion of teachings that are not by the values of the Qur'an. Therefore, the *mufasssir* (interpreter) must apply strict selectivity in choosing and using the *Isra'iliyat* narrations so that the resulting interpretation remains pure and is not contaminated by elements that contradict Islamic teachings.

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