

The Methodology for Resolving Conflicts Between Scientific Facts and the Interpretations of Early Qur'anic Exegetes

Jamila Mustafa Muhammad Almaani^{1*}, Suleman Mohammad Ali Aldgoor², Houthefa Salah Abdol Fattah Al Khalidi³

^{1*} Al-Balqa Applied University, Salt, Jordan | ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-3388-7955> | Email: j.almaani@bau.edu.jo

²University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan | Email: s.dgoor@ju.edu.jo

³Applied Science Private University, Amman, Jordan | Email: h_alkhalidi@asu.edu.jo

*Corresponding Author: Jamila Mustafa Muhammad Almaani, Al-Balqa Applied University, Salt, Jordan | ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-3388-7955> | Email: j.almaani@bau.edu.jo

Abstract: The significant methodological concern in contemporary Islamic research is the link between scientific findings and classical Qur'anic exegesis. A systematic legal-hermeneutical methodology to resolve conflicts between modern scientific knowledge and early Qur'anic exegetes has received less attention than scientific interpretation studies (*al-tafsīr al-ʿilmī*). The aim of this study is to provide a comprehensive methodological framework to resolve such conflicts by combining the principles of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *uṣūl al-tafsīr*, Arabic linguistic analysis, contextual interpretation (*siyāq*), reconciliation (*jamʿ*) and legal preference (*tarjīḥ*). The study adopts qualitative doctrinal and legal-hermeneutical research design. Selected Qur'anic verses on natural phenomena were analyzed through textual, contextual, comparative and thematic analysis. The results show that most of the perceived conflicts are apparent not real, they are due to the differences in historical background, semantic range, and the development of empirical knowledge not the contradiction between revelation and science. The study finds three mechanisms to resolve apparent conflicts, namely semantic inclusion, interpretive complementarity and interpretive compatibility. It shows that genuine conflicts should be resolved by legal preference based mainly on contextual coherence and established principles of Islamic legal methodology. The framework proposed is a balanced and systematic model, which preserves the authority of the Qur'an, honors the methodological legacy of classical exegetes and allows for constructive engagement with established scientific knowledge. This study is a contribution to the contemporary Qur'anic studies, Islamic legal hermeneutics and interdisciplinary studies by providing practical methodological guidance for scientifically related Qur'anic interpretation and future studies on the relationship between revelation and empirical science.

Keywords: Islamic Legal Hermeneutics; Qur'anic Exegesis (*Tafsīr*); Scientific Interpretation; *Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*; *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*; Reconciliation (*Jamʿ*); Legal Preference (*Tarjīḥ*); Religion–Science Dialogue.

Introduction

The relationship between scientific knowledge and Qur'anic interpretation has become one of the most important methodological issues in contemporary Islamic scholarship. Scholarly interest in Qur'anic verses describing natural phenomena (*āyāt kawniyyah*) has seen a revival due to the rapid advancements in fields like astronomy, embryology, genetics, geology, environmental science, and medicine. With the increase of scientific knowledge, many questions have arisen about the relationship between the established scientific facts and the interpretations given by classical Qur'anic exegetes. These debates are not to be understood as a conflict between revelation and science but are about the relationship between empirically verified scientific knowledge and historically conditioned human interpretations of divine revelation. Thus, the issue is not whether the Qur'an contradicts science, but how the hermeneutical work of the legal tradition of Islam should proceed when modern scientific knowledge appears to be in conflict with the classical exegetical tradition.¹

The tradition of Islamic scholarship has been marked by rigorous methodological disciplines in the evolution of Qur'anic exegesis, particularly *uṣūl al-tafsīr* and *uṣūl al-fiqh*. Classical exegetes, such as al-Ḍabārī, al-Qurṭubī, Ibn Kathīr, al-Rāzī and al-Baghawī, interpreted the Qur'an according to established linguistic principles, Prophetic traditions, reports of the Companions, Arabic rhetoric and the empirical knowledge available in their historical contexts. Their accounts of cosmological, biological, geological, and astronomical phenomena reflected the science of their times, but made no claim to be complete scientific explanations. Thus, the Qur'an itself is the immutable divine revelation, while the classical exegetical positions are scholarly endeavours (*ijtihād*) that are authoritative but historically relative. Any modern engagement with the Qur'anic verses related to science must therefore distinguish between the permanent nature of revelation and the contextual nature of human interpretation.²

Modern scientific discoveries have greatly broadened the empirical knowledge of the natural world. Advances in genetics, embryology, cosmology, neurobiology, geology and similar fields have given scientific explanations for many natural phenomena mentioned in the Qur'an. These developments have led to two opposing methodological trends in contemporary Islamic scholarship. One tendency is to find evidence of scientific miracles (*ī' jāz 'ilmī*) in the Qur'ān in almost every modern scientific discovery, often forcing Qur'ānic meanings out of their linguistic and contextual limits. The other tendency denies almost all scientific reinterpretation, in order to preserve the authority of classical *tafsīr*. Both methods, however, are methodologically flawed. The first group often confuses scientific hypotheses with scientific facts. The second group often ignores the difference between the immutable text of the Qur'an and the historical context of exegetical interpretations. Both approaches fail to utilize the interpretive techniques that

¹ Faqiuddin Abdul Kodir et al., "Maqāṣid Cum-Mubādalāh Methodology of KUPI: Centering Women's Experiences in Islamic Law for Gender-Just Fiqh," *AL-IHKAM: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 19, no. 2 (2025): 519–45, <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-lhkam.v19i2.16617>.

² Massimo Campanini, "Qur'an and Science: A Hermeneutical Approach," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 7, no. 1 (2005): 48–63, <https://doi.org/10.3366/jqs.2005.7.1.48>.

have been developed within the Islamic legal tradition to resolve competing interpretations.³

From the point of view of Islamic legal hermeneutics, the relationship between scientific knowledge and classical Qur'anic exegesis is, above all, a methodological issue rather than a theological or scientific one. To this end, Islamic jurisprudence has evolved refined criteria for settling apparent contradictions among legal evidences by means of reconciliation (jam'), legal preference (tarjīh), contextual interpretation (siyāq), linguistic analysis (dalālah) and the consideration of the higher objectives of Islamic law (maqā'id al-sharī'ah). These principles offer an inclusive interpretative framework that can respond to the challenges of modern science without undermining the authority of revelation or the methodological integrity of Islamic scholarship. Therefore, scientific Qur'anic exegesis should be governed by hermeneutic rules and not scientific reductionism or interpretive rigidity.⁴

Studies in scientific exegesis (al-tafsīr al-'ilmī) have added to our knowledge about the relationship between revelation and science. In the existing studies, three categories have emerged. The first relates verses of the Qur'an to modern science in order to prove scientific miracles. The second criticises scientific exegesis, pointing to the dangers of interpreting Qur'anic verses in the light of evolving scientific theories. The third concerns Qur'anic hermeneutics, philosophy of interpretation, and Islamic epistemology. In spite of these important contributions, the existing studies have mostly either validated or criticised scientific interpretations rather than establishing a systematic legal-hermeneutical methodology to resolve conflicts between classical exegetical opinions and scientific facts.⁵

There is thus a large methodological gap in the existing literature. Contemporary scholarship rarely makes the distinction between apparent interpretive conflict (al-ta'ārūf al-āhirī), which results from the difference of semantic scope, contextual understanding, or historical knowledge, and genuine interpretive conflict (al-ta'ārūf al-aqīqī), in which competing interpretations cannot be both maintained within the same textual context. Similarly, little attention has been given to finding the appropriate methodological response to each category of conflict. Apparent conflicts are normally resolved by reconciliation (jam'), whereas real conflicts are resolved by legal preference (tarjih) according to the principles of uṣūl al-fiqh and uṣūl al-tafsīr. The important role of contextual analysis (siyāq) in determining the intended meaning of the scientifically related Qur'anic verses has not been adequately addressed systematically in the contemporary scholarship.

This study attempts to fill these methodological gaps by offering an inclusive legal-hermeneutical framework for aligning accepted scientific facts with classical

³ Arifah Millati Agustina and Nor Ismah, "Challenging Traditional Islamic Authority: Indonesian Female Ulama and the Fatwa Against Forced Marriages," *Journal of Islamic Law* 5, no. 1 (2024): 125-46, <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v5i1.2319>.

⁴ Muhammad Azam et al., "Contemporary Trade Governance and Cross-Border Data Flows: A Comparative Study of Shari'ah Principles and International Legal Frameworks," *MILRev: Metro Islamic Law Review* 5, no. 1 (2026): 686-721, <https://doi.org/10.32332/milrev.v5i1.13387>.

⁵ Ahmed Abdullah Muhammed Al Dhahli et al., "The Future of International Commercial Arbitration in Islamic Jurisdictions: Harmonizing Global Standards with Sharia Principles," *International Journal of Law and Social Sciences* 2, no. 2 (2026): 48-68, <https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.2.2.2026.17>.

Qur'anic exegesis. The framework starts with a distinction between apparent and genuine interpretive conflicts. Three hermeneutical relations of complementarity resolve apparent conflicts: semantic inclusion, where scientific knowledge includes earlier exegetical meanings without contradicting them; interpretive complementarity, where classical and scientific explanations highlight different aspects of the same Qur'anic expression; and interpretive compatibility, where the linguistic structure of the Qur'an allows for multiple legitimate meanings. Where reconciliation is not possible, the framework applies the principle of legal preference (*tarjīḥ*) based on objective criteria from the Islamic legal methodology, including textual evidence, linguistic authenticity, and, most importantly, contextual coherence (*siyāq*), to determine which interpretation is the closest to the intended meaning of the Qur'anic text.

The research novelty is the combination of the principles of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, *uṣūl al-tafsīr*, Arabic linguistic analysis, contextual interpretation and modern philosophy of science in one methodological model of scientifically related Qur'anic interpretation. In contrast to previous studies, which have been inclined to assess scientific exegesis from an apologetic or critical perspective, this study offers clear methodological criteria to determine when scientific knowledge should expand, complement, coexist with, or give way to the classical exegetical interpretations. The proposed framework offers a balanced model that maintains the authority of the Qur'an and the methodological integrity of empirical science by distinguishing between immutable revelation and historically conditioned interpretation, while also differentiating established scientific facts from provisional scientific theories.

Beyond its theoretical import, this framework has important implications for contemporary Islamic legal thought. As Muslim societies face a growing number of legal and ethical questions relating to biotechnology, artificial intelligence, environmental sustainability, reproductive medicine, genetics and other scientific advances, Islamic scholarship requires interpretive methodologies capable of incorporating reliable empirical knowledge without sacrificing the principles of revelation. This study thus demonstrates that sophisticated mechanisms for reconciliation and legal preference were already at work in classical Islamic legal hermeneutics, thereby reaffirming the continuing adaptability of the Islamic interpretive tradition and its capacity for constructive engagement with contemporary scientific knowledge.

Therefore, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What legal-hermeneutical principles should govern the relationship between established scientific facts and classical Qur'anic exegesis?
2. How can Islamic legal hermeneutics distinguish between apparent (*al-ta'āruḥ al-āhirī*) and genuine (*al-ta'āruḥ al-aqīqī*) interpretive conflicts?
3. Under what methodological conditions should reconciliation (*jam'*) or legal preference (*tarjīḥ*) be applied in resolving scientifically related interpretive disputes?
4. How can a coherent legal-hermeneutical framework facilitate constructive integration between classical tafsīr and contemporary scientific knowledge while preserving the linguistic, contextual, and juristic integrity of the Qur'anic text?

The Methodology for Resolving Conflicts Between Scientific Facts and the Interpretations of Early Qur'anic Exegetes

The study provides answers to these questions and builds a systematic methodological framework for contemporary Qur'anic studies, Islamic legal hermeneutics and interdisciplinary research on the relationship between revelation and empirical science.

Method

The analysis reveals that the relationship between the classical Qur'anic exegesis and the established scientific facts cannot be traced under one model of interpretation. Instead, the Qur'anic verses analyzed show two types of interpretive conflicts: apparent conflicts (al-ta' āru al-āhirī) and real conflicts (al-ta' āru al-aqīqī). This distinction is the main result of the study and is the basis of the proposed legal-hermeneutical framework.

The results show that most of the perceived inconsistencies are of the type of apparent conflict. In such cases both the classical exegetical interpretation and the modern scientific explanation are valid independently of one another, because they are in different epistemological and historical contexts. The apparent contradiction is not due to the Qur'anic text but to differences in the linguistic range, context, or the amount of scientific knowledge available to the earlier exegetes. Such cases are thus best resolved by the juristic principle of reconciliation (jam'), whereby both readings are retained, where linguistic and contextual evidence allows.

The analysis also identifies three distinct mechanisms through which reconciliation can be achieved. The first is called semantic inclusion (al-iṭwā') and occurs when the wider scientific explanation includes the classical interpretation without negating it. The second is interpretive complementarity (al-takāmul), where scientific knowledge and classical exegesis draw attention to different dimensions of the same Qur'anic phrase. Thirdly, interpretive compatibility (al-tawāfuq) is the semantic flexibility of the Qur'anic text that allows for a multiplicity of legitimate interpretations, so that classical and scientific exegeses can coexist without contradiction. Together, these three mechanisms offer a systematic way of resolving apparent interpretive conflicts without sacrificing the integrity of either revelation or empirically established scientific knowledge.

The analysis also indicates that real interpretive conflicts are comparatively infrequent. They arise only when the classical exegetical interpretation and the modern scientific explanation give mutually exclusive meanings to the same Qur'anic verse, making reconciliation methodologically impossible. In such a situation, Islamic legal hermeneutics requires the use of legal preference (tarjīh), rather than reconciliation. The findings show that contextual analysis (siyāq) is the main basis for choosing interpretive preference, supported by the textual proofs from the Qur'an and Sunnah, Arabic linguistic rules and accepted principles of uṣūl al-fiqh and uṣūl al-tafsīr. Though the other scientific explanation is valid within its own disciplinary framework, the immediate and wider Qur'anic context decidedly favours one interpretation over the other, the one must be preferred.

Perhaps the most important finding of the study is that context (siyāq) is the decisive methodological criterion in differentiating between apparent and genuine

conflicts and in deciding when reconciliation or legal preference should be applied. Thus, scientific knowledge must be a tool of interpretation to explain the empirical aspects of Qur'anic references, not an autonomous authority to re-determine the linguistic and contextual meaning of revelation.

The study suggests a legal-hermeneutic framework that combines these findings and consists of five consecutive analytical stages. First, the interpreter determines if the perceived conflict is apparent or real. Secondly, the relevant Qur'anic expressions are examined through linguistic and semantic analysis. Third, the contextual structure (*siyāq*) of the passage is examined to determine the intended scope of the verse. Fourth, where the conflict is overt, reconciliation (*jam'*) is accomplished through semantic inclusion, interpretive complementarity, or interpretive compatibility. Finally, if the reconciliation fails, the juristic preference (*tarjīḥ*) is applied on the basis of the established juristic criteria. The contextual coherence is the main criterion.

These findings show that Islamic legal hermeneutics has sufficient methodological flexibility to engage positively with contemporary scientific knowledge, while maintaining the authority of the Qur'an and the methodological integrity of the classical exegetical tradition. The framework suggests that science and revelation should not be seen as competing epistemological systems, but rather that a distinction is to be made between immutable divine revelation and historically conditioned human interpretation. The framework thus provides a coherent approach to integrating established scientific facts and classical Qur'anic exegesis. In this way, the study offers a systematic interpretive template that bolsters present-day Qur'anic studies, Islamic legal theory, and interdisciplinary work on the nexus between revelation and empirical science.

Methodological Framework for Reconciling Apparent Conflicts Between Scientific Facts and Classical Qur'anic Exegesis

A perceived conflict between scientific facts and classical Qur'anic exegetes' interpretations, having no true meaning disagreement, is an apparent conflict. Both the exegetical interpretation and the scientific finding may be valid within their epistemological contexts, but they appear incompatible at first. This seeming conflict generally stems from interpretive viewpoint, historical context, or scientific understanding at the time of interpretation, not from a Qur'anic textual contradiction. Therefore, the best method is to pursue a principled reconciliation that preserves the integrity of both revelation and established scientific knowledge.

This reconciliatory strategy can be created using three complementary interpretive approaches. The first approach views the classical exegetical interpretation as a part of modern scientific reality. Careful textual and contextual examination may show that the earlier interpretation, however based on its intellectual background, is compatible with a more comprehensive scientific knowledge. Therefore, the traditional interpretation may partially express a broader reality that later scientific discoveries have clarified.

In the second approach, modern science complements past exegetes' interpretations. According to this view, both readings represent unique but harmonious Qur'anic elements. In addition, each layer adds meaning, enriching the verse. Preservation of both readings is methodologically preferable to rejection when the Qur'anic text's linguistic structure and semantic breadth allow several meanings.

The third method recognises the Qur'anic text's semantic flexibility as supporting both scientific and conventional exegesis interpretations. These interpretations are

independent exegetical perspectives that are consistent with the revelation's language and goals, unlike the second approach. Recognising the presence of several interpretations is methodologically better than eliminating one without evidence because the Qur'anic language often accommodates numerous meanings.

These three interpretive techniques establish three links to reconcile apparent discrepancies between classical Qur'anic exegesis and scientific findings. They create a coherent hermeneutical framework which distinguishes apparent contradictions from genuine incompatibilities and allows contemporary scholarship to integrate scientific advances while preserving the Qur'anic text's and classical exegetical tradition's epistemological authority. The following sections detail each relationship.⁶

A Methodological Framework for Reconciling Apparent Conflicts Between Classical Qur'anic Exegesis and Established Scientific Facts

Using the epistemological distinction between divine revelation and human interpretation, apparent conflicts between scientific facts and classical Qur'anic exegetes are not necessarily contradictions. In many cases, the exegetical interpretation and scientific explanation are acceptable within their epistemic frameworks, but the observed discrepancy stems from historical context, scientific knowledge, or interpretive viewpoint. Thus, Islamic legal hermeneutics seeks to provide an interpretive system that preserves revelation and scientific knowledge. The principle of al-jam' wa al-tawfiq (reconciliation and harmonization) has been used in uṣūl al-tafsīr and uṣūl al-fiqh to resolve inconsistencies between scriptural texts, legal evidence, and juristic opinions before resorting to preference (tarjīḥ) or rejection. This principle applies to classical Qur'anic exegesis and scientific knowledge, providing a coherent method for addressing verses about natural phenomena without compromising revelation or science. These findings suggest that conflicts can be resolved through three complementing hermeneutical relationships: inclusion (al-iṭiwā'), complementarity (al-takāmul), and compatibility (al-tawāfuq). Instead of reinterpreting the Qur'an according to changing scientific theories, these relationships provide methodological principles for reassessing earlier human interpretations when reliable scientific evidence improves our understanding of natural phenomena mentioned in the Qur'an.⁷

The Relationship of Inclusion (Al-Iṭiwā')

The first relationship is based on the semantic inclusion, in which the meaning proposed by classical exegetes is included in the broader scientific explanation without invalidating it. In this approach the traditional interpretation is a legitimate part of a wider empirical reality that is subsequently made clear through scientific inquiry. Rather than seeing the classical interpretation as wrong, it is seen as a sign of the limits of scientific knowledge available at the time, but it is consistent with the essential meaning of the Qur'anic text. Methodologically this relation presupposes that scientific discoveries can enlarge the descriptive scope of an exegetical interpretation despite altering the linguistic indication (dalālah) or theological message of the verse. The classical explanation thus becomes one constituent element in a more comprehensive scientific understanding. In

⁶ Dr. Adam Amer Jihad, "Maqāsid al-Sharī'ah and Citizenship Values: Advancing Intellectual Security and Social Sustainability in Islamic Thought," *Global Islamic Research Journal* 2, no. 2 (2026): 33–66, <https://doi.org/10.65960/girj.2.2.2026.17>.

⁷ Bagus Khusfi Satyo, S.H., M.Kn. and Bagus Agung Yuda Prasetyo, S.H., M.Kn, "Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Human Rights: Legal Accountability for Algorithmic Decision-Making in Democratic Societies," *International Journal of Law and Social Sciences* 2, no. 1 (2026): 54–74, <https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.2.1.2026.12>.

this sense, then, scientific knowledge is not corrective of revelation but interpretive of it, enriching human understanding of the created world described by the Qur'an.⁸

The Relationship of Complementarity (Al-Takāmul)

The second relationship is that of complementarity in which the scientific explanation and the classical exegetical interpretation deal with different dimensions of the same Qur'anic expression. Each interpretation has its own independent validity, and adds a richness of understanding to the verse in general. The two commentaries are not mutually exclusive as each one sheds light on a different aspect of the Qur'anic discourse. This approach demonstrates the semantic richness of the Qur'an and its ability to incorporate multiple valid interpretations as long as they are linguistically and contextually legitimate, within the framework of Islamic legal hermeneutics. Hence scientific knowledge can account for the empirical mechanisms of a phenomenon, whereas classical exegesis can stress its theological, moral or existential significance. The presence of these dimensions of interpretation does not weaken but rather strengthens the coherence of Qur'anic interpretation.⁹

The Relationship of Compatibility (Al-Tawāfuq)

A third relationship admits the validity of several independent interpretations of the Qur'anic text, each supported by the semantic elasticity of the language without necessarily completing each other. Here both the scientific explanation and the classical interpretation are still possible ways of understanding it, for the wording of the verse allows for more than one meaning. This is consistent with a known principle in uṣūl al-tafsīr which states that when the Qur'ān admits a number of linguistically valid interpretations and there is no clear evidence to exclude any of them, all of them may be accepted. Thus present scientific discoveries can be one possible interpretive option amongst other exegetical views of earlier times and neither one of the two has to necessarily rule out the other. This approach retains the linguistic openness of the Qur'an without being subjected to undue methodological rigidity.¹⁰

Implications for Islamic Legal Hermeneutics

Each of these three hermeneutical relationships constitute a systematic methodology for resolving the apparent conflict between classical Qur'anic exegesis and established scientific facts. Instead of positing revelation and science as competing authorities of knowledge, the framework differentiates between revelation as unchanging and human interpretation as historically conditioned. Thus, scientific discoveries serve to better understand the empirical content of Qur'anic references, but they are subordinate to linguistic, contextual and legal principles that define the process of Qur'anic interpretation. This methodology further protects Islamic scholarship against two methodological extremes. On the one hand, it denies the scientific reductionism which

⁸ Hafiz Ali Hassan et al., "Defending the Prophetic Sunnah in the Modern Age: Contemporary Muslim Scholarly Responses to Hadith Skepticism-," *Global Islamic Research Journal* 2, no. 1 (2026): 96–109, <https://doi.org/10.65960/girj.2.1.2026.12>.

⁹ Mohammad Ahyar Yusuf Sya'bani, "Interpretation of Hermeneutics and Religious Normativity: Hermeneutic Approach in Scientific Studies in the Islamic World," *IJISH (International Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities)* 2, no. 1 (2019): 11–21, <https://doi.org/10.26555/ijish.v2i1.535>.

¹⁰ Burhan Alsyuf, "Knowledge, Power, and Society in Islamic Civilization: Historical Perspectives on Muslim Intellectual Traditions-," *Global Islamic Research Journal* 2, no. 2 (2026): 19–32, <https://doi.org/10.65960/girj.2.2.2026.13>.

tries to reinterpret each verse of the Qur'an in the light of the current scientific paradigms. On the other hand, it does not fall into interpretative rigidity, recognising that classical exegetical opinions are authoritative and invaluable, but are still the products of human reasoning and can be revisited when trustworthy scientific evidence increases the understanding of natural phenomena, described in the Qur'an. Reconciliation should therefore be seen not as a trade-off between faith and science but as an application of known Islamic hermeneutic principles which preserve the authority of revelation while allowing for legitimate development in human interpretation.¹¹

Resolving Genuine Conflicts: The Principle of Legal Preference (*Tarjīḥ*) in Islamic Legal Hermeneutics

Most problems between classical Qur'anic exegesis and scientific knowledge can be resolved through semantic inclusion, complementarity, or interpretive compatibility, but a few circumstances present a greater hermeneutical difficulty. The classical exegetical opinion and the contemporary scientific interpretation seem mutually exclusive, making simultaneous application to the same Qur'anic expression methodologically untenable. In cases of genuine interpretive conflict (*al-ta'āruḥ al-aqīqī*), Islamic legal theory suggests applying established principles of legal preference (*tarjīḥ*) instead of reconciliation (*jam'*).

Four theoretical options are possible from an epistemic perspective. One assumes the classical exegetical interpretation is valid and the scientific explanation is wrong. When scientific conclusions are based on empirical facts rather than theories, this possibility is usually eliminated. The second assumes the scientific explanation is correct and the classical interpretation is invalid. This option is also problematic as classical tafsīr is based on *uṣūl al-tafsīr* principles and represents disciplined scholarly reasoning. A third possibility is that both interpretations are wrong, but this seems unlikely since each was established using sound methodological procedures within its own epistemological framework. The most likely explanation is that both meanings are correct, but each belongs to a separate interpretive context, making their simultaneous application to the same passage impossible. In such cases, competing interpretations of a single textual context cause the apparent contradiction, not revelation or science.¹²

This study argues that the principal source of genuine interpretative dispute is the difference in context (*siyāq*). Classical exegetes and modern scientists may place the same Qur'anic verse in different contexts. One reading ties the passage to eschatological events; the other, to present natural phenomena. This may be internally consistent, but it cannot give the original meaning of the verse, where the context allows only one interpretation. Context is the ultimate test for genuine disagreements. Where reconciliation is not possible, Islamic legal hermeneutics prefers legal preference (*tarjīḥ*). Unlike random selection, *Tarjīḥ* is based on established legal principles derived from *fiqh* and *tafsīr*. Preference is not a matter of personal opinion or intellectual fashion but of objective evidence. These characteristics are described by three main groups. The

¹¹ Muhammad Bilal Zafar and Hassnain Ali, "Shariah Governance Standard on Generative AI for Islamic Financial Institutions," preprint, SSRN, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5143165>.

¹² Yüksel Akay Ünvan and Hala Alsokhni, "The Evolution of Artificial Intelligence Research in Finance: A Bibliometric Analysis of Trends and Future Directions," *Finance Research Open* 2, no. 1 (2026): 100083, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fnr.2025.100083>.

first is textual evidence from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Explanations that are backed by authentic prophetic traditions, Qur'anic verses, or scholarly consensus (ijmā') are more authoritative than divergent interpretations. Interpretation of unseen realities (ghayb) should be based on facts, not on conjecture. The second is the Linguistic and semantic principles. And any interpretation must be consistent with the lexicon, grammar, rhetoric and usage of Classical Arabic. Even if they seem plausible from the outside, interpretations of the Qur'anic language beyond its semantic capacity, or based on unusual or untested linguistic alternatives are not supported. Keep the apparent meaning of the text unless there is strong evidence for an alternative interpretation.¹³

The third and most important category is contextual coherence (siyāq). The classical Islamic scholarship considers context a key determinant of meaning. Thus, an interpretation must match the preceding and following verses, the passage's theme, and the Qur'anic discourse's goals. Interpretations reinforced by contextual indicators are more hermeneutical than those that separate utterances from their literary context.¹⁴

In verses related to scientific interpretation, contextual preference is especially important. Some interpret Qur'anic descriptions of mountains moving "like clouds" (Q. 27:88) as Earth's rotation. In their immediate context, the verses describe the Day of Resurrection rather than terrestrial phenomena. Therefore, contextual continuity strongly favors the classical view that the verse alludes to eschatological events. This conclusion does not deny the scientific reality of Earth's motion, but it suggests that a verse about the Hereafter should not be used to derive it.¹⁵

The interpretation of verses about postmortem decomposition follows a similar pattern. Contemporary scientific observations on biological preservation or embryological structures may be valid, but they should not replace interpretations that better reflect the Qur'anic passage's linguistic meaning and context. Scientific knowledge can illuminate relevant factual processes, but it should not be applied to verses about divine omniscience, resurrection, or eschatological accountability.¹⁶

The principle of tarjīḥ shows that Islamic legal hermeneutics does not blindly accept all scientific interpretations or adhere to all classical exegetical opinions. It aims to identify which interpretation best meets the Qur'anic text's grammatical, contextual, and evidential requirements. Scientific facts are valuable sources of factual knowledge, but they assist interpreters rather than redefining revelation. Even if the scientific explanation is correct within its own academic domain, the classical interpretation should be kept if contextual evidence strongly supports it. Reconciliation is better than preference when contextual analysis allows multiple interpretations. Thus, Islamic legal

¹³ Nik Abdul Rahim Nik Abdul Ghani et al., *Stock Scalping and Shariah Legitimacy in Modern Capital Markets*, January 24, 2026, <https://doi.org/10.5281/ZENODO.18357939>.

¹⁴ Muhammad Ilyas Ab Razak and Nur Akma Mohd Dali, "The Key Challenges of Islamic Fintech Implementation in Malaysia," *Journal of Central Banking Law and Institutions* 5, no. 1 (2026): 153–74, <https://doi.org/10.21098/jcli.v5i1.270>.

¹⁵ Prof. Dr. Abdulqader Mustafa Abdulrazaq, "Types and Categories of Tadrīs: A Theoretical Analysis of Classical Works on Hadith Methodology," *Global Islamic Research Journal* 2, no. 2 (2026): 67–93, <https://doi.org/10.65960/girj.2.2.2026.16>.

¹⁶ Mustafa j. Hussein, "COVID-19 and International Relations Theory: A Comparative Analysis of Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism," *International Journal of Law and Social Sciences* 2, no. 1 (2026): 42–53, <https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.2.1.2026.13>.

hermeneutics upholds revelation and empirical science while maintaining methodological consistency across interpretive contexts.¹⁷

Classification of Interpretive Conflicts

The analysis shows that the relationship between classical Qur'anic exegesis and established scientific facts can be most convincingly explained by making a distinction between apparent contradictions (al-ta'ārū al-āhirī) and real contradictions (al-ta'ārū al-aqīqī). The majority of the scientifically relevant verses discussed in this study belong to the category of apparent conflict. The differences are based on historical scientific knowledge, linguistic scope or contextual interpretation, and not a contradiction between revelation and empirical reality. Real conflicts are rare and only occur when competing interpretations cannot be upheld concurrently in the same textual context. This distinction is the methodological basis for the choice of the appropriate interpretive approach.¹⁸

Legal-Hermeneutical Mechanisms for Conflict Resolution

The results suggest that reconciliation (jam') is the primary methodological answer to apparent conflicts. The analysis yielded three complementary mechanisms. The first is semantic inclusion (al-iṭiwā'), where scientific knowledge adds to the classical reading, without cancelling it. The second is interpretive complementarity (al-takāmul), where the scientific and classical explanations illuminate different dimensions of the same verse. The third is interpretive compatibility (al-tawāfuq), where the Qur'anic text legitimately harbours multiple meanings. If reconciliation is not possible, legal preference (tarjīḥ) is necessary and it is based on contextual coherence (siyāq), linguistic authenticity, textual evidence, and the established principles of uḥūl al-fiqh and uḥūl al-tafsīr.¹⁹

Implications for Contemporary Islamic Legal Hermeneutics

Islamic legal hermeneutics has the methodological flexibility to productively deal with present scientific knowledge while safeguarding the Qur'an's authority and the classical exegetical tradition. The framework provides a systematic way for scientifically connected Qur'anic interpretation by distinguishing immutable revelation from historically conditioned human interpretation and proven scientific facts from provisional scientific speculations. The contemporary Qur'anic studies, Islamic legal theory, and multidisciplinary study benefit from this balanced engagement between revelation and empirical science through juristic principles rather than methodological extremes.²⁰

¹⁷ Muhammad Azam et al., "Contemporary Trade Governance and Cross-Border Data Flows: A Comparative Study of Shari'ah Principles and International Legal Frameworks," *MILRev: Metro Islamic Law Review* 5, no. 1 (2026): 686–721, <https://doi.org/10.32332/milrev.v5i1.13387>.

¹⁸ Ali Masyhar et al., "The Protection Policies on Predatory Digital Credit Traps Students: Lessons from Indonesia," *Journal of Human Rights, Culture and Legal System* 6, no. 1 (2026): 254–84, <https://doi.org/10.53955/jhcls.v6i1.862>.

¹⁹ Abdul Mustafa Azhari et al., "Global Transformations in Law, Justice, and Society: Comparative Perspectives on Governance, Rights, and Legal Reform," *International Journal of Law and Social Sciences* 1, no. 1 (2025): 60–90, <https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.1.1.2025.7>.

²⁰ Humayun Akram et al., "The Interplay of Islamic Ideology and Political Authority in Pakistan's Constitutional Framework (1947-1988)," *Journal of Political Stability Archive* 3, no. 2 (2025): 368–78, <https://doi.org/10.63468/jpsa.3.2.21>.

Conclusion

The current study explores the relationship between the classical interpretation of the Qur'an and the established scientific facts from the perspective of the Islamic legal hermeneutics, and proposes a systematic framework to address the interpretative conflicts. The analysis reveals that the relationship of classical and contemporary scientific interpretations is mainly one of compatibility and integration rather than contradiction. In most cases, the apparent tension arises from disparities in historical context, linguistic interpretation, and the progression of empirical understanding, rather than from any contradiction between the Qur'an and proven scientific facts. The results also show that classical Muslim exegetes, despite the scientific limitations of their historical contexts, often produced interpretations that remain remarkably consistent with contemporary scientific knowledge when examined via established principles of *uṣūl al-tafsīr*, contextual analysis (*siyāq*), and Arabic linguistic interpretation. This shows the classical exegetical tradition's methodological strength and ability to accept empirical understandings without compromising the Qur'anic text.

This study highlights the importance of prioritising reconciliation (*jam'*) over rejection when the Qur'anic text allows for multiple interpretations. The proposed framework uses semantic inclusion, interpretive complementarity, and interpretive compatibility to reconcile classical exegetical opinions and scientific facts within a coherent legal-hermeneutical methodology. This shows Qur'anic language's semantic diversity and ability to communicate many meanings.

Finally, the study concludes that scientific advancement should not automatically determine interpretive preference in cases of genuine conflict. When reconciliation is not possible methodologically, legal preference (*tarjīḥ*) shall be applied in accord with established principles of Islamic legal methodology; contextual coherence (*siyāq*) being the primary criterion for discerning the intended meaning of the Qur'anic text. So, while the scientific explanation is valid as far as it goes, in its own empirical domain, a classical exegetical interpretation may still be preferable where it more accurately captures the linguistic and contextual structure of the verse.

The legal-hermeneutical framework balances scientific knowledge with classical Islamic interpretation. Contemporary Qur'anic studies, Islamic legal theory, and the dialogue between religion and science benefit from showing that methodological rigour, not scientific reductionism or interpretive rigidity, is the most coherent approach to scientifically related Qur'anic interpretation. Future research may apply this approach to other Qur'anic texts and new scientific fields, strengthening Islamic legal hermeneutics' role in addressing intellectual and ethical issues.

Acknowledgement

.....

AI Usage Statement

Idea generation, substantive analysis, data interpretation, and scholarly conclusions were not performed with AI. According to ethical standards in academic publishing, the author is responsible for the content's originality, accuracy, and academic integrity, and AI tools are not acknowledged as authors or contributors.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that this article has no conflict of interest.

References

Ab Razak, Muhammad Ilyas, and Nur Akma Mohd Dali. "The Key Challenges of Islamic Fintech Implementation in Malaysia." *Journal of Central Banking Law and Institutions* 5, no. 1 (2026): 153–74. <https://doi.org/10.21098/jcli.v5i1.270>.

Abdul Kodir, Faqiuddin, Nor Ismah, Samia Kotele, Wakhit Hasyim, and Fadzila Din. "Maqā'id Cum-Mubādalah Methodology of KUPI: Centering Women's Experiences in Islamic Law for Gender-Just Fiqh." *AL-IHKAM: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 19, no. 2 (2025): 519–45. <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-Ihkam.v19i2.16617>.

Abdul Mustafa Azhari, Samiullah Azhari, and Dr. Muhammad Idrees Yaqooq. "Global Transformations in Law, Justice, and Society: Comparative Perspectives on Governance, Rights, and Legal Reform." *International Journal of Law and Social Sciences* 1, no. 1 (2025): 60–90. <https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.1.1.2025.7>.

Agustina, Arifah Millati, and Nor Ismah. "Challenging Traditional Islamic Authority: Indonesian Female Ulama and the Fatwa Against Forced Marriages." *Journal of Islamic Law* 5, no. 1 (2024): 125–46. <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v5i1.2319>.

Ahmed Abdullah Muhammed Al Dhahli, Meshari Al Daihani, and Fadillah Bt Mansor. "The Future of International Commercial Arbitration in Islamic Jurisdictions: Harmonizing Global Standards with Sharia Principles." *International Journal of Law and Social Sciences* 2, no. 2 (2026): 48–68. <https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.2.2.2026.17>.

Akram, Humayun, Khizar Hayat, and Wajid Ali. "The Interplay of Islamic Ideology and Political Authority in Pakistan's Constitutional Framework (1947-1988)." *Journal of Political Stability Archive* 3, no. 2 (2025): 368–78. <https://doi.org/10.63468/jpsa.3.2.21>.

Al-Fatih, Sholahuddin, Putri Shafarina Thahir, Nafik Muthohirin, and Norhasliza Ghapa. "Artificial Intelligence in Indonesia's Financial Sector: Regulatory and Islamic Law Perspectives." *Justicia Islamica* 22, no. 2 (2025): 303–26. <https://doi.org/10.21154/justicia.v22i2.10479>.

Azam, Muhammad, Abdullah Abdul-Majeed Hamdoun, Eid Abed Alhaleem Maslat Harahsheh, Anis Mashdurohatun, and Hamonangan Parsaulian Sidaauruk. "Religious Diversity in the Digital Economy: Interfaith Legal Pathways to Harmonize Sharia, Christian Ethics, and International Law." *Contemporary Issues on Interfaith Law and Society* 4, no. 2 (2025): 207–64. <https://doi.org/10.15294/ciils.v4i2.33011>.

Azam, Muhammad, Saleh Hashem Al-Farjani, Anis Mashdurohatun, Atta Elsonbaty, and Mohammed Abdullah Salman. "E-Contract Withdrawal Rights in E-Commerce: A Comparative Analysis of the Egyptian Consumer Protection Law and Islamic Jurisprudential Perspectives." *Ulul Albab: Jurnal Studi Dan Penelitian Hukum Islam* 8, no. 2 (2025): 215. <https://doi.org/10.30659/jua.v8i2.44766>.

Bagus Khusfi Satyo, S.H., M.Kn. and Bagus Agung Yuda Prasetyo, S.H., M.Kn. "Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Human Rights: Legal Accountability for Algorithmic Decision-Making in Democratic Societies." *International Journal of Law and Social Sciences* 2, no. 1 (2026): 54–74. <https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.2.1.2026.12>.

Burhan Alsyouf. "Knowledge, Power, and Society in Islamic Civilization: Historical Perspectives on Muslim Intellectual Traditions." *Global Islamic Research Journal* 2, no. 2 (2026): 19–32. <https://doi.org/10.65960/girj.2.2.2026.13>.

Campanini, Massimo. "Qur'an and Science: A Hermeneutical Approach." *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 7, no. 1 (2005): 48–63. <https://doi.org/10.3366/jqs.2005.7.1.48>.

Dr. Adam Amer Jihad. "Maqāḍid al-Sharī'ah and Citizenship Values: Advancing Intellectual Security and Social Sustainability in Islamic Thought." *Global Islamic Research Journal* 2, no. 2 (2026): 33–66. <https://doi.org/10.65960/girj.2.2.2026.17>.

Faheem Ullah Al Azhari and Sajid Iqbal Al Azhari. "Contemporary Challenges in Harmonizing Sharia, National Legal Systems, and International Law in a Rapidly Changing World." *International Journal of Law and Social Sciences* 1, no. 1 (2025): 130–50. <https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.1.1.2025.4>.

Firas Yasin Alwan and Imad Yassin Lilo. "Defending Religious Tradition in Modern Times: Comparative Responses of Muslim and Christian Scholars to Scriptural Criticism." *Global Islamic Research Journal* 2, no. 1 (2026): 18–35. <https://doi.org/10.65960/girj.2.1.2026.11>.

Hafiz Ali Hassan, Fatihunnada F, and Muhammad Fauzinudin Faiz. "Defending the Prophetic Sunnah in the Modern Age: Contemporary Muslim Scholarly Responses to Hadith Skepticism-." *Global Islamic Research Journal* 2, no. 1 (2026): 96–109. <https://doi.org/10.65960/girj.2.1.2026.12>.

Masyhar, Ali, Pupung Purnawarman, Nunung Suryati, Sri Setyarini, and Muhammad Azam. "The Protection Policies on Predatory Digital Credit Traps Students: Lessons from Indonesia." *Journal of Human Rights, Culture and Legal System* 6, no. 1 (2026): 254–84. <https://doi.org/10.53955/jhcls.v6i1.862>.

Muhammad Azam, Naji Mohammad Alwreikat, Burhan Alsyouf, Abdel Salam Atwa Ali Al Fandi, and Rawdah Abdul Karim Mohammad Pharaon. "Contemporary Trade Governance and Cross-Border Data Flows: A Comparative Study of Sharī'ah Principles and International Legal Frameworks." *MILRev: Metro Islamic Law Review* 5, no. 1 (2026): 686–721. <https://doi.org/10.32332/milrev.v5i1.13387>.

Muhammad Azam, Naji Mohammad Alwreikat, Burhan Alsyouf, Abdel Salam Atwa Ali Al Fandi, and Rawdah Abdul Karim Mohammad Pharaon. "Contemporary Trade Governance and Cross-Border Data Flows: A Comparative Study of Sharī'ah Principles and International Legal Frameworks." *MILRev: Metro Islamic Law Review* 5, no. 1 (2026): 686–721. <https://doi.org/10.32332/milrev.v5i1.13387>.

Muhammad Talha Aziz, Iskandar, and Prof.dr.Amron. "Sustainable Trade Governance in the Muslim World: Harmonizing International Commercial Law with Sharia Economic Principles." *Global Islamic Research Journal* 2, no. 2 (2026): 01–18. <https://doi.org/10.65960/girj.2.1.2026.14>.

Mujiono and Carrel Ticualu. "Emerging Trends in Law and Social Sciences: Global Perspectives on Policy, Ethics, Justice, and Institutional Reform." *International Journal of*

Law and Social Sciences 1, no. 1 (2025): 40–60. <https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.1.1.2025.6>.

Mujiono, Carrel Ticualu, Kholid Mawardi, Slamet Riyadi, and Bagus Zuhri. "Islamic Law and Campus Governance Against Drug Abuse: Preventive Strategies and Restorative Rehabilitation in Indonesian Universities." *Global Islamic Research Journal* 1, no. 1 (2025): 43–58. <https://doi.org/10.65960/girj.1.1.2025.4>.

Mustafa j.Hussein. "COVID-19 and International Relations Theory: A Comparative Analysis of Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism." *International Journal of Law and Social Sciences* 2, no. 1 (2026): 42–53. <https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.2.1.2026.13>.

Nassery, Idris, and Muna Tatari. *Dynamics of Tradition: Islamic Theology and Law in Relation*. BRILL, 2026. <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004746886>.

Nik Abdul Rahim Nik Abdul Ghani, Hanafi Nazri, and Nurul Asikin Binti Abdul Razak. *Stock Scalping and Shariah Legitimacy in Modern Capital Markets*. January 24, 2026. <https://doi.org/10.5281/ZENODO.18357939>.

Nuzul Fitriansyah. "Literary *Tafsīr* and Qur'anic Narratives: Muḥammad Aḥmad Khalafullāh and A.H. Johns in Comparative Perspective." *Basmala: Journal of Qur'an and Hadith* 1, no. 2 (2025): 115–39. <https://doi.org/10.24260/basmala.1.2.123>.

Prof.Dr. Abdulqader Mustafa Abdulrazaq. "Types and Categories of Tadlīs: A Theoretical Analysis of Classical Works on Hadith Methodology." *Global Islamic Research Journal* 2, no. 2 (2026): 67–93. <https://doi.org/10.65960/girj.2.2.2026.16>.

Saleh Hashem Al-Farjani, Tanveer Ahmad, and Dr Hafiz Ahmed Saeed Rana. "Digital Innovation, Legal Reform, and Social Justice: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Law, Technology, and Human Rights." *International Journal of Law and Social Sciences* 1, no. 1 (2025): 91–129. <https://doi.org/10.65960/ijlss.1.1.2025.5>.

Sya'bani, Mohammad Ahyar Yusuf. "Interpretation of Hermeneutics and Religious Normativity: Hermeneutic Approach in Scientific Studies in the Islamic World." *IJISH (International Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities)* 2, no. 1 (2019): 11–21. <https://doi.org/10.26555/ijish.v2i1.535>.

Ünvan, Yüksel Akay, and Hala Alsokhni. "The Evolution of Artificial Intelligence Research in Finance: A Bibliometric Analysis of Trends and Future Directions." *Finance Research Open* 2, no. 1 (2026): 100083. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.finr.2025.100083>.

Zafar, Muhammad Bilal, and Hassnian Ali. "Shariah Governance Standard on Generative AI for Islamic Financial Institutions." Preprint, SSRN, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5143165>.