

From Adam to the End of Days: A Comparison of Bible and Quran

POL 4090

T-Th 1030-1150, Hatcher 026

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Stubbs 202, socially-distanced office hours by appointment in front of Quad Plaza Fountain

Goals and Learning Objectives

Everybody who knows the Bible is already familiar with many themes of the Quran, and vice-versa. These marked similarities in subject matter should make it somewhat easier for adherents of the three monotheistic faiths to talk to one another. In this course, we study a wide variety of themes in the Quran in light of their Biblical precedents. Every session will focus on one of the themes, beginning with Creation and concluding with the Apocalypse. We will make modest use of the Muslim exegetical tradition, to the extent that it can be accessed in English (for example, www.altafsir.com, along with the commentary in the Study Quran).

The rigorously comparative focus on the class is designed to deepen analytic skills and encourage cross-cultural appreciation. Since the three monotheistic religions and the tensions between them continue to play an enormous role in domestic and international politics, it will deepen our understanding of current events and hopefully foster constructive interaction between the different religious communities.

Required Texts: Bible (use the edition of your choice) and Quran (Study Quran). If you can read in the original languages please do so: I will refer to them sparingly in class. Other materials will be provided in class.

Syllabus:

Jan. 12: Introduction

Quran: Surah 1 (all)

We will devote much of this session to introducing the subject, goals, and expectations of the class.

Jan. 14: Creation

Bible: Genesis Ch. 1-2 (all)

Quran: Surah 2.30-33, 3.59-60, 6.1-2, 7.54, 10.3-6, 11.7, 16.3-8, 22.5, 30.20-22, 36.36-40, 42.9-12, 49.13, 53.45-47, 96.1-2

Jan. 19: The Fall

Bible: Genesis 2.16-17, 2.25, 3 (all)

Quran: 2.34-39, 3.33-34, 7.11-31, 15.28-43, 18.50-51, 20.116-124

Jan. 21: Cain, Noah, and the Disobedience of Antediluvian Man

Bible: Genesis 4 (all), 5.29-32, 6.1-12

Quran: 5:27-34, 7.59-63, 10.71-72, 11.25-35, 23.23-25, 26.105-18, 54.9-10, 71.1-25

Jan. 26: The Flood

Bible: Genesis 6.13-22, 7-9 (all)

Quran: 7.64, 10.70-73, 11.36-48, 23.26-30, 26.119-21, 54.11-16, 71.25-28

Jan. 28: Human Dispersion Across the Earth

Bible: Genesis 10-11 (all)

Quran: 2.213, 5.48, 10.19, 11.118, 16.93, 22.34, 67, 30.22, 42.8, 43.33-35, 49.13

Feb. 2: Abraham/Ibrahim

Bible: Genesis 12-13 (all), 15.7-20, 24.1-9, 25.1-11

Quran: 2.124, 130-41, 258-60, 3.65-71, 95-97, 6.74-83, 9.113-14, 14.35-41, 16.120-24, 19.41-48, 21.51-71, 22.26-33, 37.83-99

Feb. 4: Isaac and Ishmail

Bible: Genesis 15.1-6, 16-17 (all), 18.1-15, 21.1-21, 22 (all)

Quran: 2.125-29, 11.69-75, 14.39, 19.49-50, 54-55, 21.72-74, 85, 37.100-113

Honorable Mention: Lot/Lut

Bible: Genesis 13.1-13, 18.15-19.38

Quran: 7.80-84, 11.76-83, 15.51-79, 29.31-35, 51.24-37

(We will not cover this in class).

Note: Rachel, Rebecca, Esau, Laban, and all the memorable events of Jacob's youth do not appear in the Quran.

Feb. 9: Joseph/Yusuf with his father and brothers

Bible: Genesis 30.1-24, 35.16-29, 37 (all)

Quran: 12.1-22, cf. 2.132-33, 136, 3.84, 6.84, 19.6, 19.49, 40.34

Feb. 11: Joseph/Yusuf in Egypt

Bible: Genesis 39-41 (all), 47.12-27

Quran: 12.22-58

Feb. 16-18: Mardi Gras Winter Break

Feb. 23: The Family Reunion

Bible: Genesis 42-46 (all), 47.1-11, 28-31, 50 (all)

Quran: 12.59-103

Feb. 25: Moses/Musa Grows Up

Bible: Exodus 1.8-4 (all)

Quran: 20.9-48, 27.7-12, 28.3-35, 79.15-18

Mar. 2: Moses/Musa with Pharaoh

Bible: Exodus 5-10

Quran: 7.103-35, 10.75-89, 20.43-76, 26.10-51, 28.36-39, 40.23-37, 43.46-54

Mar. 4: Departure from Egypt and the Final Punishment of the Egyptians

Bible: Exodus 11-14, 15.1-21

Quran: 7.136-37, 8.54, 10.90-92, 17.101-103, 20.77-79, 26.52-68, 28.40-42, 40.45-49, 43.51-57, 44.17-31, 79.17-26

Mar. 9: Disobedience in the Desert

Bible: Exodus, 15.22-17.8, 32-34 (all), Numbers 13-14 (all), 20.1-13

Quran: 2.47-61, 4.153-55, 5.20-26, 6.91, 7.138-71, 10.93, 28.43-50

Note: The last three books of the Torah are represented only sparingly in the Quran.

Mar. 11: The Character and Scope of the Religious Community

Bible: Genesis 17.1-16, Exodus, 1.1-7, 19-20, Deuteronomy 6

Quran: 2.127-130, 2.142-43, 3.104-110, 10.47-49, 16.36-37, 16.89, 21.87-92, 23.44-54

Mar. 16: Justice and Crime

Bible: Exodus 21-22, Leviticus 19, 24.17-22, Deuteronomy 16.18-20, 24.10-21

Quran: 2.178-79, 2.274-81, 4.92-93, 5.32-40, 5.45, 17.31-35, 24.1-10

Mar. 18: Laws about Marriage and Inheritance

Bible: Genesis, 2.23-24, Exodus 22.15-16, Numbers 5.11-31, 27.1-11 Deuteronomy, 21.15-21, 22.13-29, 24.1-5

Quran: 2.180-82, 2.221-42, 4.1-41, 4.128-30, 4.176, 5.106-8

Note: The Books of Joshua and Judges leave very little trace in the Quran.

Mar. 23: Saul/Talut and David/Daoud

Bible: 1 Samuel 8 (all), 10 (all), 16-17 (all), 2 Samuel 11-12 (all)

Quran: 2.247-51, 4.163, 5.78, 6.84, 17.55, 21.78-80, 27.15-16, 34.10-11, 38.17-26

Note: The Quran makes no mention of the succession struggle between Adonijah and Solomon (see 1 Kings 1-2)

Mar. 25: Solomon/Suleiman

Bible: 1 Kings 3 (all) 5 (all), 10.1-13, 11 (all)

Quran, 2.100-103, 21.78-82, 27.15-44, 34.12-17, 38.30-39

Honorable Mention: Jonah/Yunis, Job/Ayyub, and Enoch/Idris

Bible: Genesis, 5.21-24, Jonah (all), Job (all)

Quran, 4.163, 6.86, 10.98, 19.56-57, 21.83-86, 87-89, 37.139-48, 68.48-50

(We will not cover this in class).

Note: The other prophets and kings do not figure in the Quran

Mar. 30: War and Jihad

Bible: Exodus 17.8-16, Numbers 31, Deuteronomy 20, I Samuel 15

Quran: 2.190-95, 2.217-18, 2.256, 4.71-76, 4.94-96, 8.38-41, 8.70-75, 9.1-29, 22.40, 78

Note: The Quran makes selective but significant use of the New Testament. I have attempted to identify the main passages and themes.

Apr. 1: Zakaria, Mary, and the Birth of John and Jesus

Bible: Matthew 1.18-23, 2.1-23, Luke 1 (all), 2.1-23

Quran: 3.42-49, 19.1-39, 20.89-91, 23.50

Apr. 6: Jesus's Life and Teaching

Bible: Matthew 4.1-11, 9.27-31 Mark 1.40-45, 6.31-44, Luke 5.12-16, 11.15-21, John 11 (all)

Quran: 3.49-54, 5.109-15, 43.57-67

Apr. 8: Jesus's Death and Resurrection

Bible: Matthew 26-28, John 18-20

Quran: 3.55, 4.155-59 (cf. 19.56-57), 5.117, 19.33

Apr. 13: Trinity and Tawhid

Bible: Matthew 3.16-17, 28.16-20, Luke 3.21-23, John 14.25-30, 15.23-27, Ephesians 2.18-20

Quran: 2.116-17, 4.171-72, 5.17-19, 5.72-75, 5.116-120, 6.100-01, 9.30-31, 10.68-70, 19.35, 19.88-95, 23.91, 37.149-57, 43.16-24, 112 (all)

Apr. 15: The End of Days

Bible: Isaiah 2 (all), 11-12 (all), Psalm 114 (all), Revelation of St. John, 6 (all), 20.1-9

Quran 75 (all), 77 (all), 81-82 (all)

Apr. 20: Hell

Bible: Matthew 5.22 , 8.12, 13.41-42, 13.49-50, 25.30-46 Mark 9.43-49, Luke 16.19-31, Revelation 20.10-15

Quran: 5.35-37, 7.40-54, 33.64-68, 37.62-68, 39.71-72, 44.43-50, 55.26-44, 56.39-56, 88.1-7

Apr. 22: Heaven

Bible: Matthew 8.11, 14.43-49, 19.23-26 Mark 10.23-27, Luke 23.39-43, Paul, Romans 6.20-23

Quran: 7.40-54, 15.45-49, 39.73-75, 43.68-73, 44.51-59, 55.46-78, 56.10-38, 69.20-24, 76.5-22, 88.8-16

Grades and Assignments

Attendance: 10%

Participation: 20%

A full mark includes forum posts for every class, commenting on the similarities and differences between the Bible and Quran in each day's reading. All posts will be discussed in class.

First Paper: 30% (approximately 8 pages)

Second Paper: 40% (approximately 10 pages)

All papers will focus, in one form or another, on the main theme of course, namely the comparison of the Bible and the Quran.

Grading scale

90-100: A 97-100: A+ 93-96: A 90-92: A-

80-89: B 87-90: B+ 83-86: B 80-82: B-

70-79: C 77-80: C+ 73-76: C 70-72: C-

60-69: D 67-70: D+ 63-66: D 60-62: D-

Under 60: F

Attendance

For attendance, see the official policy at <https://sites01.lsu.edu/wp/policiesprocedures/policies-procedures/22/>. Attendance is mandatory for every class, with one unexcused absence allowed for each student. All absences falling under the guidelines of PS 22 are excused: others might be as well, depending on the discretion of the professor. If you have a valid excuse, please confirm it immediately after the missed session. Students who miss a class for whatever reason are encouraged to get the best notes they can, oral and written, from fellow students.

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to read and be familiar with the LSU Code of Student Conduct and Commitment to Community, found online at www.lsu.edu/saa. All violations of this code, including plagiarism, will be referred to the Student Office of Advocacy and Accountability.

Disabilities

All disabilities will be accommodated with appropriate direction from the Office of Disabilities Service.

Final Exam Accommodation

Requests for accommodations for students with 3 exams scheduled by the University within a 24-hour period during final exam week must be made to the Dean or Director of the College or School in which the student is registered prior to the final date for dropping courses

Additional Class Rules

Please wear masks and social distance responsibly, in class and outside of it, to avoid spreading Covid. Those who refuse to comply might be asked to leave.

Bring your books to class. They will be the primary focus of the lectures, which might be difficult to follow without them.

Neuroscience, experience, and common sense all teach that the growing array of electronic devices can be distracting. **Please turn off all such devices in class.** Those who refuse to comply may be asked to leave. Exceptions will be granted only for medically-confirmed disabilities.

Please do not eat during class: drinking is normally permitted, but not in the era of Covid. Do not leave in the middle of class except for an emergency.

Dozing or talking to classmates about matters unrelated to the course is forbidden.

Violation of class rules might cost you attendance and participation marks.

