

# A Comparative Analysis Of The Events Of Women Mentioned In Quran And Bible

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## Abstract

*This comparative study aims to compare the stories of the women that are cited or found in the Quran and the Bible; these women are Hawwa (Eve), Maryam (Mary), Asiya, Hajar (Hagar), and Sarah. In the process of such investigation, the study would try to present the way women are depicted in two dominant faiths and their holy scriptures, concerning similarities as well as differences. The given paper explores the benefits and harms of such representations for society and gender roles.*

*It is unlike the biblical account where a woman is blamed, thus the creation of man in the matter as an equal partner to a woman. However, the concept related to original sin has a negative reception. Likewise, in the Quran, Maryam's story is for purposes of preservation and elevation and at the same time proving high moral standards, especially for women. Asiya is an example of strength and becoming righteous in the face of oppression and Hagar's story of the strength and faith displayed in the desert. About Sarah's role in Islamic literature, however slightly less significant than other characters, faith and divine blessing as narrated by Sarah are highlighted.*

*While the Bible proves women's importance as equal beings who are valuable contributors to society albeit in supportive roles, these scripts also paint a number of clichéd perceptions to women right from calling Eve responsible for the fall of man to setting Mary, the mother of Jesus, as a role model while expecting such a status from women in that society. There are no characters like Asiya in the Bible which hardly acts as positive models for women and although Hagar is another character, her portrayal may be representative of the distinct class. What emerges from the story of Sarah in the bible is faith and God's word, albeit cuts for a moment when Sarah laughed a moment after the pronouncement of the angel.*

**Keywords** Quran, Bible, women in religious texts, Eve (Hawwa), Mary (Maryam), Asiya, Hagar (Hajar), Sarah, gender roles, religious narratives, comparative analysis, faith and piety, miraculous births, shared responsibility, gender stereotypes, divine promise, perseverance, righteousness, Islamic tradition, Christian tradition

## Introduction

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Religious texts like the Quran and the Bible hold significant influence over the cultural, ethical, and social norms of billions of people worldwide. The portrayal of women in these texts offers insights into gender roles and expectations that have shaped societies throughout history. This study aims to provide a comparative analysis of key female figures in the Quran and the Bible, including Eve (Hawwa), Mary (Maryam), Asiya, Hagar (Hajar), and Sarah. By examining their stories, this paper will explore both the similarities and differences in how these women are depicted and consider the impact these portrayals have on modern perceptions of gender roles. Through this comparison, we seek to better understand the intersection of faith and gender in religious narratives.

### **Purpose of Study**

The aim of this work is to analyze and compare some of the narratives of some women in the Quran and in the bible. Both of these sacred scriptures from the Islamic and Christian religion contain many stories that have formed the ethical, valuable and social beliefs of people over decades. Thus, as a concern of comparing these texts, this study seeks to analyses and determine whether or not there is a similarity or contrast in the portrayal of women in this text. It will give a clear insight on how these portrayals affect the current nature of gender roles and position of women in the society.

### **Significance of Topic**

Analyzing the representation of female characters in religious literature is important for several reasons. To begin with, these texts give us religious and cultural principles that have been put in place throughout the years to regulate women's celibacy and status in their societies. It is upon this that several cultural beliefs and practices, which are present today, are rooted. The most enjoined books are the Quran and the Bible which has shaped the civilization, culture, belief, and faith of billions of people around the world. The treatment of women in these texts can influence the audience's attitudes and behavior towards women as existing or as distinct from the stereotypical views.

Secondly, religious narratives contain generally exemplarity elements; that is, they provide human examples for emulation by a religious community. This is true concerning the stories of women portrayed in these texts. They show communities with strong virtues, faith and resolve but these are often presented with predisposed roles and idealized expectations. In this way, the purpose of the present paper is to examine in a more critical way these narratives in order to characterize how they contribute to the construction of gendered identities both as inspirational and as potential reconfirming of stereotyped roles.

Thirdly, due to the recent or ongoing statements and discussions regarding women's status and their rights, it is crucial to return to these primary sources. Recognizing and understanding more about the rights of women in the holy Quran and Bible will assist in combating gender inequalities in religious organizations. First, it can be useful for creating new historically informed and equal-ops reading of these texts whose values do not correspond to current feminism.

### **Overview of Women Analyzed**

This study focuses on the comparative analysis of key female figures in the Quran and the Bible: The five pure women of paradise are Hawwa', Maryam, Asiya, Hajar, and Sarah. All these women play certain important roles in their respective religions, and the narratives are rather informative.

- **Eve (Hawwa):** Eve therefore like the incarnation of mother of humanity, is core to creation myths of both the Quran and the Bible. Some of the economies, ideas, and her portrayal together with effects of her actions have been perceived and appreciated or considered from different dimensions affecting the understanding of women's roles and responsibilities.

- **Mary (Maryam):** Mary is honored in both Islam and Christianity and is referenced as being pure and believing lady. This is evident in her story especially the story of the birth of Issa (Jesus) which portrays elements of the Catholic social teaching such as the intervention of God and obedience to him.
- **Asiya:** Asiya is one of the most important figures of Islam's religious narrative and folklore as a wife of Pharaoh who sheltered and raised Musa (Moses). Her story teachings include faith and righteousness no matter what the circumstances are or who is the tyrant.
- **Hagar (Hajar):** Abraham's wife and mother of Ishmael, Hagar's experience is that of struggling and finding divine favor. Her story is special in the Islamic culture, as the moves she makes during the rituals of the Hajj are performed as dances.
- **Sarah:** The wife of Prophet Abraham and the mother of Isaac, the story of Sara is an important thread in the two major world religions' scriptures' portrayal of the God's promise and their eventual realization.

### **Impacts of These Portrayals**

Regarding the impact that each of these narratives has on societal perceptions of women and their role, they are as follows: On the positive side, these stories can portray such women as being faithful, patient and obedient to God and are positive paragon roles. For example, Mary remains chaste throughout the story, Asiya is virtuous, and Hagar is persistent which are all auspicious attributes for women from this religion.

Nevertheless, they can also contain negative connotations. For instance, the story of Eve in the bible which has been used in the past to portray that women are easily tempted and are immoral. In the same way, the 'high ideals' represented by a Mary also put improper pressure on women so that whenever they fail to fit the model, they feel like they are inadequate.

### **Structure of Study**

The study is structured to first present a detailed analysis of each woman's story as depicted in the Quran and the Bible. For each figure, the study will explore the following:

1. **Quranic Account:** The story is told in the Quran, including key verses and interpretations.
2. **Biblical Account:** The story is told in the Biblical, including key verses and interpretations.
3. **Positive Impact:** The positive messages and role model qualities that emerge from the narrative.
4. **Negative Impact:** The potential negative implications or stereotypes that can be derived from the story.

The same framework will be used on each biblical figure of the woman, and then the comparison of the similarities and differences between the two texts will be made. As for the impact of the given findings, the study will answer the questions concerning modern gender roles and perceptions of women.

Through this kind of comparison, the research intends to extend relevant insights toward the existing debates of gender issues and women's parts as depicted in religious literature. This may, therefore, be used to develop better interpretations and implementations of these basic religious stories in today's diverse world.

### **Events of women mentioned in Quran and Bible**

## **Eve (Hawwa)**

### **Quranic Account**

The narrative of Hawwa or more familiarly Eve in the Quran started with the creation of Adam's wife. Both of them were created and placed in the Garden of Eden and enticed by Satan, to be expelled from Paradise. This narrative is recorded only in two of the Noble Surahs: Surah Al-Baqarah and Surah Al-A'raf where they are mentioned at 2:35-39 and 7:19-25 respectively. Here, the voice in Quran differs from other interpretations where the blame of disobeying God is given solely to Eve and not to Adam. This representation stresses the need to have friends as well as to care for each other especially between males and females so that the two are balance between them (Suleiman, 2001).

### **Impact:**

According to the Quran, there are profound concepts of companionship and partnership between men and women. This mutual responsibility may bring in the aspect of equality within the relations hence, there will be respect and cooperation (Suleiman, 2001). However, the connection between Eve and the first sin with the subsequent suffering of people has been viewed accordingly. This interpretation has normalized the idea about women as being inherently sinful or guilty for mankind's sins, which reproduces gender discrimination (Ahmed, 1992).

### **Biblical Account**

On the other hand, the story depicted about Eve in the Book of Genesis is her being created as Adam's helpmate from his rib. According to the first creation narrative found in Genesis 2:15- 3:24, the first woman Eve succumbs to temptation offered to her by the serpent and takes a bite of forbidden fruit that leads to the fall of man. This has over the years been used to reinforce women's subjection to temptations and deceit (Rogerson, 2006).

### **Impact:**

The analysis of Biblical story shows that women are equal valuable beings as men necessary for life, not just as complementary but as coequal half, which is the main idea of family and women in the Bible (Miles, 2008).

On the negative side the sin committed by Eve who seduced man to sin has meant that women are seen to this day as sexual beings easily influenced. This has led to the historical approach used in the justification of women as being weaker or more inclined to moral sins (Rogerson, 2006).

Therefore, the general picture of Eve drawn both in the Quran and in the Bible is informative about the rights and duties of women. The Quran insists on people's mutual concern and equity; the Bible also stresses togetherness but also adds negative attitudes. Each of the stories has shaped the societies' perception on women and is an epitome of the enlightening influence of religious books on women's roles in societies.

## **Mary (Maryam)**

### **Quranic Account**

Mary is another of the women highlighted; however, she is called Maryam in the Quran according to the Islamic tradition. Her narrative is richly depicted in Surah Maryam verses 16-34 where the themes of her purity, chastity, and even virginity, not to mention the nature of Jesus's birth. The story related to Mary in the Quran is simple and greatly appreciable as she is presented as the symbol of woman who has strong faith and chaste character. This kind of representation is beneficial in a way, first, because it raises the social position of women, for Mary is depicted as a paragon (Mattson, 2002).

**Impact:**

Mary is portrayed as a model of purity, faith, and submission to God's will, which elevates the status of women in Islamic teachings. Her narrative emphasizes the importance of piety and obedience, serving as an inspiring example for Muslim women (Mattson, 2002).

However, such high moral expectations can also create unrealistic standards for women. The portrayal of Mary as an ideal figure may lead to undue pressure on women to meet similar standards of piety and virtue, which can be challenging and potentially disheartening (Wadud, 1999).

**Biblical Account**

In the Bible, Mary's story is found in the New Testament, particularly in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew (Luke 1:26-38, Matthew 1:18-25). The Biblical narrative details the Annunciation, where the angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will conceive Jesus through the Holy Spirit. Mary's acceptance of this divine role is celebrated and she is venerated as the mother of Jesus. This account elevates the status of women through Mary's significant role in the divine plan, emphasizing her faith and obedience (Brown, 1978).

**Impact:**

The Biblical narrative elevates the status of women by highlighting Mary's significant role in the divine plan. Her faith and obedience are celebrated, making her an important and revered figure in Christianity (Brown, 1978).

Similar to the Quranic account, the portrayal of Mary as an ideal figure can set unrealistic expectations for women. The high standards of piety and virtue associated with Mary may lead to feelings of inadequacy among women who feel they cannot live up to such ideals (Johnson, 2005).

In conclusion, the portrayal of Mary in both the Quran and the Bible serves as a powerful example of faith and piety. While her narrative elevates the status of women and provides an inspiring role model, it also creates high moral expectations that may be difficult to attain. Both texts highlight Mary's importance, reflecting her significant influence in both Islamic and Christian traditions.

**Asiya**

**Quranic Account**

In the Qur'ān, Asiya wife of Pharaoh and foster-mother of Musa or Moses is categorized as a mu'mina, a believing woman and a sahabiya, a rightly guided woman par excellence. There is a brief account of her in Surah At-Tahrim 66:11 Where her faith in the Almighty and rebellion against her dictatorial husband is mentioned. Asiya's story portrays and affirms the resolve and purity of women despite the emerging oppression, which sets a perfect example of stamina and faith.

**Impact:**

The story of Asiya proves that women are strong and virtuous despite being subjected to absolute control, even. Her ability to remain faithful to her husband's order as well as her rebellion against her abusive husband exhibit her bravery as well as ethical character that was regarded as a model for women (Esposito, 1998).

Nevertheless, she appears in the sources rarely and outside Islamic studies it is difficult to define her historical or religious significance. This may lower her power, and the readership or knowledge of her story on other levels (Glassé, 2001).

### **Biblical Account**

Asiya is not mentioned in the Bible. This absence signifies a lack of representation of similar figures in the Biblical narrative, which could be seen as a limitation in providing diverse examples of female virtue and strength (Bellis, 1994).

### **Impact:**

The lack of representation of similar figures like Asiya in the Bible can be seen as a limitation. It reduces the diversity of female role models presented in the Biblical narrative, which might limit the scope of examples of female virtue and strength available to readers (Bellis, 1994).

In conclusion, Asiya's story in the Quran highlights the strength and righteousness of women even in the face of oppression. Her faith and courage serve as powerful examples, although her limited recognition outside Islamic texts restricts her broader influence. The absence of similar figures in the Bible indicates a gap in the representation of diverse female role models in the Biblical narrative.

### **Hagar (Hajar)**

#### **Quranic Account**

Hagar or Hajar is the mother of Ishmael (Ismail) recognized in the religious scripture, the Quran. Her story of surviving in the desert and hearing and then drilling for water from the Zamzam well is one of Islamic history's most dramatic stories. Another example from the al-Quran is the story narrated in Sura Ibrahim verse 37: 'And the behavior of Hajar was indeed exemplary contrary to ignorance and she was the truly faithful.' Of special importance for women is the group, and her story reveals the importance of perseverance, faith, and God's providence when in need (Stowasser, 1994).

### **Impact:**

Hagar as the protagonist shows the message of hope, faith, and God's provision during a crisis. This is true testimony for women who undergo hardships in life; this emphasizes the need to trust in God through tough time (Stowasser, 1994).

Nonetheless, the story may not be as familiar as other tales involving female characters thus possibly cannot have a impact on other situations. There is the possibility that the lesser focus placed on Hagar in general Islamic teachings may somewhat temper the effect of her story on an Islamic audience (Hawting, 2000).

#### **Biblical Account**

In the Bible Hagar is portrayed as the handmaid of Sarah, and as the mother of Ishmael. Her narrative is available in the book of Genesis, chapter 16 verse 1-16, and

Genesis 21, verses 8-21: struggles and God's promise both for her and Ishmael. Concerning Biblical interpretation, God always has a special concern for people from every class of society, thus the importance of Hagar's story (Van Seters 1997).

### **Impact:**

Respect of the social order is portrayed in the Bible as the message demonstrates God's concern for all vessels, big and small. Since Hagar is a marked outcast, her story also affirms the message of compassion and God's protection, underlining the messages from Genesis of philanthropy and concern (Van Seters, 1997, p. 344).

However, her role to portray a servant may be in incongruence with the modern society's perception towards class prejudice, hence negative. This may again be seen as entrenching other social differences and discriminations because it majorly focuses on her low-class status (Brenner, 1993).

Thus, Analyzed the Quran's and the Bible's text focused on Hagar to demonstrate her strength, faith, and the role of divine guidance. Thus, considering the fact that Jane's story is far from being a usual one – she overcomes all the obstacles and becomes a gentleman at last – the role of her social status in the two texts raises different concerns. The Quran shows her as strong and faithful while on the other hand, the Bible in this case could be portraying a bias of categorizing people in terms of classes.

## **Sarah (Sarah)**

### **Quranic Account**

The wife of the prophet Abraham (Ibrahim) – Sarah – gives bore Isaac (Ishaq) when she is already old. From this scriptorium, her story can be recalled on Surah Hud 11: 71-72 with focus on faith and the birth of Isaac as a wonderful occurrence. This is a fabulous story of faith and gods' blessings in disguise and emphasis on the role of sara in the whole affair (Khan, 1997).

### **Impact:**

Hence, this story focuses on faith and God's favor in the most peculiar circumstances as accompanied by Sarah. Her life story puts into force trust on the accordance of God as well as raises the two cardinal virtues of faith and patience (Khan, 1997).

However, the readers may feel the restriction of her authority within the Islamic tradition because of her relative coverage in comparison with other texts. The fact that her account occupies a significantly less portion of the book might lead to a weaker effect upon the readers and followers (Waines, 2003).

### **Biblical Account**

It should be noted that in biblical literature Sarah is described as the wife of Abraham and the mother of Isaac. Specifically, her account is rooted in Genesis 17:15-21, 18:10-15, as well as 21:1-7, illustrating her life and the God's covenant to her family members. This story therefore highlights the issue of faith and God's word, and presents Sarah as a leading role in the history of the chosen people (Alter, 1996).

### **Impact:**

The matter of faith and promises of God are highlighted in the Biblical account that has been given above. A summary of Sarah's testimony demonstrates that the covenant and faith are the primary concepts in the category of trust and belief: dealing with God's appointments (Alter, 1996).

However, the first reaction of the woman concerning the word of God can be considered as negative. This part of her story may evoke such attitudes like doubt and uncertainty, which, in turn, may affect the evaluation of her faith (Frymer-Kensky, 2004).

In conclusion, focusing on the story of Sarah presented in the both Quran and the Bible, it is possible to underline faith and the divine promise as major values. Thus, the shift of focus to her later faith in God's guidance of her life makes her story encourage people to trust in divine providence, if the emphasis on her earlier disbelief is omitted. The Quran mentions her as a patient and a believing woman while the Bible shows her as a woman with moments of faith and denies her any wickedness.

## **A comparative analysis**

### **Common Themes**

The source shows that the Quran and the Bible share key themes in the stories of these women, mainly, the birth, tests, and faith. The role of the piety and righteousness though preserved is emphasized in both the texts and it is supported by the fact that both religions

value them (Smith, 2002). For example, creation of Eve, as the companion; Mary's birth from the virgin; Asiya's submission in the face of tyranny; Hajar's endurance; and above all, Sarah's faith all contain these elements.

### **Differences**

Indeed, the internal flow of the events in both Quran and bible is different yet they share identical headline stories. For instance, in the south Asian context, the quranic narrative of the first woman, Eve is different from that of the biblical narrative in that more blame is pinned on Eve in the biblical account than in the Quranic account. Of course, it is also possible to pinpoint certain characters that are represented only in one of the texts, for instance Asiya from the Quran. These differences offer the readers with different perception of the kind of religious and cultural background of the texts (Saeed, 2006). Introducing the division of labor, as well as guilt and punishment, the Quran unveils a more equal concept of partnership as compared to the view suggested by certain biblical stories.

### **Impacts**

The narrative of strong, faithful women who set examples can be listed among the positive effects. For instance, by giving Mary a status of a pure and faithful woman in both texts, the status of women is boosted. However, the following are the negative effects of the fabrications, the tendentious moral code of the ideal woman and the reproduction of some stereotype. For instance, the attitude that Eve is solely responsible for the original sin according to Bible is seen to encourage feminine stereotype in that women are vulnerable to being tempted. Both of these influences illustrate that religious and spiritual paradigms play a dual part that directly affects the social perception of gender (Armstrong, 1993).

### **Find in**

In conclusion, general similarities and differences between the presentation of women in the two religious books, the Quran and the Bible, have been discussed in this paper. The two texts depict women as key characters in the stories focusing on faith, religious inclination, and strength. However, the facts and circumstances of each case are quite distinct, which reflectors the non-similar religious and cultural context in the two sources.

### **Implications of Study**

The findings of this study led to the understanding of the cultural and Religion aspects of women in Quran and Bible. To an extent, these portrayals are crucial in influencing perception on women in the modern society by gaining respect, and advocating for woman rights. Having such positive aspects recognized and having negative stereotyping addressed can open people's eyes about the status of women in society.

### **Future Research Directions**

Comparative analysis of other women also described in religious scriptures could also be carried out. Furthermore, learning the modern forms of these stories' influence in religious practices and gender roles could continue the study's key purpose of identifying the significance of the myths in the present world. Studying what these narratives do to and for gender relations in diverse cultures may also provide interesting points of view.

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