

Athari/Salafi Refutation of Anti-Islamic Allegations Against Qur'an 2:102

A consolidated and audited refutation of allegations (a) to (z)

Methodological framework: Qur'an, authentic hadith, Sunni Islamic tafsir, Salafi/Athari creed, recognised Salafi scholarship, and limited academic-historical context where relevant.

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Executive Summary

This document consolidates a focused Athari/Salafi refutation of 26 objections to [Qur'an 2:102](#) concerning Harut and Marut, magic, Sulayman, Babylon, angelic obedience, and alleged borrowing from earlier traditions.

The methodology gives priority to the Qur'an, authentic hadith, early Sunni Islamic tafsir, and Salafi/Athari scholarship. Non-Islamic academic sources are used only for historical and comparative context, not as authorities over Islamic creed.

The central conclusion is that the allegations are not sustained. [Qur'an 2:102](#) is anti-magic, anti-occult, monotheistic, morally coherent, and internally consistent. The verse clears Sulayman of disbelief, blames the devils, records the warning of Harut and Marut, affirms human responsibility, denies independent magical power, and condemns the pursuit of harmful forbidden knowledge.

Source Hierarchy and Use of Evidence

Islamic theological conclusions are drawn from the Qur'an, authentic hadith, Sunni Islamic tafsir, and Salafi/Athari scholarship. Comparative academic sources are used only to test historical or source-critical claims, such as whether the Book of Enoch contains the [Qur'an 2:102](#) narrative or whether Babylon was associated with ancient magical practices.

The term Israelite reports, "Israiliyyat", is used for transmitted material from earlier Jewish and Christian sources. Such reports are not treated as binding doctrine and are not allowed to override the Qur'an or authentic Sunnah.

Arabic or Islamic technical terms are translated first and then followed by the Arabic term in English letters inside quotation marks where needed, such as Islamic monotheism, "tawhid", trial, "fitnah", and association of partners with Allah, "shirk".

Anti-Islamic Allegations

(a) Allah is allegedly portrayed as commanding or permitting angels to teach magic, thereby implying divine endorsement of sorcery.

(b) Angels teaching magic is claimed to contradict Biblical angelology; therefore, the Qur'an is alleged to be theologically confused.

(c) The Qur'an is alleged to copy the story from earlier Biblical sources, including the Torah or the New Testament, without originality.

- (d)** The Qur'an is alleged to plagiarise Jewish apocryphal literature, especially the Book of Enoch.
- (e)** Harut and Marut are claimed to be borrowed mythological figures with no authentic historical basis.
- (f)** Islam is accused of legitimising magic by acknowledging its effectiveness.
- (g)** The verse is claimed to contradict Islamic monotheism by attributing independent causal power to magic.
- (h)** The Qur'an is alleged to confuse angels with devils by associating angels with sinful acts.
- (i)** The Qur'an is accused of moral inconsistency for presenting angels as a "test" involving forbidden knowledge.
- (j)** The narrative is claimed to reflect Babylonian pagan myths rather than divine revelation.
- (k)** The verse is said to undermine human free will by portraying people as victims of supernatural teaching.
- (l)** Muhammad is alleged to have learned the story from Jews in Arabia.
- (m)** The Qur'an is accused of selectively borrowing from multiple Jewish sources and stitching them together.
- (n)** The verse allegedly contradicts the Qur'anic doctrine of angelic infallibility.
- (o)** The Qur'an is said to contain an incoherent narrative that Islamic scholars later attempted to "rescue" through tafsir.
- (p)** The verse is claimed to endorse superstition rather than rational theology.
- (q)** Islam is accused of promoting a fear-based religion by linking magic with disbelief and punishment.
- (r)** The Qur'an allegedly fails to distinguish clearly between knowledge, trial, and sin.
- (s)** The story is claimed to be historically unverifiable and therefore fictional.
- (t)** The verse is accused of legitimising misogyny by mentioning marital separation caused by magic.
- (u)** The Qur'an allegedly contradicts itself by condemning magic while acknowledging its effects.
- (v)** The verse is used to claim that Islam promotes occult beliefs.
- (w)** The story is said to be absent from "authentic" revelation and therefore fabricated.
- (x)** The Qur'an is accused of theological borrowing due to surface similarities with Jewish lore.
- (y)** The verse is claimed to reflect Muhammad's alleged misunderstanding of earlier scriptures.

(z) Some critics claim that [Qur'an 2:102](#) reflects similarities with non-Biblical Jewish "fallen angels" traditions, such as the Book of Enoch, and therefore argue indirect borrowing despite the absence of any canonical Biblical source or scholarly consensus.

Core Qur'anic Controls in Qur'an 2:102

1. Sulayman is explicitly cleared of disbelief.
2. The devils are explicitly blamed for disbelief and corrupt magical teaching.
3. Harut and Marut are presented with a warning function: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve."
4. The learners are morally responsible because they proceed after warning.
5. The knowledge is described as harmful and non-beneficial.
6. No harm occurs except by Allah's permission, which denies independent occult causality.
7. Those who purchase this forbidden knowledge lose their share in the Hereafter.

[Qur'an 2:102](#)

وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ ۖ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ ۖ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ الْمَلَائِكَةِ بِبَابِلَ
هَزُوتٍ وَمَرْوَتَ ۚ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ ۖ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ ۖ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ ۚ وَمَا هُمْ
بِضَارِينَ بِهِ ۚ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ ۚ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلْقٍ ۚ وَلَيْسَ مَا
شَرَوْا بِهِ ۚ أَنْفُسَهُمْ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ۙ ١٠٢

“They ‘instead’ followed the magic promoted by the devils during the reign of Solomon. Never did Solomon disbelieve, rather the devils disbelieved. They taught magic to the people, along with what had been revealed to the two angels, Hârût and Mârût, in Babylon. The two angels never taught anyone without saying, “We are only a test ‘for you’, so do not abandon ‘your’ faith.” Yet people learned ‘magic’ that caused a rift ‘even’ between husband and wife; although their magic could not harm anyone except by Allah’s Will. They learned what harmed them and did not benefit them—although they already knew that whoever buys into magic would have no share in the Hereafter. Miserable indeed was the price for which they sold their souls, if only they knew!”

Part 1: Refutation of Allegation (a)

Allegation (a)

Allah is allegedly portrayed as commanding or permitting angels to teach magic, thereby implying divine endorsement of sorcery.

1. The allegation fails because Qur'an 2:102 explicitly condemns magic rather than endorsing it

The first mistake in this allegation is that it reads [Qur'an 2:102](#) against its own wording. The verse does not present magic as approved religious knowledge. It presents magic as disbelief, harm, deception, and a destructive transaction by which people sold themselves for no share in the Hereafter. The verse states that Sulayman did not disbelieve, that the devils disbelieved, that they taught people magic, that Harut and Marut warned every learner, "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve," that the learners acquired what harmed them and did not benefit them, and that those who purchased such knowledge had no share in the Hereafter. These are not the markers of endorsement. They are the markers of prohibition, exposure, and condemnation.

The English rendering of [Qur'an 2:102](#) on the Quranic Arabic Corpus preserves these key elements:

Sulayman is cleared, the devils are blamed, the two angels warn against disbelief, the harm is limited by Allah's permission, and the knowledge is described as harmful rather than beneficial.

The wording is decisive. If the Qur'an intended to legitimise magic, it would not connect magic with disbelief, devilish teaching, harm, loss in the Hereafter, and the warning "do not disbelieve." The verse is structured as a refutation of magic, not as a manual of magic. The charge of divine endorsement ignores the verse's own moral vocabulary.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

2. Divine testing is not divine approval

The central phrase is "We are only a trial." The Arabic term for trial is "fitnah". In this context, a trial is not approval. A trial exposes whether a person obeys or disobeys. The Qur'anic logic is clear: Harut and Marut were not inviting people to magic as lawful guidance. They warned them that approaching this knowledge was a path to disbelief. The test lay in whether people would obey the warning or insist on acquiring forbidden knowledge.

This distinction is foundational in Sunni Islamic theology. Allah may create a test, allow a forbidden object to exist, or expose human beings to temptation, while still prohibiting that temptation. The existence of wine does not mean wine is endorsed. The existence of adultery does not mean adultery is endorsed. The existence of Satan does not mean Satan is endorsed. Likewise, the existence of magic and the divine testing of people through it does not mean magic is endorsed.

The verse itself closes the door to misunderstanding by saying that people learned what harmed them and did not benefit them. In other words, the Qur'an does not merely say magic is spiritually dangerous. It explicitly denies that it is beneficial knowledge.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

3. The angels' warning proves they were not promoting magic

Harut and Marut do not say, "Learn this." They say, "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." This is a prohibitive warning. The allegation wrongly converts a warning into an endorsement, which reverses the meaning of the text.

Their role is therefore not comparable to a teacher approving a subject. It is closer to a divinely appointed test in which the forbidden nature of the act is made unmistakably clear before the person proceeds. That is why the guilt belongs to those who knowingly proceed after warning. The verse says that people still learned from them, which means the learners are morally responsible for choosing the forbidden path after the warning.

This reading also preserves the Qur'anic doctrine of angelic obedience. If Harut and Marut are understood as angels, their function must be understood as obedience to a divine test, not independent sin, rebellion, or approval of sorcery. The verse itself gives that safeguard by recording their warning before any learning takes place.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Qur'an 66:6; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

4. Sunni Islamic scholarship treats magic as disbelief and destructive sin, not religiously authorised knowledge

Recognised Sunni Islamic scholarship does not read [Qur'an 2:102](#) as permission to practise magic. Shaykh Abd al-Aziz ibn Baz explicitly treated magic as a grave matter linked to devils and unlawful means. In one official fatwa, he explains that protection from magic is through lawful Islamic means such as [Ayat al-Kursi](#), the last three surahs, and authentic remembrance of Allah, not through counter-magic or occult practice.

In another official answer, he states that magic is among the causes of associating partners with Allah because it is commonly reached through worship of the jinn, seeking their help, drawing near to them through sacrifice, vows, prostration, or similar acts. He then notes that scholars ruled against magicians because of this connection to disbelief.

This is crucial because the anti-Islamic allegation claims that Islam legitimises magic. The orthodox Sunni Islamic conclusion is the opposite: magic is forbidden, destructive, and, where it involves devil-worship and seeking aid from devils, major disbelief. The verse is therefore used by Sunni Muslim scholars as evidence against magic, not in favour of it.

Relevant sources: Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Ibn Baz, Kayfiyyat al-wiqayah min al-sihr wa-al-jinn; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

5. The hadith evidence confirms that magic is among the destructive sins

The Prophetic Sunnah confirms the Qur'anic condemnation of magic. In Sahih al-Bukhari, Abu Hurayrah reports that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Avoid the seven great destructive sins," and he included practising sorcery among them. The same report is found in Sahih al-Bukhari under more than one numbering location, including [hadith 2766](#) and [hadith 6857](#) in the Sunnah.com numbering.

This classification removes any possible claim that Islam treats magic as spiritually neutral or religiously legitimate. Islam does not place legitimate acts among the destructive sins. It places grave acts there. Magic is therefore not treated as a permissible spiritual method, an acceptable science, or a neutral cultural practice. It is classified as a destructive sin and, depending on its form, may involve disbelief and association of partners with Allah.

Relevant sources: Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith 2766 and 6857; Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, parallel narration on the seven destructive sins; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

6. Permission in divine decree is not permission in Islamic law

A major confusion behind this allegation is the failure to distinguish between Allah's universal decree and Allah's religious command. In Sunni Islamic theology, Allah may allow something to occur within creation without loving it, approving it, or legislating it as permissible. Disbelief exists by Allah's decree, but disbelief is not approved by Allah. Murder exists by Allah's decree, but murder is not approved by Allah. Satan exists by Allah's decree, but Satan is not approved by Allah. Magic exists by Allah's decree, but magic is not approved by Allah.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) itself states that magic cannot harm anyone except by Allah's permission. This does not mean Allah approves of magic. It means magic has no independent power outside Allah's sovereignty. The verse therefore strengthens monotheism rather than weakening it. It denies that magic has autonomous causal authority. Whatever harm occurs remains subordinate to Allah's will, permission, wisdom, and trial.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah, discussion of divine decree and created causes.

7. The verse does not say the angels loved, approved, recommended, or practised magic

The allegation introduces ideas that the verse itself never states. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not say the angels loved magic. It does not say they approved magic. It does not say they practised magic. It does not say they invited people to magic. It does not say they benefited people through magic. It says they warned people not to disbelieve.

The difference is decisive. Teaching in this context is not endorsement. It occurs within a declared trial and is preceded by a warning. The immoral act is not the angels' fulfilment of a divine command, but the human choice to ignore the warning and acquire forbidden knowledge.

That is why the verse condemns the learners: they learned what harmed them and did not benefit them.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

8. The allegation fails by its own internal logic

If a text says, "This is a test, do not disbelieve; this harms and does not benefit; those who purchase it have no share in the Hereafter," then the coherent reading is condemnation, not endorsement. To call that endorsement is not careful interpretation. It is inversion.

The allegation depends on removing five controlling elements from the verse: the devils disbelieved, the angels warned, the act is linked to disbelief, the result is harm rather than benefit, and the buyer loses the Hereafter. Once these elements are restored, the allegation cannot be sustained from the text itself.

Conclusion to Part 1

[Qur'an 2:102](#) does not portray Allah as endorsing sorcery. It portrays magic as devilish, harmful, spiritually ruinous, and connected to disbelief. Harut and Marut, if understood as angels, function within a divine test and warn people before they proceed. Their warning, "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve," is the key to the passage. The verse does not legitimise magic. It exposes it, condemns it, and subordinates any possible effect of it to Allah's permission. The allegation therefore fails textually, theologically, and according to orthodox Sunni Islamic interpretation.

Part 2: Refutation of Allegation (b)

Allegation (b)

Angels teaching magic is claimed to contradict Biblical angelology; therefore, the Qur'an is alleged to be theologically confused.

1. The allegation falsely assumes that Biblical angelology is the controlling standard for Qur'anic theology

This claim is not sustained at the methodological level before it reaches the verse itself. It assumes that Qur'anic teaching must be judged by later Jewish or Christian readings of angels. That is not a neutral academic standard. It is a sectarian standard. The Qur'an presents itself as revelation from Allah and as a criterion over earlier religious claims, not as a text required to conform to post-Biblical theological expectations.

The relevant question is not whether [Qur'an 2:102](#) mirrors a Christian or Jewish reading of angels, but whether the verse is coherent within Qur'anic monotheism, the way of the Prophet and Companions, the righteous predecessors "[as-salaf as-salih](#)", and early Sunni Islamic

explanation. On that basis, there is no contradiction. [Qur'an 2:102](#) states that Harut and Marut warned people before any teaching occurred: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." The verse therefore does not portray angels rebelling against Allah, approving sin, or promoting sorcery. It portrays them functioning within a divine test while warning humans not to fall into disbelief. The Quranic Arabic Corpus translation preserves this governing warning and places it before the human act of learning from them.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

2. The Qur'anic doctrine of angels is internally consistent

The Qur'an's general doctrine is that angels obey Allah. Qur'an 66:6 describes angels as beings who do not disobey Allah in what He commands them and who do what they are commanded. This is directly compatible with [Qur'an 2:102](#). If Harut and Marut are understood as angels, then their role must be read as obedience to Allah's command in a test, not as personal sin or independent moral corruption.

The allegation confuses two different things: carrying out a divinely decreed test and approving the forbidden act that the test exposes. Allah may test humans through forbidden options without approving those options. Satan exists as a test, but Satan is not approved. Wealth is a test, but greed is not approved. Power is a test, but oppression is not approved. Likewise, forbidden knowledge may be involved in a test, while the acquisition and use of that knowledge remains sinful.

The angels' own warning proves this: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." A warning against disbelief cannot rationally be turned into approval of disbelief.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Qur'an 66:6; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah, discussion of belief in angels and divine decree; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

3. Biblical angelology is not as simple as the allegation assumes

Even on Biblical grounds, the claim is overstated. The Bible itself presents angels as servants who carry out God's commands, appear to humans, deliver messages, and perform functions connected to divine judgement. [Psalm 103:20](#) describes angels as mighty beings who do God's bidding and obey His word. That does not contradict the Qur'anic idea that angels may be assigned roles by divine command.

Nor does the New Testament statement that resurrected humans will be like angels in heaven prove that angels can never interact with humans, test humans, or perform difficult roles in divine judgement. [Matthew 22:30](#) is about the state of resurrected humans in relation to marriage. It is not a complete technical manual on every possible angelic function.

[Hebrews 13:2](#) also refers to people showing hospitality to angels without knowing it, which confirms that Biblical material itself includes angelic interaction with humans in earthly settings.

The claim that angelic involvement with humans is inherently un-Biblical is therefore inaccurate even by Biblical categories.

This does not mean that Qur'anic angelology depends on Biblical angelology. It only shows that the critic's simplified appeal to "Biblical angelology" is too broad and imprecise to function as a serious objection.

Relevant sources: Psalm 103:20; Hebrews 13:2; Davidson, A Dictionary of Angels; Stuckenbruck, Angel Veneration and Christology.

4. Qur'an 2:102 does not depict angels committing sin

The allegation depends on inserting into the verse what the verse does not say. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not say Harut and Marut worshipped devils. It does not say they practised magic for themselves. It does not say they deceived people. It does not say they invited people into sorcery. It says they did not teach anyone until they first warned them that the matter was a trial and that they must not disbelieve.

This is the opposite of sinful angelology. The devils are the ones explicitly linked to disbelief in the verse. Sulayman is cleared of disbelief. The devils are condemned for teaching magic. Harut and Marut are distinguished from the devils by their warning. The verse therefore separates three categories: the innocent prophet, the disbelieving devils, and the angels involved in a test. Confusion only arises when critics erase these distinctions.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

5. The phrase "teaching magic" must be read under the controlling warning, not in isolation

The verse's controlling clause is the angels' warning: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." Critics isolate the phrase about teaching and ignore the warning that governs it. That is poor textual analysis.

In the verse, the teaching is not presented as religious instruction, spiritual guidance, or permissible knowledge. It is part of a test whose danger is announced in advance. The moral failure belongs to the person who continues after being warned. The verse then confirms that people learned what harmed them and did not benefit them. This removes the allegation that the Qur'an confused angels with sinful beings. The angels warn. The devils mislead. Humans choose. Allah remains sovereign.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

6. The objection depends on a category error about divine command

The critic assumes that if angels are involved in a trial, they must be morally endorsing the forbidden matter within that trial. That does not follow. An agent commanded by Allah to carry out a test is not equivalent to a sinner inviting people into evil. In [Qur'an 2:102](#), Harut and Marut are not framed as tempters who beautify magic. They are framed as warners whose first recorded statement is a prohibition.

This distinction is necessary for theological precision. The angels' role belongs to divine command and trial. The learners' guilt belongs to their decision to proceed after warning. The devils' guilt belongs to their disbelief and corrupt teaching. The verse is therefore not confused. It distributes responsibility carefully.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Qur'an 66:6; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Al-Fawzan, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah.

7. Final judgement on Claim (b)

Claim (b) fails because it imposes Biblical theology as an external standard over the Qur'an, oversimplifies Biblical angelology, ignores the Qur'an's doctrine of angelic obedience, and removes the angels' warning from the verse. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not portray confused theology. It presents a coherent Sunni Islamic doctrine: angels obey Allah, devils teach evil deceptively, humans are morally responsible, magic is forbidden, and all harm remains under Allah's permission.

Part 3: Refutation of Allegation (c)

Allegation (c)

The Qur'an is alleged to copy the story from earlier Biblical sources, including the Torah or the New Testament, without originality.

1. The allegation fails because the Torah and New Testament do not contain the Qur'an 2:102 narrative

The first problem is factual. The specific Qur'anic narrative of [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not found in the Torah or the New Testament. [Qur'an 2:102](#) contains a distinctive cluster of elements: the exoneration of Sulayman, the accusation that the devils disbelieved, the teaching of magic, Babylon, Harut and Marut, the warning "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve," the marital harm caused by magic, the denial of independent magical power, the description of magic as harmful and non-beneficial, and the declaration that those who purchased such knowledge had no share in the Hereafter. The Quranic Arabic Corpus translation preserves these controlling elements in the verse.

A copying claim requires an identifiable source with substantial narrative overlap. A vague claim that "earlier scriptures had angels" or "earlier scriptures mention magic" is not evidence of copying. It is only evidence that multiple religious traditions discuss angels and magic. That is shared subject matter, not plagiarism.

The Torah and New Testament contain references to angels, sorcery, divine judgement, and Solomon, but they do not contain the [Qur'an 2:102](#) account as a narrative. Therefore, the claim that the Qur'an copied this story from the Torah or New Testament is unsupported.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Reynolds, The Qur'an and the Bible: Text and Commentary.

2. Similar themes do not prove literary copying

A serious academic argument must distinguish between theme, motif, and direct borrowing. Angels are a theme. Magic is a theme. Babylon is a historical-religious setting. Solomon is a prophetic figure. None of these proves copying. Direct copying would require close verbal dependence, a shared storyline, the same sequence of events, or evidence of access to a specific source containing the same narrative structure.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) is not merely a story about magic. It is a theological correction. It clears Sulayman of disbelief, identifies the devils as the guilty party, treats magic as disbelief and harm, records the warning of Harut and Marut, and states that harm cannot occur except by Allah's permission. This structure serves Qur'anic monotheism. It is not a reproduced Biblical narrative.

The allegation therefore confuses thematic overlap with textual dependence. That is not academically sufficient.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction.

3. The Qur'an's treatment of Sulayman is corrective, not derivative

The verse begins by rejecting a false claim against Sulayman: "Sulayman did not disbelieve, but the devils disbelieved." This is not a casual narrative detail. It is the controlling purpose of the passage. The Qur'an defends a prophet of Allah from an accusation linked to magic and disbelief.

That function is distinctly Qur'anic. The Qur'an consistently defends prophets from charges that compromise their prophetic integrity. This is fully aligned with Sunni Islamic belief regarding the honour and protection of the prophets. The verse is not interested in entertaining folklore. It is interested in purifying belief, correcting a false association between prophethood and sorcery, and warning believers against magic.

If the Qur'an were merely copying earlier Biblical material, one would expect a close reproduction of the earlier narrative. Instead, the verse gives a compressed theological judgement: Sulayman is innocent, the devils are guilty, magic is disbelief, Harut and Marut warn, and Allah alone controls harm. That is doctrinal correction, not literary dependency.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

4. The New Testament is especially irrelevant to this allegation

The claim sometimes mentions the New Testament as if it provides a source for [Qur'an 2:102](#). This is weak. The New Testament contains references to angels and spiritual beings, but the specific [Qur'an 2:102](#) narrative is absent. The verse's distinctive contents are Harut and Marut, Babylon, Sulayman's exoneration, devilish teaching of magic, the warning against disbelief, marital separation, Allah's permission over harm, and loss in the Hereafter. Those elements do not occur as a New Testament narrative.

This matters because the New Testament references sometimes cited in general discussions of angelology do not match [Qur'an 2:102](#). [Matthew 22:30](#), for example, concerns resurrected humans being like angels in relation to marriage. [Hebrews 13:2](#) concerns people showing hospitality to angels without knowing it. Neither text contains Harut and Marut, Babylonian magic, Sulayman's exoneration, or the warning "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." BibleGateway's rendering of [Hebrews 13:2](#) confirms that the passage is about hospitality to strangers and angels, not the [Qur'an 2:102](#) narrative.

Therefore, using the New Testament as an alleged source for [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not evidence-based. A text about angels is not automatically a source for every later text mentioning angels.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Matthew 22:30; Hebrews 13:2; Reynolds, The Qur'an and the Bible: Text and Commentary.

5. The Torah is also not an adequate source for the Qur'an 2:102 narrative

The Torah includes accounts involving angels, divine messengers, and earlier prophets, and later Jewish tradition contains expanded angelological material. However, the Torah itself does not give the [Qur'an 2:102](#) account. The allegation therefore shifts between two different claims: first, that the Qur'an copied the Torah, and second, that the Qur'an resembles later Jewish lore. Those are not the same claim.

This distinction is important because critics often move the goalposts. When the Biblical source is not found, they appeal to non-Biblical material. When the non-Biblical material is not identical, they appeal to vague "influence." A rigorous refutation must keep the claim fixed: the Torah and New Testament do not contain this Qur'anic narrative. Therefore, the allegation of direct Biblical copying is not established.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Reynolds, The Qur'an and the Bible: Text and Commentary; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction.

6. Qur'an 2:102 is too theologically integrated to be dismissed as copied folklore

The verse is not an ornamental story inserted into the Qur'an. It performs several tightly integrated doctrinal functions. It protects the prophetic honour of Sulayman. It distinguishes

prophetic authority from sorcery. It identifies devils as sources of corrupt occult teaching. It treats magic as disbelief. It affirms human responsibility. It states that harm occurs only by Allah's permission. It denies benefit in magic. It warns of loss in the Hereafter.

This structure is not random stitching. It is a compact theological argument. Every clause serves the moral purpose of the verse. The allegation of copying from earlier scripture fails because it cannot identify the alleged Biblical source and cannot explain why the Qur'an's form is so consistently aligned with its own doctrine of prophethood, monotheism, divine decree, moral trial, and accountability.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

7. A copying allegation requires more than possible religious contact

Even if one grants that late antique Arabia was a region where Jews, Christians, and others were present, that does not prove that [Qur'an 2:102](#) was copied from Biblical sources. Historical contact is not the same as textual dependence. To establish copying, a critic must identify the source text, prove access to it, demonstrate meaningful similarity in wording and structure, and explain why the Qur'an's sharply monotheistic correction should be treated as borrowing rather than revelation or correction.

The allegation does not meet that standard. It identifies no Torah passage matching [Qur'an 2:102](#). It identifies no New Testament passage matching [Qur'an 2:102](#). It does not establish a shared narrative sequence. It therefore remains a speculation based on broad thematic resemblance.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext.

8. Final judgement on Claim (c)

Claim (c) fails because no Torah or New Testament passage contains the [Qur'an 2:102](#) narrative. The allegation rests on surface-level similarities, such as angels, magic, Solomon, or ancient religious lore, but such similarities do not prove copying. The Qur'anic passage is a distinct theological correction that clears Sulayman, condemns devils, forbids magic, affirms divine sovereignty, and places human choice under moral accountability. The copying claim is therefore historically unproven, textually weak, and theologically inadequate.

Part 4: Refutation of Allegation (d)

Allegation (d)

The Qur'an is alleged to plagiarise Jewish apocryphal literature, especially the Book of Enoch.

1. The allegation confuses broad thematic resemblance with textual plagiarism

The charge of plagiarism is much stronger than the evidence allows. To establish plagiarism, a critic must show more than a general overlap in themes such as angels, forbidden knowledge, magic, or ancient moral corruption. A serious plagiarism claim requires demonstrable dependence: close verbal similarity, the same named figures, the same plot structure, the same theological function, the same moral emphasis, and a plausible transmission pathway strong enough to explain the specific form of the Qur'anic passage.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) does not reproduce the Book of Enoch. The Qur'anic passage speaks about Sulayman, devils, magic, Babylon, Harut and Marut, the warning "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve," marital separation, divine permission, harm without benefit, and loss in the Hereafter. The Book of Enoch, by contrast, speaks about the Watchers descending, taking women, producing giants, and teaching forbidden arts before the Flood. In [1 Enoch 8](#), figures such as Azazel and Semjaza are associated with teaching forbidden arts, including weapons, ornaments, enchantments, root-cuttings, and other forms of forbidden knowledge. This is a different narrative framework from [Qur'an 2:102](#).

The Book of Enoch tradition includes rebellious Watchers who sin through transgression, intermarriage, and corruption, while [Qur'an 2:102](#) presents Harut and Marut as a trial who warn people before they proceed. The Qur'anic structure is therefore not Enochic plagiarism, but a distinct theological discourse.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; 1 Enoch 6 to 8; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1; VanderKam, Enoch: A Man for All Generations.

2. The names Harut and Marut are absent from the Book of Enoch

One of the clearest weaknesses in the plagiarism claim is that the central Qur'anic names, Harut and Marut, are not the names of the Watchers in the Book of Enoch. The Enochic tradition refers to figures such as Semjaza, Azazel, Armaros, Baraqijal, Kokabel, Ezeqeel, Araqiel, Shamsiel, and Sariel. [Qur'an 2:102](#) names Harut and Marut. A critic cannot reasonably claim direct plagiarism when the most identifiable named figures are not the same.

This matters because names are often strong evidence in literary dependence. If [Qur'an 2:102](#) were simply copying the Book of Enoch, one would expect it to preserve the major Enochic names or at least retain the core Watchers framework. It does not. The Qur'an instead places the matter in Babylon, connects the passage to the defence of Sulayman, identifies devils as the guilty teachers of magic, and gives Harut and Marut a warning function. These are not minor adjustments to the Book of Enoch. They constitute a different narrative and theological structure.

The Enochic Watchers material is associated with named figures such as Azazel and Semjaza, and the public text of [1 Enoch 8](#) explicitly identifies Azazel with teaching unrighteousness and revealing heavenly secrets, while also naming Semjaza as a leading figure. Harut and Marut are not the operative names in that account.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; 1 Enoch 6 to 8; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1, commentary on 1 Enoch 6 to 8; Reeves and Reed, Enoch from Antiquity to the Middle Ages.

3. The moral function of the two accounts is fundamentally different

In the Book of Enoch, the Watchers are themselves corrupt. They descend, desire women, take wives, produce giant offspring, teach forbidden knowledge, and become a cause of pre-Flood corruption. In [Qur'an 2:102](#), Harut and Marut are not presented as lustful rebels, fathers of giants, or cosmic criminals. Their defining speech is a warning: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." The moral centre of [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not angelic sexual rebellion. It is human moral responsibility after explicit warning.

This difference is a serious difficulty for the plagiarism claim. The Book of Enoch's central concern is the corruption of heavenly beings and the spread of forbidden arts before the Flood. [Qur'an 2:102](#) is concerned with clearing Sulayman, condemning the devils, warning against magic, affirming Allah's exclusive control over harm, and exposing the spiritual loss of those who acquire forbidden knowledge. The verse is not narrating the fall of angels. It is correcting a false association between prophethood and sorcery.

The Qur'an's theology is also stricter and more monotheistic. It refuses to give magic independent power. It says that magic cannot harm anyone except by Allah's permission. That clause is absent from the Enochic Watchers story as the controlling theological principle. [Qur'an 2:102](#) is therefore not merely different in wording. It is different in doctrinal aim.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; 1 Enoch 6 to 8; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1.

4. Sunni Islamic tafsir does not require Enochic material to explain the verse

The Qur'anic verse is self-contained in its main moral argument. It tells the reader who was innocent, who disbelieved, what was taught, what warning was given, what people learned, what harm could occur, what limitation governed that harm, and what spiritual loss followed. A person does not need the Book of Enoch to understand the verse's main message.

Early tafsir discusses reports about Harut and Marut, but Sunni Islamic scholarship distinguishes the Qur'anic text from later reports, especially reports transmitted from earlier Jewish and Christian material, known as Israelite reports, "Israiliyyat". Those reports are not the foundation of the Qur'anic meaning. The controlling point remains the verse itself: magic is a trial, it is forbidden, it is harmful, and it has no independent power outside Allah's permission.

This distinction matters. Critics often attack later embellished stories and then pretend that the Qur'an itself contains those embellishments. That is academically invalid. The Qur'an is not responsible for every later tale attached to the verse, especially when Sunni Muslim scholars themselves identify such material as requiring caution.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith.

5. The Book of Enoch is not a single stable "source" in the simplistic way critics assume

The Book of Enoch belongs to a complex Second Temple Jewish literary environment. It contains multiple sections with different dates, transmission histories, languages, and interpretive layers. The Watchers tradition also circulated in different forms and was later adapted in Jewish, Christian, and other religious settings. Therefore, even where thematic parallels exist between Qur'anic and extra-Biblical traditions, that does not automatically prove that the Qur'an copied a particular written Enochic text.

Academic caution is necessary. Similarity may arise from a shared ancient religious vocabulary, a polemical correction of existing claims, oral traditions in late antique religious environments, or divine revelation addressing known disputes. The critic must prove direct dependence. Merely saying "both mention angels and forbidden knowledge" is not proof.

The weakness of the plagiarism claim becomes clearer when the Qur'anic details are kept in view. [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not a pre-Flood giant story. It is not about Mount Hermon. It is not about Semjaza or Azazel. It is not about angels marrying women. It is not about the birth of giants. It is not about cosmetics, weapons, or metallurgy as the central moral issue. It is about a Babylonian trial involving magic, an explicit warning against disbelief, the exoneration of Sulayman, and Allah's sovereignty over harm.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; 1 Enoch 6 to 8; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1; VanderKam, Enoch: A Man for All Generations; Reeves and Reed, Enoch from Antiquity to the Middle Ages.

6. The Qur'an's anti-magic stance is sharper than the alleged source

Even if one argues that the Qur'an is interacting with themes known from earlier Jewish material, interaction is not plagiarism. The Qur'an often corrects, judges, and purifies earlier claims. In [Qur'an 2:102](#), the correction is clear: Sulayman did not disbelieve; the devils disbelieved; magic is harmful; learners were warned; harm occurs only by Allah's permission; those who purchased this knowledge had no share in the Hereafter.

This structure is not a borrowed myth. It is a theological verdict. It removes prophetic blame, places guilt on devils and morally responsible humans, and strips magic of any autonomous power. The allegation of plagiarism therefore fails because it cannot explain why the Qur'an's version is so deliberately anti-sorcery, anti-devil, and monotheistic.

The available online presentation of Ibn Kathir's commentary also preserves the same key Qur'anic structure: Sulayman is cleared, the devils are blamed, Harut and Marut warn that they are only a test, and the magic cannot harm anyone except by Allah's will.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

7. Plagiarism language is methodologically excessive

Even in academic discussions that explore Qur'anic engagement with late antique Jewish and Christian traditions, "plagiarism" is not a careful category. Plagiarism implies unauthorised copying from an identifiable source while concealing dependence. That is not what has been established here. At most, critics point to shared motifs: angels, forbidden knowledge, and magic. But shared motifs are not the same as copied text.

The Book of Enoch lacks Harut and Marut by name, lacks the Qur'anic defence of Sulayman, lacks Babylon as the specific frame of this trial, lacks the warning formula in [Qur'an 2:102](#), and lacks the Qur'anic doctrine that harm occurs only by Allah's permission. The specific Qur'anic account therefore remains textually distinct and theologically independent.

A controlled academic conclusion would therefore be this: there are broad thematic parallels between [Qur'an 2:102](#) and some late antique traditions about forbidden knowledge, but those parallels are insufficient to prove plagiarism from the Book of Enoch.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; 1 Enoch 6 to 8; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction.

8. Final judgement on Claim (d)

Claim (d) fails because [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not reproduce the Book of Enoch in names, setting, plot, chronology, theological purpose, or moral structure. The Book of Enoch's Watchers narrative concerns rebellious heavenly beings, women, giants, and pre-Flood corruption. [Qur'an 2:102](#) concerns Sulayman's exoneration, devilish magic, Babylon, Harut and Marut, warning before trial, human accountability, and Allah's exclusive sovereignty over harm.

At most, critics can point to broad thematic overlap concerning angels and forbidden knowledge. That is not plagiarism. It is not sufficient proof of direct borrowing. The Qur'anic passage remains textually distinct, theologically coherent, and fully consistent with Sunni Islamic monotheism.

Part 5: Refutation of Allegation (e)

Allegation (e)

Harut and Marut are claimed to be borrowed mythological figures with no authentic historical basis.

1. The claim wrongly treats lack of independent external attestation as proof of mythology

The allegation rests on a flawed historical assumption: if a figure is not independently verified in surviving non-Islamic records, the figure must be mythological. That is not sound

historiography. Many ancient figures, events, local traditions, and religious episodes are not independently recoverable through archaeology or external documents. Absence of independent attestation is not the same as disproof.

Harut and Marut are known from [Qur'an 2:102](#). For Muslims, the Qur'an is revelation, and its report is sufficient in matters of the unseen when understood according to the Qur'an, authentic Sunnah, and the way of the early Muslims. The historical limitation is simple: external sources may not preserve every divinely reported event. A critic may say, "I do not accept revelation as evidence," but that is not the same as proving that the Qur'an borrowed a myth. It is merely stating a prior philosophical rejection of revelation.

The verse itself presents Harut and Marut briefly and soberly: they are connected with Babylon, a trial, warning against disbelief, and the harmful knowledge of magic. The Qur'anic Arabic Corpus translation preserves the main wording of the verse, including the warning "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve," and the limitation that no harm occurs except by Allah's permission.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

2. The Qur'an does not present Harut and Marut as mythological heroes

Harut and Marut are not portrayed as gods, demigods, culture heroes, cosmic rivals to Allah, or independent supernatural powers. They are mentioned briefly as part of a moral test. Their only quoted speech is a warning: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." Their role is subordinate, limited, and entirely under Allah's authority.

This is the opposite of mythology in the theological sense. Mythological figures often compete for power, embody divine forces, or function as semi-divine agents in a polytheistic cosmos. [Qur'an 2:102](#) allows none of that. Harut and Marut do not create harm independently. They do not possess divine authority. They do not legislate. They do not invite worship. They do not defeat Allah's will. The verse explicitly says that harm cannot occur except by Allah's permission.

Therefore, even if one calls them supernatural beings, that does not make them mythological in the polemical sense. In Islamic theology, angels are real created servants of Allah. Their mention in revelation belongs to the doctrine of the unseen, not to pagan mythology.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Qur'an 66:6; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

3. Name resemblance does not prove borrowing

Some critics argue that Harut and Marut resemble names or figures from surrounding religious cultures. Even if a proposed linguistic resemblance were granted for argument's sake, resemblance does not prove borrowing. Names can travel across languages. Names can be adapted. Different historical figures can have similar names. A text can also correct a corrupted memory of real events preserved imperfectly among earlier communities.

A credible borrowing argument must demonstrate more than etymological possibility. It must show that the Qur'an copied a specific mythic source, retained its mythic meaning, and failed to transform it into a different theological structure. That burden is not met. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not preserve a pagan mythic theology. It places Harut and Marut within strict monotheism, denies independent power to magic, warns against disbelief, and condemns the learners of forbidden knowledge.

This is why the name argument is weak. Even if a critic proposes that the names have parallels, the Qur'an's theological use of the figures is not mythological borrowing. It is a divinely framed account governed by monotheism, warning, trial, and accountability.

Some encyclopaedic discussions note proposed connections between the names Harut and Marut and other religious traditions, including Iranian material, but such proposals remain etymological or comparative suggestions. They do not by themselves prove literary borrowing, theological dependence, or mythological adoption.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Jeffery, The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'an; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Encyclopaedia Iranica, "Harut and Marut."

4. The verse's brevity is evidence against mythological dependence, not for it

[Qur'an 2:102](#) does not tell a full mythic biography of Harut and Marut. It gives no parentage, no cosmic battle, no dramatic fall scene, no marriage episode, no giant offspring, no legendary punishment story, and no elaborate mythic cycle. The names appear within a larger argument about magic, devils, Sulayman, and moral trial.

This is important because mythological borrowing usually leaves narrative traces. If the Qur'an were dependent on a mythic Harut-Marut cycle, one would expect the passage to preserve the myth's dramatic features. Instead, the Qur'an deliberately avoids such embellishment. The two figures are mentioned only as much as needed for the verse's warning against magic. The Qur'an is therefore not interested in myth-making. It is interested in moral judgement.

Later storytellers expanded Harut and Marut with legendary details, but those later expansions cannot be retrojected into the Qur'an. A careful refutation must distinguish between the Qur'anic text and later folklore. The Qur'anic text remains brief, sober, and theologically controlled.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith; Reeves and Reed, Enoch from Antiquity to the Middle Ages.

5. Sunni Islamic scholarship distinguishes Qur'anic certainty from weak legendary reports

The strongest Sunni Islamic position is not to build doctrine on dramatic stories about Harut and Marut unless authentically established. The Qur'an establishes what must be affirmed: the mention of Harut and Marut, their connection to Babylon, the trial, the warning against disbelief, and the fact that people learned harmful magic. Beyond that, embellished reports require scrutiny.

This approach is methodologically stronger than the critic's approach. The critic often treats later legends as if they are the Qur'an, then attacks Islam for those legends. Sunni Islamic scholarship does the opposite: it gives authority to the Qur'an, authentic Sunnah, and sound tafsir, while treating Israelite or weak reports with caution. This prevents mythology from controlling doctrine.

The Qur'anic account therefore cannot be dismissed because of later folklore. The proper Sunni Islamic response is to affirm the revealed text and reject unsupported embellishments.

The existence of expanded folklore around Harut and Marut is not disputed. Some public encyclopaedic summaries openly distinguish the Qur'an's brief reference from later exegetical and folkloric elaborations, including stories of angelic fall and punishment. That distinction supports, rather than weakens, the need to separate Qur'anic wording from later narrative expansion.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, introduction and commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith.

6. "No authentic historical basis" is an overclaim

A critic may argue that Harut and Marut are not externally verified by independent historical records. That is a limited claim. It does not prove they are mythological. It only states that the critic does not possess external documentation. To move from "not externally verified" to "borrowed mythological figures" is an unjustified leap.

The Qur'an often speaks about matters of the unseen. Angels themselves are not accessible through ordinary historical reconstruction. That does not make angelology irrational within a revealed worldview. The question is whether the account is internally coherent and theologically consistent. [Qur'an 2:102](#) is coherent: Allah tests; angels obey; devils mislead; humans choose; magic harms only by Allah's permission; forbidden knowledge brings spiritual loss.

The allegation therefore fails because it demands a type of historical evidence inappropriate to the category of the claim, then declares mythology when that evidence is unavailable.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Qur'an 66:6; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa.

7. The Qur'anic account is theologically anti-mythological

A mythological borrowing would normally preserve, or at least carry over, the religious assumptions of the source myth. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does the opposite. It removes independent power from magic, refuses to glorify hidden knowledge, condemns the devils, protects Sulayman from disbelief, and places all harm under Allah's permission.

This is not the logic of mythological adoption. It is the logic of monotheistic correction. Harut and Marut do not function as divine rivals, semi-divine teachers, or sacred culture heroes. They function as part of a trial in which the human learner is warned not to disbelieve. The theological centre is Allah's sovereignty, not the power of Harut and Marut.

Therefore, the mythological accusation fails not only because it lacks proof, but because the Qur'an's own theological structure resists mythological reading.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Iana al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

8. Final judgement on Claim (e)

Claim (e) fails because it rests on a false equation between non-attestation and mythology. Harut and Marut are not presented in the Qur'an as pagan gods, mythic heroes, divine rivals, or independent occult powers. They are mentioned briefly as part of a divinely governed trial in which the learners are warned not to disbelieve. Proposed similarities with outside names or traditions do not prove borrowing, especially when the Qur'an's account is structurally and theologically distinct. The sound Sunni Islamic position is to affirm what the Qur'an states, avoid building doctrine on weak legendary reports, and reject the critic's unsupported leap from limited external evidence to mythological fabrication.

Part 6: Refutation of Allegation (f)

Allegation (f)

Islam is accused of legitimising magic by acknowledging its effectiveness.

1. The allegation confuses acknowledgement of effect with moral approval

This claim rests on a basic logical error. Acknowledging that something can have an effect does not mean legitimising it. Islam acknowledges that murder kills, poison harms, theft causes loss, lies mislead, and adultery destroys families. None of these acknowledgements makes those acts lawful or morally approved. The same principle applies to magic.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) does not legitimise magic. It says that people learned from it what separates a man from his wife, but immediately controls that statement with three decisive restrictions. First, they could not harm anyone except by Allah's permission. Second, they learned what harmed them and did not benefit them. Third, those who purchased it had no share in the Hereafter. The verse therefore acknowledges that magic may have harmful effects while condemning it as spiritually destructive. The verse's wording explicitly says that what they learned harmed them and did not benefit them.

The allegation fails because it assumes that only unreal things can be forbidden. That assumption is irrational. Many real things are forbidden precisely because they are harmful. Magic is condemned not because Islam presents it as harmless fantasy, but because it is a corrupt, devilish, harmful, and spiritually ruinous practice.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith on the seven destructive sins.

2. The Qur'an's acknowledgement of magic is framed entirely as condemnation

[Qur'an 2:102](#) does not describe magic in neutral or positive terms. It connects magic with the disbelief of the devils, warning against disbelief, harm, lack of benefit, and loss in the Hereafter. These are not the words of legitimisation. They are the words of condemnation.

The verse does not say that magic is a valid religious science. It does not say that Muslims may learn it. It does not say that magicians are blessed, gifted, or spiritually advanced. It does not say that magic should be used for good purposes. Instead, it says that those who learned it acquired what harmed them and did not benefit them. This is comprehensive moral disqualification.

A practice can be real and forbidden at the same time. The critic's argument only works if "real" means "permissible", but Islam never accepts that equation. The forbidden world contains real harms. That is exactly why revelation warns against them.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

3. Authentic Sunni Islamic hadith classifies magic as a destructive major sin

The Prophetic Sunnah removes any possible ambiguity. The Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, counted magic among the seven destructive sins. This is reported in Sahih al-Bukhari, including [hadith 2766](#) in the Sunnah.com numbering, where sorcery is listed among the seven destructive sins.

This classification is decisive against the allegation. Islam does not place legitimate acts among the destructive sins. It places grave acts there. Magic is therefore not treated as a permitted spiritual method, an acceptable science, or a neutral cultural practice. It is placed among sins that destroy a person's religion and moral standing.

This is also why Salafi scholars such as Shaykh Abd al-Aziz ibn Baz and Shaykh Salih al-Fawzan treat magic as a grave violation of monotheism when it involves seeking help from devils, sacrificing to them, invoking them, or performing acts of worship for them. Magic is not legitimised. It is condemned spiritually, morally, and, in Islamic law, legally.

Relevant sources: Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith 2766 and 6857; Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, parallel narration on the seven destructive sins; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

4. Islam rejects both denialist rationalism and occult glorification

The Sunni Islamic position avoids two extremes. The first extreme denies all magic and treats every reference to magic as mere superstition or metaphor. The second extreme glorifies magic and treats it as hidden wisdom, spiritual power, or sacred knowledge. Islam rejects both.

The Qur'an affirms that magic can cause harm by Allah's permission, but it also declares that it harms and does not benefit. This is a precise middle position. It neither gives magic independent

metaphysical power nor dismisses all occult harm as impossible. Instead, it places magic under Allah's created order and moral judgement.

This is not superstition. It is theological realism. Islam recognises that there are unseen created beings, such as devils, and that human beings may enter sinful relations with them. However, Islam denies that devils or magicians possess any independent power against Allah. Magic is therefore neither sacred nor sovereign. It is a corrupt means whose effects remain dependent on Allah's decree.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa, discussions on magic, devils, and created causes; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah, discussion of divine decree and created causes; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

5. The phrase "what harmed them and did not benefit them" defeats the legitimisation claim

A legitimate practice may be described as beneficial, lawful, useful, or righteous. [Qur'an 2:102](#) says the opposite about magic. It says that people learned what harmed them and did not benefit them. This is one of the strongest anti-magic statements in the verse. The wording appears clearly in the Arabic text and in translation: "they learn what harms them and does not benefit them."

The wording is important. The harm is not only social or marital. It is also religious and spiritual. The verse says that those who purchased magic had no share in the Hereafter. That means the deepest harm of magic is not merely that it damages relationships or frightens people. Its deepest harm is that it corrupts the person's relationship with Allah and may enter the category of disbelief.

Therefore, [Qur'an 2:102](#) acknowledges the harmful effect of magic only to condemn those who seek it. The critic's argument reverses the verse's meaning.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

6. Legitimate Islamic protection is not magic

Another confusion behind this allegation is the failure to distinguish magic from lawful protection. Islam forbids magic but permits lawful supplication, Qur'anic recitation, remembrance of Allah, and seeking protection through authentic prophetic invocations. These are not magic. They are acts of worship directed to Allah alone.

Lawful protective recitation is based on dependence upon Allah, while magic is commonly based on corrupt rituals, hidden manipulation, deception, devilish assistance, or forbidden invocations. The two belong to opposite theological categories. One is monotheistic worship. The other is forbidden occult practice.

This distinction is essential. Critics often lump together all unseen matters as "magic". Islam does not. The lawful request for Allah's protection is worship. Seeking occult power through

devils is forbidden and may be disbelief. Therefore, the Islamic acknowledgement of magic's harmful possibility does not legitimise magic. It clarifies why Muslims must avoid it and seek protection only through lawful means.

Shaykh Ibn Baz's official fatwa material supports this distinction by directing Muslims to lawful protection, including Ayat al-Kursi, the last surahs of the Qur'an, remembrance of Allah, and reliance upon Allah, rather than counter-magic or occult methods.

Relevant sources: Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Ibn Baz, Turuq al-wiqayah min al-sihr; Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, reports concerning lawful protective recitation; Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, reports concerning lawful protective recitation.

7. The accusation depends on a false definition of legitimacy

The critic treats acknowledgement as legitimacy, but legitimacy in Islamic law requires permission, approval, or lawful benefit. [Qur'an 2:102](#) gives none of these. Instead, it gives condemnation, warning, harm, lack of benefit, loss in the Hereafter, and the denial of independent power.

This distinction is important because the Qur'an often acknowledges realities it condemns. It acknowledges disbelief without legitimising disbelief. It acknowledges oppression without legitimising oppression. It acknowledges the existence of devils without legitimising obedience to devils. Similarly, it acknowledges the harmful reality of magic without legitimising magic.

The correct conclusion is therefore not that Islam legitimises magic, but that Islam recognises enough of its harmful reality to warn people against it, forbid it, and direct believers to lawful reliance upon Allah.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Al-Fawzan, Imanat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

8. Final judgement on Claim (f)

Claim (f) fails because it confuses effect with approval. [Qur'an 2:102](#) acknowledges that magic can cause harm, but only under Allah's permission, and only while describing it as harmful, non-beneficial, connected to disbelief, and ruinous in the Hereafter. Authentic hadith classifies magic among the destructive sins, and Sunni Islamic Salafi scholarship treats it as a grave violation, especially when it involves devils. Islam therefore does not legitimise magic by acknowledging its effect. It condemns magic precisely because it is a real spiritual and moral danger.

Part 7: Refutation of Allegation (g)

Allegation (g)

The verse is claimed to contradict Islamic monotheism by attributing independent causal power to magic.

1. The allegation is directly contradicted by the wording of Qur'an 2:102

This claim is one of the clearest to refute because [Qur'an 2:102](#) explicitly denies the very thing the allegation asserts. The verse says that magicians could not harm anyone except by Allah's permission. This clause removes independent causal power from magic.

The verse does not say that magic operates outside Allah's rule. It does not say that magicians overpower Allah's will. It does not say that devils possess autonomous authority. It does not say that occult forces control the universe. It says the opposite: no harm occurs except by Allah's permission. Quran.com's rendering of [Qur'an 2:102](#) preserves this key clause: "But they could not harm anyone except by Allah's Will."

Therefore, [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not a contradiction of monotheism. It is a statement of monotheism. It affirms that even harmful created causes remain subordinate to Allah's decree.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

2. Islamic monotheism does not deny created causes

The allegation assumes that Islamic monotheism requires denying all secondary causes. That is false. Islam affirms that Allah alone is the Creator, Sustainer, and ultimate controller of all things, while also affirming that He creates means and causes within creation.

Fire burns by Allah's permission. Food nourishes by Allah's permission. Medicine heals by Allah's permission. Poison harms by Allah's permission. A sword cuts by Allah's permission. None of these created causes has independent power. They are means created and governed by Allah.

Magic, if it produces harm, is no different in this respect. Its effect is not independent. It is not divine. It is not outside Allah's control. It is a created cause or means of harm that operates only if Allah permits it. The verse therefore fits within Sunni Islamic belief concerning divine decree and created causes.

Relevant sources: Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa, discussions on divine decree and created causes; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah, discussion of divine decree; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

3. "By Allah's permission" means sovereignty, not approval

A critic may respond that if magic works "by Allah's permission", then Allah approves it. This is a second confusion. In Sunni Islamic theology, Allah's universal permission is not the same as His religious approval.

Allah may allow a thing to occur as a test, punishment, consequence, or wisdom, while still hating and forbidding the act itself. Disbelief occurs by Allah's decree, but Allah does not approve disbelief. Murder occurs by Allah's decree, but Allah does not approve murder. Oppression occurs by Allah's decree, but Allah does not approve oppression. In the same way, magic may harm by Allah's permission, but Allah does not approve magic.

This distinction is essential to understanding [Qur'an 2:102](#). The verse condemns magic while affirming Allah's control over its possible effects. That is not contradiction. It is theological precision.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa, discussions on divine will and command; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah, discussion of universal will and legislative command; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

4. The verse strips magic of metaphysical independence

Many occult systems present magic as a hidden force that trained practitioners can manipulate through secret knowledge. [Qur'an 2:102](#) dismantles that worldview. It does not present magic as a neutral cosmic law available to the skilled. It presents magic as devilish, forbidden, harmful, non-beneficial, spiritually ruinous, and incapable of harm unless Allah permits.

That is the opposite of occult metaphysics. The verse does not elevate magic. It demotes it. It tells the believer that magic is not an independent power. It is not a rival to Allah. It is not a sacred science. It is not a path to salvation. It is a destructive practice whose effects remain dependent on Allah's will.

This is why the verse strengthens monotheism, meaning the oneness of Allah, "tawhid", rather than undermining it. The believer fears Allah, not magic as an independent force. The believer avoids magic because Allah forbade it, not because magic has divine power.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

5. The allegation contradicts the verse's anti-association structure

Association of partners with Allah, "shirk", occurs when created beings or forces are given rights, powers, worship, or dependence that belong to Allah alone. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not do this. It does not give magic divine power. It does not command reliance on magicians. It does not allow seeking occult aid. It does not treat devils as partners with Allah. Instead, it condemns the devils and subordinates all harm to Allah's permission.

The verse's structure is anti-association at every level. Sulayman is cleared of disbelief. The devils are condemned. The angels warn against disbelief. Magic is described as harm without benefit. Allah alone controls whether harm occurs. The buyer of magic loses the Hereafter. Every major clause pushes the reader away from occult dependence and toward reliance upon Allah.

Therefore, accusing [Qur'an 2:102](#) of violating monotheism is not supported by the text. The verse's actual function is to protect monotheism from occult exaggeration.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

6. Sunni Muslim scholars use Qur'an 2:102 to condemn magic as a violation of monotheism

Recognised Sunni Muslim scholars do not use [Qur'an 2:102](#) to legitimise magic. They use it as proof against magic. Shaykh Abd al-Aziz ibn Baz cited the verse to show the gravity of magic and its connection to disbelief. His official fatwa material explains that magic is connected to unlawful relations with devils and that protection from magic must be through lawful Qur'anic recitation, remembrance, and reliance upon Allah rather than occult methods.

Shaykh Salih al-Fawzan, in his explanations of monotheism, discusses magic under matters that violate or endanger monotheism, especially where the magician seeks assistance from devils through acts of worship, humiliation, sacrifice, or invocation. This is decisive for the internal Sunni Islamic reading. If the verse truly attributed independent power to magic, Sunni Muslim scholars committed to "tawhid" would not use it as evidence against sorcery. They do so because the verse denies independent power to magic and condemns the occult path.

The claim therefore misrepresents both the Qur'anic text and the Sunni Islamic theological tradition.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Uthaymin, Al-qawl al-mufid ala kitab al-tawhid.

7. The hadith evidence supports the same monotheistic framework

The authentic Sunnah also confirms that magic is not treated as an independent or legitimate power. The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, counted magic among the seven destructive sins, alongside associating partners with Allah and other grave offences. [Sahih al-Bukhari 2766](#) includes sorcery among these destructive sins.

This classification supports the same conclusion as [Qur'an 2:102](#). Magic is not a rival power to Allah, nor is it lawful spiritual knowledge. It is a grave destructive sin because it endangers monotheism, harms people, and often involves unlawful dependence on devils. The hadith evidence therefore reinforces the Qur'anic argument that magic is condemned and subordinated to Allah's permission, not treated as independent.

Relevant sources: Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith 2766 and 6857; Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, parallel narration; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

8. Final judgement on Claim (g)

Claim (g) fails because [Qur'an 2:102](#) explicitly says that magic cannot harm anyone except by Allah's permission. This clause denies independent causal power and affirms Allah's absolute sovereignty. Islamic monotheism does not deny created causes. It denies that created causes act independently of Allah. Magic, like poison or fire, can only affect by Allah's decree. The verse therefore does not contradict monotheism, meaning the oneness of Allah, "tawhid". It protects "tawhid" by condemning magic, rejecting devilish occultism, and declaring that all harm remains under Allah's permission.

Part 8: Refutation of Allegation (h)

Allegation (h)

The Qur'an is alleged to confuse angels with devils by associating angels with sinful acts.

1. The allegation fails because Qur'an 2:102 sharply distinguishes devils from angels

The claim collapses when the structure of [Qur'an 2:102](#) is read carefully. The verse does not blur angels and devils. It separates them with precision. It first clears Sulayman of disbelief. It then identifies the devils as the guilty party: "but the devils disbelieved, teaching people magic." Only after this does it mention what was sent down to the two angels in Babylon, Harut and Marut, and it immediately records their warning: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." The verse also states that the people learned what harmed them and did not benefit them, and that no harm occurred except by Allah's permission.

The devils are associated with disbelief and corrupt teaching. The angels are associated with warning, trial, and prohibition. The two categories are not confused. They are contrasted. The allegation depends on erasing the verse's own distinction between devils who mislead and angels who warn.

In the Sunni Islamic reading, this distinction is essential. The devils are morally corrupt enemies of mankind. Angels are honoured servants of Allah who obey His command. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not confuse these categories. It uses both categories in a morally ordered way: the devils are condemned, the angels warn, the humans who proceed after warning are held responsible.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

2. The angels are not described as committing sin

The allegation says the verse associates angels with sinful acts. This is not what the verse says. Harut and Marut are not described as worshipping devils, practising magic for themselves, seducing people into sorcery, lying, rebelling, or disobeying Allah. The only direct speech attributed to them is a warning against disbelief.

This is decisive. If the Qur'an intended to portray Harut and Marut as sinful angels, their quoted speech would not be a prohibition. Yet the verse says they would not teach anyone until they first said, "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." Ibn Kathir's tafsir, as presented on Quran.com, reports early explanations that Allah made them promise not to teach anyone until first proclaiming that they were only a test and that the person must not fall into disbelief.

The sinful act belongs to those who ignored the warning and learned what harmed them. The devils are blamed for disbelief and corrupt teaching. The angels are not blamed. The verse

therefore does not associate angels with sin in the way critics claim. It associates angels with a divinely appointed test and a clear warning.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah.

3. A divinely commanded test is not a sinful act

The critic's mistake is to assume that involvement in a test makes the tester sinful. That assumption is invalid. In Islamic theology, Allah tests His servants through commands, prohibitions, blessings, hardships, temptations, enemies, wealth, poverty, and access to choices that may lead either to obedience or sin. The existence of the test does not mean the test is morally evil from Allah's side, nor does it mean the agent carrying out Allah's command is sinful.

For example, the presence of forbidden desires in human life does not mean Allah approves sinful fulfilment of those desires. The existence of Satan as a tempter does not mean Satan's path is approved. The presence of wealth as a trial does not mean greed is approved. Likewise, the presence of forbidden magical knowledge as a test does not mean the angels committed sin by warning people before the test.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) gives the key phrase: "We are only a trial." The Arabic term for trial is "fitnah". In this context, the term means a test by which obedience and disobedience become manifest. It does not mean moral approval of the forbidden thing. The angels' role is therefore fully compatible with obedience to Allah.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa.

4. The Qur'anic doctrine of angels rules out devil-like rebellion

The Qur'an describes angels as servants who do not disobey Allah in what He commands them and who do what they are commanded. This principle governs the interpretation of [Qur'an 2:102](#). If Harut and Marut are angels, their action must be understood as obedience to Allah's command within a trial, not as rebellion, devilry, or moral corruption.

Sunni Islamic tafsir therefore does not need to rescue the verse from contradiction. The Qur'an itself supplies the interpretive framework. Angels obey Allah. Devils disbelieve and mislead. Humans are tested and accountable. [Qur'an 2:102](#) fits that framework exactly.

The critic's reading would only be possible if the verse said Harut and Marut disbelieved, rebelled, deceived people, or practised magic as a sinful pursuit. It says none of that. It says the devils disbelieved, while the angels warned people not to disbelieve. That is not confusion. It is contrast.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Qur'an 66:6; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102 and Qur'an 66:6; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

5. The verse places moral blame exactly where it belongs

[Qur'an 2:102](#) assigns moral blame with precision. Sulayman is declared innocent. The devils are declared disbelievers. The angels issue a warning. The people who learn magic after the warning are condemned for acquiring what harms and does not benefit. Those who purchase such knowledge are said to have no share in the Hereafter.

This distribution of moral responsibility is coherent. Prophethood is protected. Devils are exposed. Angels remain obedient. Humans remain accountable. Allah's sovereignty over harm is affirmed. No category is confused with another.

The allegation therefore fails because it misreads moral proximity as moral identity. Merely mentioning angels in a passage about magic does not make angels devils, just as mentioning prophets in passages about disbelief does not make prophets disbelievers. The verse's grammar and moral logic keep the categories separate.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

6. Later legendary reports must not be confused with the Qur'anic text

Some confusion around this allegation comes from later stories about Harut and Marut, including reports influenced by Israelite material, meaning Jewish and Christian transmitted reports known as "Israiliyyat". Some of these reports describe dramatic stories involving angels, desire, punishment, or earthly temptation. These reports are not the Qur'anic text.

A sound Sunni Islamic method distinguishes between what the Qur'an establishes and what later reports claim. [Qur'an 2:102](#) establishes that Harut and Marut were connected to a test in Babylon and warned people not to disbelieve. It does not establish the sensational stories sometimes attached to them. Ibn Kathir's tafsir is especially valuable here because it records such material cautiously and does not build the verse's meaning upon unreliable embellishments.

Critics often attack later legendary narratives and then accuse the Qur'an of confusion. That is methodologically invalid. The Qur'anic text itself is restrained, clear, and theologically coherent.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith.

7. The allegation depends on isolating a single word from its moral frame

The critic often isolates the idea that Harut and Marut "taught" and then treats this as if it must mean moral approval or sinful participation. That is not a responsible reading. The verse itself provides the frame: the devils disbelieved, the angels warned, the learners proceeded, the knowledge harmed, and Allah alone permitted any effect.

A word must be interpreted within its sentence, and a sentence within its moral and theological context. In [Qur'an 2:102](#), the context is warning and condemnation, not approval. The teaching is not free-floating. It is governed by the prior warning: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." Ibn Kathir's commentary explicitly frames the matter as trial and testing, not angelic corruption.

Thus, the allegation is not drawn from the full verse. It is drawn from a partial reading that removes the warning and then accuses the Qur'an of confusion.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

8. Final judgement on Claim (h)

Claim (h) fails because [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not confuse angels with devils. It explicitly condemns the devils as disbelievers while presenting Harut and Marut as part of a divine trial who warn people not to disbelieve. The angels are not described as rebels, magicians, devil-worshippers, or sinners. The sinful choice belongs to those who ignore the warning and learn harmful forbidden knowledge. The verse therefore preserves the Sunni Islamic distinction between obedient angels, disbelieving devils, morally responsible humans, and Allah's complete sovereignty.

Part 9: Refutation of Allegation (i)

Allegation (i)

The Qur'an is accused of moral inconsistency for presenting angels as a "test" involving forbidden knowledge.

1. The allegation misunderstands the nature of divine testing

This claim assumes that a divine test must involve only morally neutral options. That assumption is false. In revelation, moral tests often involve exposure to prohibited things. The test lies precisely in whether the servant obeys Allah's prohibition or follows desire, curiosity, pride, fear, greed, or pressure.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) presents Harut and Marut as a test. The warning is explicit: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." This warning removes ambiguity. A person who proceeds after that warning is not an innocent seeker of knowledge. He is someone who chooses forbidden knowledge despite being told that it leads to disbelief. The verse then states that people learned what harmed them and did not benefit them, and that those who purchased such knowledge had no share in the Hereafter.

There is therefore no moral inconsistency. The test is morally coherent because the prohibition is clear before the person acts. The angels are not tricking anyone. They are not hiding the danger. They are not presenting magic as useful religious knowledge. They warn first, and the learners are condemned only after knowingly proceeding.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah.

2. Forbidden knowledge can be a test without being approved

The allegation wrongly equates exposure with endorsement. Allah may allow a person to encounter forbidden knowledge, forbidden wealth, forbidden relationships, forbidden speech, or forbidden power. That does not mean He approves the forbidden matter. It means the servant is tested by whether he obeys Allah's limits.

Magic is not treated in the verse as beneficial knowledge. It is described as harmful and non-beneficial. Those who acquire it are spiritually ruined. The verse therefore presents forbidden knowledge as a test of obedience, not as an approved object of study. Ibn Kathir's tafsir reports early explanations that Harut and Marut would not teach anyone until first warning that they were a test and that the person must not fall into disbelief.

This distinction is crucial. A warning label on poison does not endorse drinking poison. A legal prohibition against theft does not endorse theft by naming it. A trial involving forbidden magic does not endorse magic. [Qur'an 2:102](#) identifies the danger, declares the warning, and condemns those who proceed.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

3. The angels' warning makes the test morally transparent

A morally problematic test would be one in which the tested person is deceived, denied knowledge of the danger, or punished for an unclear violation. [Qur'an 2:102](#) describes the opposite. The angels warn before the person proceeds. Their warning states the nature of the matter: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve."

This warning establishes moral transparency. The learner is not trapped. He is not coerced. He is not misled by the angels. He is informed that the matter is religiously dangerous. If he continues, he does so by choice.

The moral burden therefore rests on the learner, not on the angels. The verse uses active language for the learners: they learn what causes separation between a man and his wife, and they learn what harms and does not benefit them. The later condemnation is also attached to those who purchased such knowledge. That is accountability, not inconsistency.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa.

4. A test can involve real danger and still be just

Some critics act as though a divine test is only fair if it involves no serious danger. That is not how moral life works. Real tests are meaningful because real consequences exist. Wealth can corrupt. Power can corrupt. Desire can corrupt. Fear can corrupt. Knowledge can corrupt when it is pursued through forbidden means or used for forbidden ends.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) presents magic as a dangerous test precisely because it exposes the person's loyalty. Will the person stop when warned that the matter is disbelief, or will he continue because he desires control, revenge, curiosity, power, or worldly advantage? The test reveals the inner state. This is morally consistent because the verse does not punish a person for unavoidable ignorance. It condemns those who knowingly acquire what harms and does not benefit. The angels' warning comes first, then the human choice, then the moral judgement.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

5. The test protects the doctrine of human responsibility

Far from being morally inconsistent, [Qur'an 2:102](#) strongly affirms human responsibility. The people are not portrayed as helpless victims of angelic instruction. They are warned first. They then choose to learn. The verse says they learn what harms them and does not benefit them. It also says they knew that whoever purchased it would have no share in the Hereafter.

This means the moral failure is deliberate. It is not innocent ignorance. It is not compulsion. It is not confusion caused by angels. It is a conscious preference for forbidden power over obedience to Allah.

The Arabic concept of responsibility before Allah is tied to clear warning and accountable choice. [Qur'an 2:102](#) contains both. The warning is clear. The choice is voluntary. The consequence follows the deliberate pursuit of forbidden knowledge.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

6. The allegation ignores the verse's anti-magic purpose

If [Qur'an 2:102](#) were morally inconsistent, it would blur the status of magic. It does not. The verse is morally severe throughout. It associates magic with disbelief, harm, lack of benefit, marital destruction, and loss in the Hereafter. It also denies that magic has independent power by saying harm occurs only by Allah's permission.

This is a coherent moral system. Forbidden knowledge is not forbidden because Islam fears knowledge itself. It is forbidden because some paths of knowledge involve disbelief, devilish aid, spiritual corruption, harm to others, and rebellion against Allah's limits. Magic is one such path.

The verse therefore distinguishes between beneficial knowledge and destructive forbidden knowledge. Islam commands the pursuit of beneficial knowledge, but it prohibits knowledge that corrupts faith and harms creation. There is no inconsistency in that distinction. Every serious moral tradition recognises that some forms of knowledge or technique may be dangerous, restricted, or forbidden because of their nature and use.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

7. The test is consistent with Sunni Islamic belief in Allah's wisdom

Sunni Islamic theology affirms that Allah is perfectly wise, just, and sovereign. His tests are not purposeless. They reveal faith, expose hypocrisy, distinguish obedience from rebellion, and establish proof against those who choose misguidance after warning.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) fits this principle. The trial of Harut and Marut establishes proof against those who insist on forbidden magic after being warned. Their later condemnation is therefore not arbitrary. It follows knowledge, warning, choice, and persistence.

The allegation treats divine testing as if it must remove the possibility of sin. That would empty moral responsibility of meaning. A world in which no one can choose wrongly is not a world of moral testing. [Qur'an 2:102](#) is morally coherent because it presents a real test, a clear warning, a voluntary act, and a just consequence.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

8. Final judgement on Claim (i)

Claim (i) fails because it misunderstands divine testing. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not present forbidden knowledge as approved knowledge. It presents it as a dangerous test preceded by an explicit warning: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." The angels are not morally corrupt because they warn rather than seduce. The learners are responsible because they proceed knowingly. The verse is therefore morally consistent: Allah tests, angels obey, humans choose, magic remains forbidden, and the consequence follows clear warning and deliberate disobedience.

Part 10: Refutation of Allegation (j)

Allegation (j)

The narrative is claimed to reflect Babylonian pagan myths rather than divine revelation.

1. The allegation confuses geographical mention with theological dependence

The claim rests on a weak assumption: because [Qur'an 2:102](#) mentions Babylon, the verse must be borrowing from Babylonian pagan mythology. This does not follow. A revealed text may mention Egypt without endorsing Egyptian religion, Rome without endorsing Roman paganism, Babylon without endorsing Babylonian religion, or Arabia without endorsing pre-Islamic idolatry. Mentioning a place is not dependence on that place's mythology.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) mentions Babylon as the location connected to a particular trial involving magic. It does not mention Babylonian gods, temple cults, astral priesthods, Marduk, Ishtar, Enlil, Ea, or any pagan cosmogony. The verse does not reproduce a Babylonian creation myth, divine conflict myth, underworld myth, fertility cult, or astral theology. Its theological structure is entirely anti-pagan: Allah alone controls harm, devils are condemned, magic is harmful, and forbidden occult

practice leads to loss in the Hereafter. The verse's wording is explicit that the magic "could not harm anyone except by Allah's Will."

The burden of proof is therefore on the critic. To prove pagan borrowing, the critic must identify a Babylonian myth that contains the same narrative structure: Sulayman being falsely accused, devils teaching magic, Harut and Marut in Babylon, a warning not to disbelieve, marital separation through magic, the denial of independent magical power, and final judgement in the Hereafter. Without that, the claim is only an association fallacy.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Lambert, Babylonian Creation Myths; George, The Epic of Gilgamesh.

2. Qur'an 2:102 does not contain Babylonian pagan theology

Babylonian religion was deeply polytheistic. Its myths involved multiple gods, cosmic struggles, divine genealogies, sacred kingship, ritual power, celestial omens, and temple-centred cultic life. [Qur'an 2:102](#) contains none of this. The verse is not polytheistic, not astral, not temple-centred, not mythic in the Babylonian religious sense, and not concerned with legitimising ritual specialists.

The verse's core theology is pure monotheism, meaning the oneness of Allah, "tawhid". It states that no harm can occur except by Allah's permission. This single clause is enough to separate the Qur'anic worldview from pagan magical cosmology. Babylonian magical texts often operated within a ritual world of divine names, incantations, demons, omens, and priestly mediation. [Qur'an 2:102](#) rejects autonomous occult causality and subjects all possible harm to Allah's permission.

Therefore, the verse does not preserve Babylonian paganism. It dismantles the religious assumptions on which pagan magical thinking depends.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Bottero, Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia; Scurlock, Sourcebook for Ancient Mesopotamian Medicine; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

3. Babylon was historically associated with magic, but association is not adoption

Ancient Mesopotamia was historically known for divination, incantations, omen literature, anti-witchcraft rituals, and ritual specialists. A Qur'anic reference to Babylon in a discussion of magic is therefore historically intelligible. The Metropolitan Museum of Art notes that first-millennium Mesopotamian incantations and rituals, including Maqlu anti-witchcraft texts, formed part of a long tradition of trained specialists and transmitted ritual knowledge. The University of Helsinki's Ancient Near Eastern Empires project similarly describes Mesopotamian anti-witchcraft texts as combining incantations with ritual instructions and notes that Babylonian cities were among the places from which such ritual texts are known.

However, historical intelligibility is not the same as religious borrowing. If a text says that a forbidden practice was associated with a known historical centre of occult learning, that does not

mean the text adopts that centre's theology. Rather, [Qur'an 2:102](#) uses Babylon as the setting of a warning against forbidden magic. The verse does not romanticise Babylon as a source of sacred wisdom. It presents the matter as a severe trial.

This distinction is important. The Qur'an's mention of Babylon is polemical and corrective, not devotional or derivative. It does not invite believers to learn Babylonian occult sciences. It warns them that such knowledge is harmful, spiritually destructive, and powerless except by Allah's permission.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Lenzi, Secrecy and the Gods; Rochberg, The Heavenly Writing; Abusch and Guinan, Mesopotamian Magic.

4. The verse's moral centre is not myth but judgement

Babylonian myths often explain cosmic origins, divine rivalries, royal legitimacy, or ritual order. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does something different. It delivers moral judgement. It clears Sulayman of disbelief. It condemns devils. It describes magic as a trial. It records the angels' warning. It condemns those who knowingly learn what harms and does not benefit. It affirms that harm occurs only by Allah's permission.

This is not mythic storytelling. It is theological adjudication. The verse's purpose is not to entertain, preserve folklore, or explain the origin of Babylonian religion. Its purpose is to purify belief and warn against magic.

The critic's claim fails because it mistakes any reference to an ancient place for dependence on that place's pagan religion. By that reasoning, any modern historian who writes about Babylonian astrology would be promoting Babylonian paganism. That is not serious textual analysis. Description and warning are not endorsement or borrowing.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Lambert, Babylonian Creation Myths.

5. The Qur'an reverses pagan assumptions about occult power

In many ancient magical systems, ritual knowledge was treated as a means of controlling hidden forces. The specialist could manipulate names, rites, signs, objects, demons, or divine agencies to produce a desired result. [Qur'an 2:102](#) gives the opposite message: magic harms only if Allah permits, and those who seek it acquire harm without benefit.

This is a direct theological reversal. The magician is not empowered as a sacred technician. The devils are not honoured as sources of wisdom. Babylon is not sanctified. The learners are not praised. The result is not enlightenment. The result is loss.

The verse therefore cannot be fairly classified as pagan myth. It is an anti-occult, anti-devil, anti-magic, monotheistic warning. Its use of Babylon as a setting strengthens the historical realism of the warning but does not make the warning Babylonian paganism.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa, discussions on magic, devils, and created causes; Ibn Uthaymin, Al-qawl al-mufid ala kitab al-tawhid; Bottero, Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia.

6. The allegation fails because it cannot identify a matching Babylonian source

A serious borrowing claim requires an actual source. It is not enough to say "Babylon had magic" or "Babylonian religion included occult practices." The critic must produce a Babylonian text that matches [Qur'an 2:102](#) in its distinctive content and sequence. The alleged source would need to include Sulayman's exoneration, devils as disbelieving teachers, Harut and Marut, a warning against disbelief, marital separation through magic, harm only by Allah's permission, and loss in the Hereafter.

No such Babylonian pagan text is produced by this allegation. The claim therefore remains speculative. It relies on atmosphere, not evidence. It says "Babylon sounds pagan," then treats that as proof. That is not academic argumentation.

The Qur'anic account is better understood on its own terms: a revealed correction concerning magic, prophethood, devils, moral testing, and divine sovereignty.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Rochberg, The Heavenly Writing; Lenzi, Secrecy and the Gods; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

7. Babylon as a historical city does not prove Babylonian theological dependence

Babylon was indeed one of the major cities of ancient Mesopotamia. Encyclopaedia Britannica describes it as one of antiquity's most famous cities and as the capital of southern Mesopotamia, lying near modern Al-Hillah in Iraq. This confirms the historical significance of the location, but it does not prove that [Qur'an 2:102](#) adopted Babylonian pagan belief.

A historically known location can appear in revelation, history, poetry, or polemic without the text inheriting that location's religion. The mention of Babylon gives the episode a historical setting. It does not make the passage a Babylonian myth. The internal theology of [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not Babylonian polytheism, but strict monotheism and moral warning.

The critical question is therefore not whether Babylon existed or had magical traditions. Both are historically intelligible. The critical question is whether the Qur'an reproduces Babylonian pagan theology. It does not.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Britannica, "Babylon"; Bottero, Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

8. Final judgement on Claim (j)

Claim (j) fails because [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not contain Babylonian pagan theology, does not reproduce a Babylonian myth, and does not endorse Babylonian occult practice. It locates a trial connected with magic in Babylon while condemning magic and subordinating all harm to Allah's permission. The verse is not pagan in structure, purpose, or doctrine. It is a monotheistic refutation of occult power and a warning against forbidden knowledge. The allegation survives only by confusing geographical reference with theological borrowing.

Part 11: Refutation of Allegation (k)

Allegation (k)

The verse is said to undermine human free will by portraying people as victims of supernatural teaching.

1. The allegation is directly contradicted by the sequence of the verse

[Qur'an 2:102](#) does not portray people as helpless victims. It portrays them as morally responsible learners who proceed after a warning. The sequence is critical: Harut and Marut say, "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve"; then people learn from them what causes separation between a man and his wife; then the verse declares that they learned what harmed them and did not benefit them; then it states that they knew whoever purchased it would have no share in the Hereafter. The verse also states that no harm could occur except by Allah's permission.

This sequence proves responsibility. The learners are warned. They continue. They acquire forbidden knowledge. They know its consequence. They are condemned. That is not victimhood. That is accountable choice.

The allegation would only work if the verse said people were forced, deceived, overpowered, or made unable to resist. It says none of that. The verse presents warning before action and knowledge before judgement.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

2. The angels' warning establishes moral agency

The phrase "so do not disbelieve" is a command of restraint. A command only makes moral sense if the listener is capable of responding. Harut and Marut do not treat the learner as helpless. They address him as a responsible agent who can stop.

This is decisive. If the Qur'an intended to portray humans as victims of supernatural compulsion, the warning would be meaningless. The warning proves that the person has a real choice: obey the warning and avoid the forbidden matter, or ignore the warning and continue.

The verse therefore protects human responsibility rather than undermining it. It shows that even in the presence of dangerous supernatural matters, human beings remain accountable for their decisions.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa, discussions on human action and divine decree; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

3. Sunni Islamic theology affirms both divine decree and human responsibility

The critic's claim often assumes a false dilemma: either Allah decrees events, or humans have responsibility. Sunni theology rejects this false dilemma. Allah creates and decrees all things, but human beings still possess will, choice, intention, and accountability within the created order.

This applies directly to [Qur'an 2:102](#). Allah allowed the trial to exist. Harut and Marut warned. The devils misled. Humans chose whether to proceed. The harm could not occur except by Allah's permission. None of this cancels human responsibility. Rather, it places human action inside Allah's sovereignty.

In Sunni Islamic doctrine, human free will is not independent sovereignty. It is created will. Humans choose, but their choices do not escape Allah's knowledge, will, creation, or judgement. [Qur'an 2:102](#) is fully consistent with this: the learners choose forbidden magic, but the effects of that magic remain under Allah's permission. The verse's wording, "they could not harm anyone except by Allah's Will," directly preserves Allah's sovereignty while the people's learning preserves human accountability.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa, discussions on divine decree and human action; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah, discussion of belief in divine decree; Al-Fawzan, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah.

4. The word "learned" indicates voluntary acquisition, not passive victimhood

[Qur'an 2:102](#) repeatedly frames the human side in terms of learning and purchasing. These are active ideas. A person who learns seeks, listens, accepts, and internalises. A person who purchases chooses an exchange and accepts a price. The verse says people learned what harmed them and that they purchased it at the cost of the Hereafter. This language is not the language of coercion. It is the language of deliberate acquisition.

The metaphor of purchase is especially powerful. It means that the person exchanged guidance, safety, and the Hereafter for forbidden occult gain. A victim is not normally described as purchasing the thing that destroys him. The Qur'an's wording therefore assigns responsibility to the learner.

This defeats the claim that the verse portrays humans as passive victims of supernatural instruction. The verse portrays them as morally accountable agents who choose corrupt knowledge after warning.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

5. Supernatural temptation does not remove responsibility

The Qur'anic worldview recognises devils, whispers, temptations, and trials. However, these do not erase human responsibility. A devil may invite, whisper, beautify, or tempt, but the human being remains accountable for accepting or rejecting that invitation. [Qur'an 2:102](#) fits this wider doctrine. The devils are guilty of disbelief and corrupt teaching, but the learners are guilty for pursuing what they were warned against.

This is morally coherent. Temptation is not compulsion. Instruction is not coercion. Availability is not obligation. A person can be exposed to evil without being forced to commit it.

The allegation is not sustained because it treats exposure to forbidden knowledge as automatic victimhood. [Qur'an 2:102](#) instead treats exposure as a test, warning as proof, and deliberate pursuit as guilt.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa, discussions on Satanic influence and human responsibility; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

6. The verse's final condemnation would be unjust unless choice existed

[Qur'an 2:102](#) states that those who purchased magic had no share in the Hereafter. Such a condemnation would be morally unintelligible if the people were innocent victims with no agency. The fact that the verse condemns them proves that they are being treated as accountable.

The Qur'an does not punish people for unavoidable ignorance or forced action in the way it condemns deliberate disbelief and forbidden acquisition. Here, the warning is given, the danger is stated, the choice is made, and the consequence follows. The moral structure is clear.

Therefore, the allegation contradicts the verse's own moral logic. The people are not condemned because they were victimised. They are condemned because they knowingly chose forbidden knowledge after warning.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

7. The allegation also ignores the protective function of the warning

A warning before a dangerous act does not make the warned person a victim of the warning. It gives that person moral clarity. In [Qur'an 2:102](#), Harut and Marut do not conceal the danger. They announce it before any learning takes place. Ibn Kathir's commentary preserves early reports that they would not teach anyone until first declaring that they were only a test and that the person should not fall into disbelief.

This means the warning functions as protection, not coercion. It tells the learner to stop. If the learner proceeds, the fault lies in ignoring the warning. The text therefore strengthens accountability rather than weakening it.

The allegation fails because it treats a warning as if it were entrapment. The verse presents the opposite: a transparent moral test in which the wrong path is labelled before the person chooses it.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

8. Final judgement on Claim (k)

Claim (k) fails because [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not portray people as helpless victims of supernatural teaching. It portrays them as warned, morally responsible learners who knowingly proceed into forbidden knowledge. The angels' warning proves that stopping was possible. The language of learning and purchasing proves voluntary acquisition. The final condemnation proves

accountability. The verse therefore affirms human responsibility within Allah's decree and does not undermine free will.

Part 12: Refutation of Allegation (I)

Allegation (I)

Muhammad is alleged to have learned the story from Jews in Arabia.

1. The allegation is an assertion, not evidence

This allegation depends on a claim of human borrowing, but it does not provide the necessary evidence. To prove that the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, learned [Qur'an 2:102](#) from Jews in Arabia, the critic must establish several points with evidence. First, an identifiable Jewish source in Arabia must be shown to contain the same account. Second, the Prophet must be shown to have had access to that exact source. Third, the wording, structure, theology, and argument of [Qur'an 2:102](#) must match that source closely enough to prove dependence. Fourth, borrowing must explain the Qur'anic passage better than revelation, correction, or independent divine disclosure.

The allegation usually does none of this. It moves from possibility to certainty. It says that Jews lived in Arabia, that some Jewish traditions existed, and that [Qur'an 2:102](#) contains material involving Sulayman, angels, magic, and Babylon. From this, it concludes that the Prophet learned the story from Jews. That is not proof. It is speculation.

A serious historical argument cannot rest on the mere presence of Jewish communities. Cultural contact is not the same as textual dependence. Presence is not transmission. Transmission is not plagiarism. Similarity is not proof of learning. The critic must identify the actual source, the route of access, and the specific dependence. Without that, the claim remains polemical rather than evidential.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction.

2. Qur'an 2:102 is not a passive repetition of Jewish lore

The verse does not read like a borrowed tale inserted for entertainment. It is a tightly constructed theological correction. It begins by clearing Sulayman of disbelief. It identifies the devils as the guilty party. It discusses magic as forbidden and harmful. It introduces Harut and Marut as a trial. It records their warning: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." It states that magic can harm only by Allah's permission. It says people learned what harmed them and did not benefit them. It concludes that those who purchased such knowledge had no share in the Hereafter.

This is not the structure of a merely borrowed legend. It is the structure of correction, judgement, and doctrinal purification. The passage does not preserve Jewish lore neutrally. It adjudicates. It

rejects false attribution to Sulayman. It condemns devilish magic. It subordinates all harm to Allah. It treats forbidden occult knowledge as spiritual ruin.

If the Prophet had merely learned the story from Jews, the critic must explain why the Qur'an reshapes the material into a forceful anti-magic, anti-devil, pro-prophetic, monotheistic verdict. The borrowing claim is weak because it does not account for the Qur'an's distinctive theological architecture.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

3. The Prophet's environment does not prove he learned this account from Jews

The Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, lived in a religiously mixed environment in which Jews, Christians, polytheists, and others existed. However, historical environment alone cannot prove literary dependence. A person may live near a community without learning a specific account from them. A community may possess broad religious ideas without possessing the exact form of [Qur'an 2:102](#). Even if a related tradition existed orally, that would not prove that the Qur'an copied it.

The allegation also ignores the Prophet's own historical profile. He was not known as a formal student of Jewish rabbis. His opponents in Makkah and Madinah attacked him fiercely, yet the Qur'an repeatedly challenged accusations that he was being taught by a human source. The polemical charge that he was taught by others existed in his lifetime, but the Qur'an rejected it as false.

From a Sunni Islamic standpoint, the Prophet's knowledge of such matters came through revelation. Critics who deny revelation may disagree, but denial is not evidence. A naturalistic assumption cannot simply be substituted for historical proof.

Relevant sources: Ibn Hisham, Al-sirah al-nabawiyah; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction.

4. The allegation cannot identify the alleged Jewish teacher

A claim of direct learning becomes weaker when it cannot identify the teacher, the text, the lesson, the setting, or the transmission. Critics sometimes speak vaguely of "Jews in Arabia", but this is not evidence. Which Jewish individual taught the Prophet this account? In which language? From which written text or oral tradition? When did this happen? How did the Prophet acquire the exact content? Why did his opponents not produce this teacher as decisive evidence against him?

These questions matter. The Prophet's opponents were not passive observers. They were politically, socially, and religiously invested in discrediting him. If there had been a clear Jewish teacher behind [Qur'an 2:102](#), that would have been a powerful polemical weapon. Instead, the charge remains vague.

A vague allegation cannot defeat a specific revealed text. The Qur'anic passage must be judged by its own wording and structure. It presents a coherent doctrine of prophethood, angels, devils, magic, divine permission, and human accountability. The claim of Jewish instruction adds no real explanatory force unless the critic can produce the missing evidence.

Relevant sources: Ibn Hisham, Al-sirah al-nabawiyah; Ibn Kathir, Al-bidayah wa al-nihayah; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih.

5. Similarity to Jewish material does not prove that the Prophet learned it from Jews

Even if a critic identifies partial resemblance between [Qur'an 2:102](#) and some Jewish tradition, that still would not prove that the Prophet learned the account from Jews. Similarity can be explained in several ways. It may reflect a shared memory of ancient events. It may reflect the Qur'an correcting earlier corrupted reports. It may reflect broad late antique religious vocabulary. It may reflect later Jewish, Christian, or Islamic transmission in complex directions. Or, from the Islamic standpoint, it may reflect revelation from Allah concerning matters earlier communities discussed imperfectly.

The critic must therefore prove direction of dependence. It is not enough to say that Jewish material existed. One must prove that the Qur'an depends on it. This is especially difficult because [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not merely repeat a Jewish account. It reshapes the matter around the innocence of Sulayman, the guilt of devils, the danger of magic, the warning of Harut and Marut, and the absolute sovereignty of Allah.

The charge is therefore circular when it begins with the assumption that revelation is impossible and then treats any overlap with previous religious material as borrowing. That is not neutral scholarship. It is philosophical bias presented as historical conclusion.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

6. Qur'an 2:102 corrects Jewish claims rather than submitting to them

The opening of the verse is especially important: "Sulayman did not disbelieve, but the devils disbelieved." This is a corrective statement. It does not flatter a Jewish accusation, nor does it simply repeat a Jewish legend. It rejects a corrupt attribution to a prophet of Allah.

The Qur'an's treatment of prophets is consistent. Prophets are honoured servants of Allah, not occult criminals or servants of devils. [Qur'an 2:102](#) therefore functions as a defence of prophetic integrity. It is not dependent on Jewish approval. It challenges claims that compromised Sulayman's honour.

If the verse were a product of Jewish instruction, one would expect it to preserve the perspective of the alleged source community. Instead, it issues a judgement over that perspective. It separates truth from falsehood. Sulayman is cleared. Devils are condemned. Magic is condemned. Human

learners are held accountable. This is revelation acting as criterion, not a student copying a teacher.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih.

7. The allegation fails under historical and theological scrutiny

Historically, the allegation lacks the required evidence: no named teacher, no identified source text, no demonstrated access, no matching account, and no proof of dependence. Theologically, the Qur'anic passage is not a borrowed curiosity. It is a deliberate correction that serves Islamic monotheism, the honour of prophethood, the condemnation of magic, and the affirmation of divine sovereignty.

The critic may reject revelation as a matter of personal belief, but that rejection does not prove borrowing. A refutation must insist on this distinction. "I do not believe the Qur'an is revelation" is not the same as "Muhammad learned this from Jews." The first is a theological disagreement. The second is a historical claim requiring evidence. The required evidence has not been supplied.

8. Final judgement on Claim (l)

Claim (l) fails because it offers speculation in place of proof. The presence of Jews in Arabia does not establish that the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, learned [Qur'an 2:102](#) from them. The allegation cannot identify the teacher, the source, the setting, or the exact transmission. [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not a passive repetition of Jewish lore. It is a compact theological correction that clears Sulayman, condemns devils, forbids magic, affirms human responsibility, and subordinates all harm to Allah's permission. The claim is therefore historically unproven and theologically inadequate.

Part 13: Refutation of Allegation (m)

Allegation (m)

The Qur'an is accused of selectively borrowing from multiple Jewish sources and stitching them together.

1. The allegation is built on an unfalsifiable method

This claim is often presented when critics cannot find one exact source for [Qur'an 2:102](#). Instead of admitting that no single source matches the Qur'anic account, they claim that the Qur'an stitched together fragments from multiple Jewish sources. This creates an unfalsifiable argument. If one source matches, they call it copying. If no source matches, they call it stitching. If details differ, they call it selective adaptation. If details are absent, they call it indirect borrowing.

That is not a rigorous method. A serious source-critical argument must identify the sources, show the specific elements allegedly taken from each, explain the transmission pathway, and demonstrate why the Qur'anic arrangement is best explained by borrowing rather than by independent revelation or correction of earlier corrupted traditions.

The stitching claim usually does not meet this standard. It is a rescue theory for a failed plagiarism accusation. Because no single Jewish source reproduces [Qur'an 2:102](#), the critic invents a composite process. But a composite borrowing claim requires even more evidence, not less.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

2. Qur'an 2:102 is not a patchwork; it is a unified argument

The verse is internally coherent. Its parts are not randomly assembled. Each clause serves the central argument.

First, Sulayman is cleared of disbelief. Second, the devils are identified as the disbelieving teachers of magic. Third, Harut and Marut are introduced in connection with a trial. Fourth, the warning "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve" makes the moral status of the matter explicit. Fifth, the learners are described as acquiring what could separate a husband and wife. Sixth, the verse denies independent occult power by saying harm occurs only by Allah's permission. Seventh, it declares that this knowledge harms and does not benefit. Eighth, it ends with the loss of the Hereafter for those who purchased it. Qur'an.com's rendering preserves this full sequence in one integrated verse.

This is not stitched folklore. It is a carefully ordered theological refutation of magic and false claims against Sulayman. The verse moves from prophetic exoneration to devilish guilt, from trial to human choice, from harm to divine sovereignty, from worldly damage to eternal consequence. The internal progression is too coherent to be dismissed as random compilation.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

3. The alleged "multiple sources" do not produce the Qur'anic meaning

A critic may point to separate Jewish materials about Solomon, demons, magic, angels, forbidden knowledge, or Babylon. Even if all those themes exist somewhere in Jewish literature, combining theme parallels does not produce proof of borrowing. A list of common motifs is not a source.

The Qur'anic meaning is not reducible to those motifs. The verse's meaning lies in its theological arrangement: Sulayman is innocent, devils are guilty, angels warn, humans choose, magic harms but has no independent power, and the Hereafter is lost by those who purchase forbidden knowledge. The critic must show not only that the motifs existed, but that the Qur'an took them from identifiable sources and arranged them by human borrowing.

That has not been demonstrated. The presence of scattered motifs in earlier or neighbouring traditions proves only that the Qur'an addresses themes known in the religious world of late antiquity. It does not prove stitching.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Reeves and Reed, Enoch from Antiquity to the Middle Ages; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

4. The stitching claim ignores the Qur'an's role as criterion

The Qur'an does not present itself as a neutral collector of religious folklore. It presents itself as guidance, clarification, correction, and criterion. This matters because the Qur'an often addresses earlier communities and disputed claims. Where it shares a topic with earlier traditions, the proper question is not merely "Is there overlap?" but "What judgement does the Qur'an give?"

In [Qur'an 2:102](#), the judgement is clear. Sulayman is not guilty. Devils are guilty. Magic is disbelief and harm. Harut and Marut warn against disbelief. Human learners are responsible. Allah alone controls harm. The buyers of magic lose the Hereafter.

This is not stitching. It is judgement. The Qur'an takes a disputed religious subject and resolves it according to pure monotheism. That is why the verse is doctrinally unified. The critic's model of stitching cannot explain the verse's moral force, theological coherence, and polemical correction.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

5. A composite borrowing theory must meet a higher evidentiary burden

It is harder, not easier, to prove borrowing from multiple sources. A single-source borrowing claim requires one source and one transmission pathway. A multiple-source borrowing claim requires several sources, several lines of access, and evidence that the alleged borrower selected, modified, and integrated them into one coherent passage.

The allegation provides none of this with sufficient precision. Which Jewish sources were used? Which exact lines or traditions were taken? Were they written or oral? Were they available in western Arabia in the Prophet's lifetime? In what language? Who transmitted them? Why do the alleged sources lack the Qur'an's exact arrangement? Why does the Qur'an reject or transform the alleged source material so sharply?

Without answers, the claim is not evidence. It is imagination filling gaps. The more sources a critic must hypothesise, the stronger the evidence must become. In this case, the necessary evidence is not supplied.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction; Ibn Hisham, Al-sirah al-nabawiyah.

6. The Qur'an's account contains controls that resist mythic stitching

A stitched myth usually carries unresolved tensions from its sources. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not. Its controlling theological principles organise the entire passage.

The first control is prophetic protection: Sulayman did not disbelieve. The second is moral identification: the devils disbelieved. The third is warning: Harut and Marut say, "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." The fourth is divine sovereignty: magic harms only by Allah's permission. The fifth is moral evaluation: the knowledge harms and does not benefit. The sixth is eschatological judgement: its buyer has no share in the Hereafter.

These controls prevent the passage from becoming folklore. Every element is disciplined by monotheism, meaning the oneness of Allah, "tawhid", and by moral accountability. This is why the passage reads as revelation and judgement, not as a stitched compilation of legends.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Iana al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Uthaymin, Al-qawl al-mufid ala kitab al-tawhid.

7. The critic mistakes correction for dependence

The Qur'an may mention subjects known to Jews, Christians, or others, but it does not follow that it borrows from them. A teacher correcting a false rumour must mention the rumour's subject. That does not mean the teacher borrowed the rumour. In [Qur'an 2:102](#), the Qur'an addresses claims connected to Sulayman, magic, devils, and forbidden knowledge. Its purpose is correction.

This distinction is decisive. If previous communities had corrupted or confused reports about Sulayman and magic, revelation can correct those reports. The Qur'an's reference to the subject matter does not prove dependence on the corrupt form. It proves that the Qur'an is addressing an existing error and replacing it with the correct judgement.

Therefore, even if scattered Jewish traditions contained partial motifs, [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not reducible to them. It functions as divine correction, not human compilation.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext.

8. Final judgement on Claim (m)

Claim (m) fails because it is a speculative composite theory used when no single source matches [Qur'an 2:102](#). The verse is not a stitched patchwork of Jewish material. It is a unified theological argument that clears Sulayman, condemns devils, presents Harut and Marut as a trial, warns against disbelief, affirms human responsibility, denies independent power to magic, and declares the spiritual ruin of those who purchase forbidden knowledge. A multiple-source borrowing claim requires strong evidence of sources, access, transmission, selection, and integration. The allegation provides none of that. It therefore remains conjecture, not proof.

Part 14: Refutation of Allegation (n)

Allegation (n)

The verse allegedly contradicts the Qur'anic doctrine of angelic infallibility.

1. The allegation assumes what Qur'an 2:102 does not state

The claim depends on the assumption that Harut and Marut sinned. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not say that. It does not say that Harut and Marut disobeyed Allah. It does not say that they practised magic for themselves. It does not say that they invited people to disbelief. It does not say that they loved, approved, or encouraged sorcery. The only speech directly attributed to them is a warning: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." The verse also states that the people learned what harmed them and did not benefit them, and that no harm occurred except by Allah's permission.

That warning is the controlling statement. It proves that their role was not sinful promotion but divinely governed warning. The people who proceeded after the warning were the guilty parties. The devils were the ones explicitly described as disbelievers. Sulayman was explicitly cleared. Harut and Marut are not condemned in the verse.

Therefore, the allegation creates a contradiction by inserting a premise that the verse does not contain. If angels are obedient servants of Allah, and Harut and Marut were acting as part of a divinely appointed test while warning against disbelief, then no contradiction exists.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah.

2. Qur'an 66:6 supports the correct reading of Qur'an 2:102

The Qur'an describes the angels as beings who do not disobey Allah in what He commands them and who do what they are commanded. Qur'an 66:6 states this doctrine clearly. This principle must govern how [Qur'an 2:102](#) is read. If Harut and Marut are angels, then their action must be understood as obedience to Allah's command, not rebellion against Him.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) gives no reason to abandon that principle. It does not portray Harut and Marut as rebels. It portrays them as warning people. Therefore, the two passages are harmonious. Qur'an 66:6 states the general doctrine of angelic obedience. [Qur'an 2:102](#) gives a particular case of angels functioning within Allah's command in a test.

The alleged contradiction only appears if one first assumes that teaching in this context means sinful endorsement. But the verse itself prevents that reading by saying that they warned each person not to disbelieve. A warning against disbelief is not disbelief. Obedient participation in a test is not sin.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Qur'an 66:6; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102 and Qur'an 66:6; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Al-Fawzan, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah.

3. The verse distinguishes between angelic obedience and human disobedience

[Qur'an 2:102](#) is structured around moral distinction. Sulayman is innocent. The devils disbelieve. Harut and Marut warn. Humans choose to learn harmful knowledge. Allah controls whether harm occurs. Those who purchase magic lose the Hereafter.

This structure does not blur responsibility. It assigns it carefully. The angels are not placed in the same moral category as devils or human learners. The devils are condemned because they taught magic in disbelief. The human learners are condemned because they proceeded despite warning. The angels are not condemned because their role is warning within a trial.

The claim of contradiction fails because it collapses these distinctions. It treats the angels' involvement in the test as though it were the same as the devils' corrupt teaching. The verse itself separates the two. Devils mislead. Angels warn. Humans are tested. Allah judges.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Iman al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

4. A divinely commanded test does not compromise angelic obedience

The allegation assumes that if a test involves forbidden knowledge, then anyone connected to that test must be sinful. This is false. Allah tests human beings through forbidden options without approving the forbidden act. The test is meaningful because the person can obey or disobey.

For example, the existence of wine does not mean wine is approved. The existence of unlawful wealth does not mean unlawful wealth is approved. The existence of Satan does not mean Satan is approved. Similarly, the existence of forbidden magical knowledge as a trial does not mean the angels who warned against it became sinful.

Harut and Marut are not presented as independent initiators of evil. They are presented as part of a test and as warning agents before the person acts. Their statement, "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve," makes their role morally transparent. They do not conceal the danger. They reveal it.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa, discussions on divine decree, wisdom, and testing; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

5. Later reports of angelic sin are not the Qur'anic doctrine

Some polemical claims rely on later legendary reports about Harut and Marut, including stories of angels being tempted, falling into sin, or being punished. A sound Sunni Islamic approach does not make those stories the foundation of belief. Many such reports are treated as Israelite reports, meaning reports transmitted from earlier Jewish or Christian material known as "Israiliyyat", or as narrations that require scrutiny.

This is crucial. The critic often takes a weak or embellished later report, attaches it to [Qur'an 2:102](#), and then claims that the Qur'an contradicts angelic infallibility. That is invalid. The Qur'anic text itself does not narrate angelic sin. It narrates warning and trial.

Sunni Islamic tafsir must be anchored in the Qur'an, authentic Sunnah, and sound reports from the early Muslims. Anything beyond that must be assessed according to hadith and tafsir methodology. Therefore, the doctrine of angelic obedience is not overturned by sensational stories that the Qur'an itself does not state.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir.

6. The claim ignores the verse's own assignment of disbelief

[Qur'an 2:102](#) says that Sulayman did not disbelieve, but the devils disbelieved. It then says that Harut and Marut warned, "Do not disbelieve." If the verse intended to accuse Harut and Marut of disbelief or sinful rebellion, it would be incoherent for the verse to place disbelief explicitly on the devils and then place a warning against disbelief on the tongues of the angels.

This is a strong internal refutation. The verse's moral grammar is clear. Disbelief is attached to the devils and to those who knowingly purchase magic. Warning against disbelief is attached to Harut and Marut. The angels' quoted statement is therefore exculpatory, not incriminating.

The critic reverses the verse. The verse says the angels warned against disbelief. The critic says the angels modelled disbelief. These cannot both be true. The Qur'anic wording decides the matter.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

7. The correct Sunni Islamic conclusion preserves both texts

The sound conclusion is simple. Angels do not disobey Allah in what He commands them. Harut and Marut, if understood as angels, were not sinful magicians. They were part of a divine test and warned people before any forbidden pursuit occurred. The guilt belonged to those who ignored the warning and learned harmful magic. The devils were the corrupt teachers linked to disbelief.

This preserves [Qur'an 66:6](#) and [Qur'an 2:102](#) together. There is no contradiction unless the critic forces a sinful meaning onto Harut and Marut that the verse itself does not state.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Qur'an 66:6; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah.

8. Final judgement on Claim (n)

Claim (n) fails because [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not present Harut and Marut as sinful or rebellious angels. It presents them as part of a divine trial who warned people, "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." The Qur'an explicitly attaches disbelief to the devils, not to the angels. Sunni Islamic doctrine of angelic obedience remains intact. The alleged contradiction is manufactured by reading later legendary material, or hostile assumptions, into a verse that itself gives a clear warning-based framework.

Part 15: Refutation of Allegation (o)

Allegation (o)

The Qur'an is said to contain an incoherent narrative that Islamic scholars later attempted to "rescue" through tafsir.

1. The allegation mistakes concise revelation for incoherence

[Qur'an 2:102](#) is compressed, but compression is not incoherence. The Qur'an often speaks with dense theological economy, giving enough information to establish guidance, correction, and judgement without narrating every historical detail. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does exactly that. It does not aim to provide a full biography of Harut and Marut, a history of Babylonian occultism, or an extended story about every person who learned magic. Its purpose is moral and theological.

The structure is coherent. The verse first rejects a false claim against Sulayman. It then identifies the devils as the real disbelievers who taught magic. It then mentions the trial involving Harut and Marut in Babylon. It records their warning. It describes what people learned. It denies independent power to magic. It declares that the knowledge harmed and did not benefit. It concludes with loss in the Hereafter. Qur'an.com's rendering preserves this integrated structure, including the warning, the harm, the limitation by Allah's will, and the final Hereafter consequence.

This is not incoherence. It is a tightly ordered argument. The critic calls it incoherent only because the verse is not written as a modern narrative essay with all background information supplied.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction.

2. Tafsir explains the verse; it does not rescue it

The allegation assumes that interpretation is evidence of textual failure. That is unreasonable. Every serious scripture, legal text, philosophical text, and ancient document requires interpretation. The existence of commentary does not prove incoherence. It proves that scholars are carefully explaining meaning, language, context, and implications.

Tafsir, meaning Qur'anic explanation, is not a rescue operation. It is the normal scholarly discipline by which the Qur'an is understood through Arabic language, Qur'anic cross-reference, Prophetic Sunnah, reports from the Companions, and early scholarly interpretation. Islamic scholars did not invent coherence after the fact. They drew out the coherence already present in the verse.

In [Qur'an 2:102](#), tafsir clarifies matters such as the false accusation against Sulayman, the distinction between devils and angels, the meaning of trial, "fitnah", the prohibition of magic,

and the phrase "except by Allah's permission." These are interpretive clarifications of a coherent passage, not desperate repairs of a broken one.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, introduction and commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

3. The verse's internal logic is clear without later embellishment

Even without extended reports, [Qur'an 2:102](#) communicates its main points clearly. Sulayman was not guilty of disbelief. The devils were guilty. Magic is connected to disbelief. Harut and Marut were a test. They warned people not to disbelieve. People learned harmful magic. Magic cannot harm independently. It harms and does not benefit. Those who choose it lose the Hereafter.

These points are all inside the verse. Tafsir does not create them. It identifies and explains them. The allegation that scholars later "rescued" the verse is therefore unfair. The core theology requires no rescue.

A passage is incoherent when its parts cannot be reconciled or when its claims contradict each other. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not do that. Every clause supports the same warning: do not associate prophecy with magic, do not follow devils, do not learn sorcery, do not imagine magic has independent power, and do not trade the Hereafter for harmful forbidden knowledge.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Iman al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

4. The alleged incoherence usually comes from hostile reconstruction

The claim of incoherence often arises when critics splice the verse with later legends, apocryphal stories, speculative etymologies, or assumptions from outside Islamic theology. They then judge the resulting hybrid as confused. This is not sound analysis.

The verse must first be read according to its own wording. It does not narrate angels sinning. It does not say magic is lawful. It does not give magic independent power. It does not confuse Sulayman with devils. It does not leave the moral status of magic ambiguous. It explicitly condemns the path.

Once the hostile additions are removed, the verse is coherent. The supposed incoherence belongs to the critic's reconstruction, not to the Qur'an.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext.

5. The verse has a consistent theological progression

The progression of [Qur'an 2:102](#) can be read in five stages.

First, the verse protects prophethood by clearing Sulayman. Second, it identifies the real source of corrupt magic: the devils. Third, it explains that Harut and Marut functioned as a test, not as promoters of disbelief. Fourth, it establishes human responsibility by noting that people learned

after warning. Fifth, it reasserts pure monotheism by stating that harm occurs only by Allah's permission and ends with Hereafter accountability.

This progression is not accidental. It moves from correction to warning, from warning to accountability, from accountability to monotheism, and from monotheism to final judgement. The verse's internal organisation is therefore strong.

The accusation of incoherence is especially weak because the verse repeats its moral evaluation in different ways: disbelief, trial, do not disbelieve, harm, no benefit, no share in the Hereafter. These terms all point in the same direction. They make the passage morally unambiguous.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Al-qawl al-mufid ala kitab al-tawhid.

6. Differences among scholars do not prove incoherence

Critics may point to differences in tafsir as evidence that the verse is confused. This is also weak. Scholarly discussion over details does not mean the text has no coherent meaning. Scholars may discuss whether certain reports about Harut and Marut are reliable, how to understand particular grammar, or how much historical background can be affirmed. Such discussion is normal in serious interpretation.

What matters is that the central meaning is stable: magic is forbidden, Sulayman is innocent, devils are condemned, Harut and Marut warned, human learners were responsible, harm occurs only by Allah's permission, and the pursuit of magic brings spiritual loss.

Differences over secondary details do not overturn agreement on the main doctrine. The critic exaggerates interpretive discussion into contradiction because the polemical argument needs confusion where the text gives warning.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

7. Tafsir protects the text from legendary distortion

Far from rescuing an incoherent Qur'an, sound tafsir protects [Qur'an 2:102](#) from later legendary distortions. Scholars such as Ibn Kathir report, assess, and limit extra-Qur'anic material. They do not allow weak stories to overrule the verse's clear message. Ibn Kathir's tafsir presentation records the warning-based interpretation of Harut and Marut, including that they would not teach anyone until first declaring that they were a test and that the learner should not fall into disbelief.

This is methodologically important. A weak tradition may say more than the Qur'an says. A polemicist may use that weak tradition to attack Islam. But Sunni Islamic tafsir can respond: the Qur'an establishes only what it establishes; unsupported additions are not binding doctrine. The verse remains coherent because its meaning is anchored in its wording, not in every later tale attached to it.

Therefore, tafsir is not a rescue attempt. It is a filter. It separates the revealed text from doubtful embellishment and keeps the reader focused on the verse's actual guidance.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir.

8. Final judgement on Claim (o)

Claim (o) fails because [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not incoherent. It is concise, but its internal structure is clear: Sulayman is cleared, devils are condemned, Harut and Marut warn, humans choose, magic harms only by Allah's permission, and those who purchase it lose the Hereafter. Tafsir does not rescue the verse from confusion. It explains its language, context, and theological implications while filtering unreliable embellishments. The alleged incoherence comes from hostile reconstruction, not from the Qur'anic text.

Part 16: Refutation of Allegation (p)

Allegation (p)

The verse is claimed to endorse superstition rather than rational theology.

1. The allegation wrongly defines rational theology as denial of the unseen

The claim rests on a narrow secular assumption: anything involving angels, devils, magic, or unseen causation must be superstition. That assumption is not a neutral academic conclusion. It is a philosophical premise. Islamic theology does not define reason as denial of everything beyond direct sensory observation. Rather, sound reason recognises that human perception is limited, that unseen realities may exist, and that revelation from Allah gives knowledge about realities beyond ordinary human access.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) does not endorse superstition. It gives a disciplined theological account of a forbidden practice. It identifies the moral source of magic, condemns devilish teaching, warns against disbelief, denies independent occult power, and places all possible harm under Allah's permission. The verse's wording states that those who learned magic learned what harmed them and did not benefit them, and that no harm occurred except by Allah's will.

Superstition normally gives irrational fear or sacred value to objects, omens, rituals, hidden forces, or occult specialists. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does the opposite. It strips magic of sacred value. It denies that magic has autonomous power. It condemns those who seek it. It warns that its knowledge harms and does not benefit. Therefore, the verse is not an endorsement of superstition, but a refutation of occult superstition.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa.

2. Qur'an 2:102 is rational because it distinguishes cause, permission, morality, and accountability

The verse is theologically precise. It does not say that magic operates independently. It says harm cannot occur except by Allah's permission. It does not say that the practice is beneficial. It says it harms and does not benefit. It does not say that the learners are innocent. It says they purchased something that cost them their share in the Hereafter. It does not say that angels promoted disbelief. It says they warned, "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve."

This is a rational structure. The verse separates four matters that critics often confuse. First, it recognises that a harmful cause may exist. Second, it denies that the cause is independent of Allah. Third, it gives a moral ruling by identifying magic as disbelief and harm. Fourth, it assigns responsibility to those who knowingly pursue it after warning.

That is not superstition. It is a coherent account of causality and moral responsibility. A superstitious worldview fears magic as an uncontrolled mysterious power. [Qur'an 2:102](#) denies that. A superstitious worldview may glorify occult specialists. [Qur'an 2:102](#) condemns them. A superstitious worldview may treat hidden techniques as sacred knowledge. [Qur'an 2:102](#) says they harm and do not benefit.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

3. The verse opposes occult thinking rather than promoting it

Occult superstition normally encourages hidden manipulation. It promises power through secret knowledge, rituals, symbols, invocations, spirits, or unseen forces. Qur'an 2:102 blocks this at every level. It says the path is disbelief. It says the knowledge is harmful. It says it has no benefit. It says the practitioner has no independent power. It says the learner risks the Hereafter.

Therefore, the verse cannot fairly be described as promoting occult belief. It is an anti-occult passage. It exposes magic as devilish and spiritually destructive. It prevents the believer from treating magicians as powerful intermediaries. It directs fear, dependence, and hope back to Allah alone.

The rationality of the verse is seen in its moral diagnosis. People seek magic because they want control, revenge, domination, separation between spouses, hidden advantage, or unlawful power. The Qur'an exposes this desire and condemns it. That is a sober moral analysis of human corruption, not superstition.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Ibn Baz, Turuq al-wiqayah min al-sihr; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

4. Recognising real harm is not superstition

The allegation assumes that the only rational view of magic is to deny all possible effect. This assumption is not required by reason. Many harmful things are not fully visible in their mechanisms to ordinary people, yet their effects may be real. Islam does not ask people to

romanticise magic, fear it independently, or practise it. It simply states that it can cause harm only if Allah permits.

That is a restrained claim, not a superstitious one. It neither exaggerates magic into a sovereign force nor reduces all unseen harm to fiction. The Qur'an's wording is balanced. It recognises harm, denies independent power, condemns the practice, and commands reliance upon Allah.

This approach is more rational than both extremes. It is more rational than occultism because it rejects magic as sacred power. It is also more rational than crude denialism because it does not assume that human beings can dismiss every unseen reality merely because it is not measurable by ordinary senses.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa, discussions on magic, devils, and created causes; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah, discussion of belief in the unseen and divine decree; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

5. Islamic protection from magic is worship, not superstition

Islamic protection from magic is based on worship of Allah, not occult counter-magic. The lawful response is repentance, reliance upon Allah, prayer, remembrance, recitation of the Qur'an, lawful supplication, and authentic prophetic invocations. None of this is superstition in Islamic theology. It is direct dependence on the Creator.

This is very different from magical thinking. Magical thinking seeks power through hidden techniques. Islamic protection seeks refuge in Allah. Magical thinking often involves spirits, symbols, sacrifices, or secret formulas detached from worship. Islamic protection is an act of monotheism. Magical thinking attempts to manipulate unseen forces. Islamic supplication humbly asks Allah.

This distinction is essential. Critics often place all unseen-related practices into one category and call them superstition. Islam does not do that. Islam separates monotheistic worship from forbidden occultism. [Qur'an 2:102](#) is part of that separation. The hadith evidence also supports this distinction because magic is counted among the seven destructive sins, not among lawful acts of worship.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith 2766; Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, parallel narration; Ibn Baz, Turuq al-wiqayah min al-sihr.

6. The verse preserves moral clarity, which superstition lacks

Superstition often blurs morality. It can make people fear omens, objects, places, names, rituals, or invisible forces without a clear ethical framework. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does the opposite. It gives a clear moral framework.

Sulayman is innocent. The devils are guilty. The angels warn. Humans choose. Magic harms. It does not benefit. Allah alone permits any harm. The buyers of magic lose the Hereafter. Every element has a moral place.

This clarity is the opposite of superstition. The believer is not left in irrational panic. The believer knows that magic is forbidden, that devils are enemies, that magicians have no independent power, that Allah is sovereign, and that protection must be sought through lawful worship. The verse therefore produces disciplined belief and moral restraint, not superstitious fear.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

7. The allegation is internally inconsistent

The critic cannot coherently accuse [Qur'an 2:102](#) of both promoting superstition and stripping magic of independent power. The verse explicitly says that magic cannot harm except by Allah's permission. That statement rejects the idea that magic is an autonomous hidden force. It directs all causality back to Allah.

If a person defines superstition as irrational belief in independent occult power, [Qur'an 2:102](#) rejects that. If a person defines superstition as any belief in unseen realities, then the accusation is merely a rejection of religion itself, not a serious refutation of [Qur'an 2:102](#). In that case, the critic is not proving that the verse is irrational. He is only announcing a secular naturalistic assumption.

The verse should therefore be judged according to what it actually says. It does not glorify magic. It condemns it. It does not empower magicians. It limits them. It does not direct people to occult reliance. It directs them away from it.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah.

8. Final judgement on Claim (p)

Claim (p) fails because [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not endorse superstition. It presents a rational monotheistic framework: magic is harmful, forbidden, connected to disbelief, powerless except by Allah's permission, and spiritually destructive for those who pursue it. The verse rejects occult glorification and denies independent magical causality. It does not promote irrational fear. It teaches moral clarity, divine sovereignty, and lawful reliance upon Allah alone.

Part 17: Refutation of Allegation (q)

Allegation (q)

Islam is accused of promoting a fear-based religion by linking magic with disbelief and punishment.

1. The allegation confuses moral warning with fear-based manipulation

The claim assumes that any warning about punishment is fear-based manipulation. That assumption is not reasonable. Every serious moral, legal, and religious system warns people against destructive acts. A doctor warns a patient about poison. A court warns citizens about criminal penalties. A parent warns a child about danger. Revelation warns humanity about disbelief and spiritual ruin. Warning is not manipulation when the danger is real and the warning is truthful.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) links magic with disbelief and punishment because magic is not presented as a harmless curiosity. It is connected to devilish teaching, forbidden knowledge, harm to others, marital destruction, and the pursuit of occult power outside Allah's lawful guidance. The verse says Harut and Marut warned, "We are only a test, so do not abandon your faith," and it also says that the people learned what harmed them and did not benefit them.

The warning is therefore protective, not manipulative. A religion that never warns against destructive practices would not be morally serious. Islam warns against magic because it protects monotheism, families, spiritual integrity, and human accountability.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

2. The warning in Qur'an 2:102 is morally proportionate

The Qur'an does not link magic with disbelief randomly. Magic, in its forbidden religious form, often involves seeking aid from devils, invoking them, obeying them, humiliating oneself before them, slaughtering or offering for them, or committing acts of disbelief to gain their service. That is why recognised Sunni Muslim scholars treat such magic as a grave violation of monotheism.

The punishment is therefore not disproportionate. The issue is not a harmless trick or illusion. The issue is occult practice tied to devils, spiritual corruption, and harm against others. [Qur'an 2:102](#) specifically mentions separation between a man and his wife, showing that the practice may be used to damage families and violate human relationships.

The verse also says that those who learned it acquired what harmed them and did not benefit them. This means the warning protects both the victim and the practitioner. The magician harms others and destroys himself spiritually. A serious warning is appropriate for a serious evil.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith 2766.

3. Islam balances warning with knowledge, mercy, and lawful protection

The allegation portrays Islam as if it only frightens people. That is false. Islam does not merely say, "Be afraid of magic." It teaches what magic is, why it is forbidden, why it has no independent power, how to avoid it, and how to seek protection lawfully through Allah.

The verse itself contains balance. It warns against disbelief, but it also limits fear by saying that magic cannot harm anyone except by Allah's will. That clause prevents panic. It teaches the believer that magicians, devils, and occult practices are not sovereign. Allah alone controls harm.

Islam therefore does not produce helpless fear. It produces disciplined caution and reliance upon Allah. A Muslim avoids magic not because magic is a rival god, but because Allah forbade it. A Muslim seeks protection not from magicians, talismans, amulets, or occult counter-practices, but from Allah alone. Ibn Baz's material on the ruling of magic also directs Muslims to lawful means of protection and treatment rather than occult methods.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Al-qawl al-mufid ala kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Baz, Turuq al-wiqayah min al-sihr; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

4. Linking magic with disbelief protects pure monotheism

The heart of Islam is monotheism, meaning the oneness of Allah, "tawhid". Magic is dangerous because it often redirects dependence, fear, hope, sacrifice, invocation, obedience, and secrecy toward devils or occult forces. That directly threatens "tawhid".

The Qur'an's warning therefore serves a protective function. It prevents people from treating magicians as hidden authorities. It prevents fear of devils from becoming a rival to fear of Allah. It prevents desperate people from seeking unlawful occult solutions to marriage, illness, revenge, wealth, love, or status. It protects the servant from becoming enslaved to unseen manipulation.

This is not fear-based religion. It is monotheistic protection. The warning tells the believer: do not sell your Hereafter for forbidden control, do not seek hidden power through devils, do not harm people through occult means, and do not think anything can harm independently of Allah.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Iman al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

5. The verse protects victims as well as warning perpetrators

[Qur'an 2:102](#) mentions separation between a man and his wife. This is not fearmongering. It is an acknowledgement that magic may be used to damage real human relationships. The warning protects households from people who seek occult means to destroy marriages, create hatred, or manipulate emotions.

A moral system that fails to condemn such practices would be negligent. Islam's severity toward magic is partly because magic is not merely a private act of disbelief. It may involve harm against others. It can be used secretly against innocent people. It can exploit fear, destroy trust, and drive vulnerable people toward magicians.

Therefore, the warning is socially protective. It warns the potential practitioner, protects potential victims, and closes the door to a market of occult exploitation.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

6. Fear of punishment is not the only motive in Islam

Islamic worship is not built on fear alone. It includes love of Allah, hope in His mercy, gratitude for His blessings, reverence for His greatness, trust in His decree, and fear of His justice. A balanced believer worships Allah with love, hope, and fear. Removing fear entirely would produce moral recklessness. Making fear the only motive would produce despair. Islam rejects both extremes.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) is a warning passage, so it naturally contains warning language. That does not mean the whole religion is fear-based. A legal document warning against murder does not mean the whole legal system is hatred-based. A medical label warning against poison does not mean medicine is fear-based. A verse warning against magic does not mean Islam is fear-based.

The warning is appropriate to the subject. Magic is spiritually and socially destructive, so revelation speaks about it with severity. The hadith on the seven destructive sins confirms this severity by listing sorcery among the gravest destructive sins.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith 2766; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

7. The allegation ignores the mercy contained in the warning

A warning before punishment is mercy. In [Qur'an 2:102](#), the learners are not left ignorant. Harut and Marut warn them before they proceed. The verse tells later readers exactly why the path is forbidden. It exposes the consequences before a person falls into them. Ibn Kathir's tafsir material preserves the same warning-based explanation, namely that Harut and Marut would not teach anyone until first declaring that they were only a test and that the learner should not fall into disbelief.

This is merciful because it closes the excuse of ignorance. It also offers a path of safety: do not learn magic, do not seek magicians, do not treat devils as sources of power, and do not believe harm occurs independently of Allah. The believer is guided away from destruction before it happens.

A fear-based system manipulates people through vague terror. [Qur'an 2:102](#) gives precise warning, precise moral reasoning, and precise theological limits. That is guidance, not manipulation.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Turuq al-wiqayah min al-sihr.

8. Final judgement on Claim (q)

Claim (q) fails because [Qur'an 2:102](#) links magic with disbelief and punishment for clear moral and theological reasons. Magic is connected to devils, forbidden occult dependence, harm to others, and loss of monotheistic purity. The verse warns against it because warning is mercy when the danger is real. Islam does not create irrational fear of magic. It limits fear by declaring

that no harm occurs except by Allah's permission and directs the believer to lawful reliance upon Allah alone. The claim therefore mistakes protective moral warning for fear-based manipulation.

Part 18: Refutation of Allegation (r)

Allegation (r)

The Qur'an allegedly fails to distinguish clearly between knowledge, trial, and sin.

1. The allegation fails because Qur'an 2:102 distinguishes all three categories with precision

This allegation fails because [Qur'an 2:102](#) does exactly what the critic says it fails to do. The verse distinguishes between knowledge, trial, and sin by assigning each one a different moral function.

Knowledge is mentioned in the form of what people learned. However, the verse does not treat all knowledge as equal. It describes this specific knowledge as harmful and non-beneficial. Trial is identified by the warning of Harut and Marut: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." Sin is identified in the deliberate act of ignoring the warning and acquiring forbidden magical knowledge.

The distinction is therefore clear. The mere existence of knowledge is not the same as permission to acquire it. The existence of a trial is not the same as approval of the forbidden matter within that trial. The sin occurs when a person knowingly crosses the boundary after warning.

The verse's order makes this unmistakable: warning comes first, learning comes after, condemnation follows. That order proves that the Qur'an is not confused. It is assigning responsibility carefully. [Qur'an 2:102](#) explicitly states that the learners acquired what harmed them and did not benefit them, while also stating that the two angels warned that they were only a trial.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir.

2. The verse does not condemn knowledge absolutely

The Qur'an is not anti-knowledge. Islam commands the pursuit of beneficial knowledge and honours those who know the truth and act upon it. What [Qur'an 2:102](#) condemns is not knowledge as such, but forbidden knowledge that is acquired through a corrupt path, used for harm, linked to disbelief, and pursued after clear warning.

This distinction is essential. Some knowledge is obligatory, such as knowledge of Allah, worship, lawful and unlawful matters, and religious duties. Some knowledge is permissible or

beneficial in worldly life. Some knowledge is forbidden because it corrupts faith or enables harm. Magic belongs to the last category.

The verse states that people learned "what harmed them and did not benefit them." This phrase proves that the Qur'an is not confusing knowledge with sin. Rather, it classifies a particular type of knowledge as sinful because of its nature, means, purpose, and consequence.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

3. The trial is explicitly identified before the sin occurs

A major strength of [Qur'an 2:102](#) is that the trial is not hidden. Harut and Marut say, "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." The learner is warned before proceeding. This makes the moral boundary clear.

The word trial, "fitnah", means that the person is being tested. A test is not sin by itself. The sin is the person's wrongful response to the test. In this verse, the wrongful response is to proceed into forbidden magical knowledge after being warned that doing so is connected to disbelief.

This means the Qur'an distinguishes trial and sin very carefully. The trial is the circumstance. The sin is the disobedient choice. The knowledge is the forbidden object acquired through that choice. These are not mixed together. They are layered in a precise moral sequence. Ibn Kathir's tafsir material also preserves the explanation that Harut and Marut would not teach anyone until first proclaiming that they were a test and warning the person not to fall into disbelief.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah.

4. The angels' warning proves the knowledge was not morally neutral

The phrase "so do not disbelieve" prevents any reading that treats the knowledge as neutral. If the knowledge were harmless or permissible, the warning would be unnecessary. The angels' warning establishes that pursuing the knowledge is religiously dangerous.

This is a clear distinction between awareness and acquisition. A person may know that magic exists, know that it is forbidden, and know that it is harmful. That awareness is not the same as learning magic in order to practise or use it. [Qur'an 2:102](#) condemns the latter, not the former.

This matters because critics often blur the categories. They assume that if the Qur'an mentions magic, it legitimises magical knowledge. That is false. A text may mention murder without teaching murder, mention idolatry without endorsing idolatry, or mention magic without permitting magic. [Qur'an 2:102](#) mentions magic as a warning against it.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

5. The verse separates beneficial knowledge from destructive knowledge

[Qur'an 2:102](#) uses a decisive evaluative phrase: "what harmed them and did not benefit them." This establishes a moral and practical distinction. Beneficial knowledge leads to truth, worship, justice, lawful worldly benefit, protection of people, or sound understanding. Destructive knowledge damages faith, harms others, empowers wrongdoing, and corrupts the person who seeks it.

Magic is placed in the second category. It does not benefit the learner. Even if it appears to offer control over others, revenge, influence, or hidden advantage, the verse says its real outcome is harm. Its worldly effects are themselves harmful, and its spiritual consequence is worse.

Therefore, the verse does not fail to distinguish knowledge from sin. It explains why this specific knowledge is sinful: it is harmful, non-beneficial, connected to disbelief, and pursued after warning. The authentic Sunnah strengthens this classification by listing sorcery among the seven destructive sins.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith 2766; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa.

6. The verse distinguishes between divine permission and moral permission

Another source of the allegation is the critic's confusion over the phrase "except by Allah's permission." The critic may assume that if Allah permits an event to occur in the created order, then the act must be morally permitted. Sunni Islamic theology rejects this confusion.

Allah's universal permission means that nothing can occur outside His will, knowledge, decree, and control. It does not mean that every act He allows to occur is loved, approved, or lawful. Disbelief occurs by Allah's decree, but disbelief is forbidden. Oppression occurs by Allah's decree, but oppression is forbidden. Magic may harm by Allah's permission, but magic is forbidden.

This distinction is one of the strongest proofs that [Qur'an 2:102](#) is precise rather than confused. It distinguishes created effect from moral approval. Magic may have an effect, but that effect is not independent and does not make the act lawful. [Qur'an 2:102](#) states that they could not harm anyone through it except by Allah's permission.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah, discussion of divine will and decree; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa, discussions on divine command and divine decree; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

7. The final judgement of the verse confirms the category of sin

The verse ends by saying that those who purchased this knowledge had no share in the Hereafter. This final judgement removes all ambiguity. The person is not condemned merely because a trial existed. The person is not condemned merely because magic was mentioned. The person is condemned because he purchased, pursued, and acquired forbidden knowledge after warning.

The purchase language is important. It indicates deliberate exchange. The learner trades obedience, spiritual safety, and the Hereafter for forbidden occult gain. That is sin, not innocent knowledge-seeking.

Thus, [Qur'an 2:102](#) distinguishes three things clearly: the test arranged by Allah, the warning delivered by Harut and Marut, and the sinful decision of the learner. The critic's allegation works only if these distinctions are ignored.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

8. Final judgement on Claim (r)

Claim (r) fails because [Qur'an 2:102](#) clearly distinguishes knowledge, trial, and sin. The knowledge in question is not beneficial knowledge but harmful forbidden magic. The trial is explicitly announced by Harut and Marut. The sin occurs when people ignore the warning and deliberately acquire what harms and does not benefit. The verse therefore does not blur moral categories. It gives a precise Sunni Islamic framework: Allah tests, angels warn, humans choose, magic remains forbidden, and accountability follows deliberate disobedience.

Part 19: Refutation of Allegation (s)

Allegation (s)

The story is claimed to be historically unverifiable and therefore fictional.

1. The allegation confuses historical limitation with historical disproof

This claim is built on an invalid inference. It moves from "this event is not independently verifiable through surviving external records" to "therefore it is fictional." That is not sound historical reasoning. Many ancient events, persons, conversations, and local episodes are not independently recoverable through archaeology, inscriptions, or non-Islamic documents. The absence of external verification does not prove fiction.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) concerns matters involving angels, devils, magic, trial, and divine permission. These are not all matters that can be verified by ordinary historical tools. A historian may be able to study Babylon, ancient magic, Jewish traditions, or late antique religious debates. However, the unseen elements of the verse are known through revelation, not through archaeology.

Therefore, the critic's standard is category-confused. A revealed report about angels cannot be dismissed as fictional merely because angels do not leave ordinary archival records. That objection assumes naturalism before the discussion begins. It does not refute the Qur'an. It merely refuses to accept revelation as a source of knowledge.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction.

2. Historical unverifiability is not the same as impossibility

A claim can be difficult to verify externally without being impossible. The existence of Babylon is historically established. Ancient Mesopotamia had extensive traditions of incantation, divination, exorcistic practice, anti-witchcraft ritual, and ritual specialists. The Qur'an's association of Babylon with a trial involving magic is therefore not historically absurd. What is not externally recoverable is the full unseen dimension of Harut and Marut and the exact event described in revelation.

This is an important distinction. The verse is not historically incoherent. It is located in a plausible ancient setting associated with occult practice. However, its ultimate authority does not depend on modern historians being able to reconstruct the event from Babylonian tablets. The Qur'an speaks with revelatory authority.

The critic therefore overstates the case. At most, the critic can say, "I do not have independent historical documentation for Harut and Marut." That is far weaker than saying, "The story is fictional."

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Lenzi, Secrecy and the Gods; Rochberg, The Heavenly Writing; Abusch and Guinan, Mesopotamian Magic.

3. Revelation is a valid source within Islamic epistemology

In Sunni Islam, knowledge is not limited to sensory observation or modern historical reconstruction. Sound knowledge comes through revelation, authentic transmission, reason, and sensory experience, each within its proper domain. Matters of the unseen are known through revelation, not by laboratory observation or archaeological excavation.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) is therefore not dependent on external historical verification in the way a secular historian might demand. For Muslims, the Qur'an is the speech of Allah, and its reports are true. The task of tafsir is to understand what the verse says, not to suspend belief until every unseen detail receives external corroboration.

This does not mean Islam rejects history. It means Islam refuses to reduce all truth to what survives in external archives. Such reduction would be too narrow. Human history is full of real events for which no direct external record survives. The unseen, by definition, requires revelation.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, introduction and commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

4. The verse is not presented as folklore but as theological correction

[Qur'an 2:102](#) is not framed like a fictional tale. It is not a mythic entertainment narrative. It is a correction of false belief and a warning against magic. It clears Sulayman of disbelief, identifies the devils as guilty, explains the trial of Harut and Marut, condemns magical learning, denies independent magical power, and warns of loss in the Hereafter.

This theological function is important. Fictional folklore usually serves entertainment, mythic identity, symbolic storytelling, or cultural preservation. [Qur'an 2:102](#) serves moral judgement and doctrinal purification. The verse is not interested in giving dramatic details. It gives only what is necessary for guidance.

The critic's claim that it is fictional because it is not externally verifiable ignores the verse's genre and purpose. The passage is revelatory correction, not secular historiography and not folklore.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith.

5. The critic's standard would invalidate much of ancient history

If a report must be externally verified by multiple independent surviving sources before it can be considered non-fictional, then vast portions of ancient history would be dismissed. Many ancient events are known from single sources, later sources, partial inscriptions, literary references, or tradition. Historians weigh probability, context, genre, transmission, and coherence. They do not automatically declare every singly attested event fictional.

The critic applies an unfair standard to the Qur'an. For ordinary ancient history, lack of independent verification may lead to caution. For the Qur'an, the critic declares fiction. That is not neutral. It is a double standard.

A fairer formulation would be: "The event is not independently verifiable through currently available non-Qur'anic records." That statement is limited and honest. It does not prove fabrication. It does not prove borrowing. It does not prove myth. It merely states the limits of external historical access.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir.

6. The Qur'an's account is historically restrained rather than mythologically inflated

A fictional or mythological account often expands dramatic detail: names, battles, dialogues, punishments, transformations, cosmic scenes, and legendary embellishments. [Qur'an 2:102](#) is notably restrained. It gives only a brief reference to Harut and Marut and focuses on the moral issue of magic.

This restraint is significant. The Qur'an does not indulge in the later sensational stories sometimes attached to Harut and Marut. It does not describe them falling into lust, committing murder, drinking wine, worshipping idols, or being punished in elaborate ways. Those elements belong to later reports whose reliability must be scrutinised. The Qur'anic text itself is concise and controlled.

The passage's restraint supports its function as revelation and warning, not fiction. It gives enough to establish truth and guidance, while avoiding legendary detail.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir.

7. The proper conclusion is epistemic humility, not dismissal

The critic's strongest possible statement is limited: the full historical circumstances of Harut and Marut cannot be reconstructed from surviving external evidence. That is not a refutation. It is a statement of limited access.

The Islamic conclusion is stronger because it is grounded in revelation: Allah informed us of the matter, and the verse's message is clear. Magic is forbidden. Sulayman is innocent. Devils are guilty. Harut and Marut were a trial. People were warned. Harm occurs only by Allah's permission. Those who pursue magic harm themselves and lose the Hereafter.

Therefore, the verse's truth is not suspended on the incompleteness of modern historical archives. Absence of external documentation cannot overturn revelation within Islamic epistemology. At most, it marks the limits of what secular historical reconstruction can independently confirm.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa.

8. Final judgement on Claim (s)

Claim (s) fails because historical unverifiability does not equal fiction. [Qur'an 2:102](#) contains unseen elements that are known through revelation, not external archives. Babylon's association with occult practice is historically intelligible, but the full event involving Harut and Marut belongs to revealed knowledge. The critic's conclusion is an overreach: lack of independent reconstruction is not disproof. The verse remains theologically coherent, historically plausible in setting, and authoritative within Sunni Islamic epistemology.

Part 20: Refutation of Allegation (t)

Allegation (t)

The verse is accused of legitimising misogyny by mentioning marital separation caused by magic.

1. The allegation misreads description as endorsement

This claim is not sustained because [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not approve marital separation through magic. It condemns it. The verse mentions separation between a man and his wife as an example of the harm caused by forbidden magic. The function of the statement is not to legitimise the harm, but to expose it.

A text may mention murder without legitimising murder. It may mention theft without legitimising theft. It may mention oppression without legitimising oppression. In the same way,

[Qur'an 2:102](#) mentions marital separation caused by magic as a harmful result of forbidden occult practice. The verse immediately states that such knowledge harms and does not benefit. It also says that those who purchased it had no share in the Hereafter. These are not words of approval. They are words of condemnation.

The allegation therefore depends on a basic category error. It treats the Qur'an's exposure of a social harm as if it were approval of that harm. The verse does the opposite: it identifies the destruction of marriage as one of the reasons magic is morally and spiritually evil.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

2. The verse protects marriage rather than attacking women

The verse does not blame women for marital separation. It does not say that wives are the cause of magic. It does not say that women are more magical, more deceptive, more blameworthy, or more spiritually dangerous. It simply states that people learned from magic what could separate a man from his wife.

The wording identifies the relationship as the victim, not the woman as the villain. The harm is the destruction of a marriage bond. The guilty party is the one who learns and uses forbidden magic. The verse therefore protects the household from occult interference.

Calling this misogyny is textually baseless. The verse does not degrade women. It condemns those who attempt to destroy a marriage through forbidden means. It recognises the seriousness of harming the marital relationship and treats that harm as part of the corruption of magic.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

3. The phrase "between a man and his wife" names the marital bond as a target of harm

The verse mentions "a man and his wife" because marriage is one of the most serious human relationships affected by enmity, suspicion, manipulation, and emotional harm. Magic is condemned partly because it can be used to attack this bond. The Qur'an's wording is therefore socially protective.

The allegation assumes that mentioning a husband and wife must somehow be anti-woman. That does not follow. The verse does not single out wives as blameworthy. It mentions both spouses together as a relationship unit. The evil lies in causing separation between them.

This is important because marital separation through magic is not treated as normal divorce, lawful arbitration, or legitimate marital resolution. It is presented as a corrupt harm produced through forbidden knowledge. The verse therefore defends the integrity of marriage against hidden aggression.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

4. The Qur'an condemns the perpetrator, not the spouse harmed by the magic

A misogynistic reading would require the verse to blame the wife, portray her as spiritually inferior, or make her responsible for the breakdown. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does none of that. It blames those who learn magic after warning. It says they learned what harmed them and did not benefit them. It also states that those who purchased it had no share in the Hereafter.

The moral burden therefore rests on the magician or learner of magic, not on the wife. The verse does not turn women into scapegoats. It exposes an external corrupt act that may damage marriage.

This distinction is decisive. The critic reads misogyny into the verse because marriage is mentioned. But the verse's grammar does not support that claim. The actors condemned are the learners and buyers of magic. The marital pair are the object of harm.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa, discussions on magic and harm.

5. Islam treats unjust marital harm as morally serious

Islamic law and ethics treat marriage as a solemn covenant with rights, duties, kindness, justice, and accountability before Allah. [Qur'an 2:102's](#) mention of marital separation must be read in that moral framework. Destroying a marriage through forbidden magic is not a private entertainment or harmless ritual. It is a grave violation involving spiritual corruption and interpersonal harm.

The verse therefore strengthens the protection of the family. It warns people not to seek hidden means to create hatred, suspicion, emotional distance, or separation between spouses. This protection benefits both husband and wife. It is not gendered hostility. It is a moral defence of the marital bond.

The claim of misogyny is especially weak because the verse does not say that only women are targeted, only women are guilty, or only men suffer. It simply gives the most socially serious example of magical harm: the destruction of a household.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

6. The verse rejects coercive manipulation in intimate relationships

One of the strongest moral lessons of [Qur'an 2:102](#) is that forbidden hidden manipulation of relationships is condemned. Magic used to separate spouses is an attack on consent, trust, affection, and family stability. The verse does not normalise this. It treats it as part of the harmful knowledge that destroys the one who learns it.

This is directly opposed to misogyny. Misogyny often objectifies women, manipulates them, blames them, or treats their emotional and marital lives as tools of control. [Qur'an 2:102](#) condemns the hidden manipulation that damages marriage. It does not authorise it.

The verse therefore provides a moral shield against occult abuse in family life. A person who uses magic to damage a marriage is not empowered by the Qur'an. He is condemned by it.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

7. The allegation imports a modern polemical frame that the verse does not support

The critic begins with the word "wife", assumes gendered hostility, and then accuses the verse of misogyny. This is not careful reading. The verse mentions "a man and his wife" as a pair. It does not privilege the husband's harm over the wife's harm. It does not say that the wife is property. It does not blame her for separation. It does not depict women as occult threats.

The verse is about magic, not gender hierarchy. Its moral target is the acquisition of harmful forbidden knowledge. Its social example is marital separation. Its theological point is that no harm occurs except by Allah's permission. Its final judgement is that those who purchase such knowledge lose the Hereafter.

None of these elements supports misogyny. The allegation is therefore an ideological projection onto the text rather than a conclusion drawn from its wording.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Al-qawl al-mufid ala kitab al-tawhid.

8. Final judgement on Claim (t)

Claim (t) fails because [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not legitimise misogyny. It does not blame women, degrade wives, or authorise harm against them. It mentions separation between a man and his wife as an example of the harm caused by forbidden magic. The verse condemns the magician, protects the marital bond, denies independent magical power, and warns that such knowledge harms and does not benefit. The allegation mistakes a condemnation of marital sabotage for approval of misogyny, which reverses the verse's meaning.

Part 21: Refutation of Allegation (u)

Allegation (u)

The Qur'an allegedly contradicts itself by condemning magic while acknowledging its effects.

1. The allegation rests on the false assumption that only unreal things can be condemned

This claim is logically weak. A thing can be real and forbidden at the same time. Poison can really kill and still be forbidden as a means of murder. Theft can really enrich the thief and still be unlawful. Lying can really deceive people and still be sinful. Oppression can really harm

victims and still be condemned. Therefore, acknowledging that magic may have an effect does not contradict condemning magic.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) acknowledges that magic can be used to cause harm, including separation between spouses, but it condemns that harm as part of the evil of magic. The verse says that people learned what harmed them and did not benefit them. It also says that those who purchased it had no share in the Hereafter. This is not contradiction. It is moral reasoning.

The critic's argument would only work if the Qur'an said, "Magic is false and has no effect whatsoever," and then later said, "Magic has effects." But that is not what the Qur'an says. The Qur'an condemns magic while affirming that whatever harm occurs is by Allah's permission.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

2. The verse condemns magic precisely because its effects are harmful

The Qur'an's condemnation is not weakened by acknowledging harm. It is strengthened. If magic were presented as harmless, the warning would be less forceful. [Qur'an 2:102](#) condemns magic because it is religiously corrupt and socially harmful. It can damage marriages, involve devilish assistance, corrupt faith, and destroy the practitioner's Hereafter.

The verse therefore follows a clear moral pattern: this practice is forbidden because it harms. That is not self-contradiction. It is the same moral logic by which revelation condemns murder, theft, slander, adultery, intoxicants, oppression, and other destructive acts.

The phrase "what harmed them and did not benefit them" is essential. It shows that the Qur'an does not acknowledge magical effects in order to legitimise them. It acknowledges them in order to show why the path is ruinous.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

3. The phrase "except by Allah's permission" prevents theological contradiction

[Qur'an 2:102](#) does not attribute independent power to magic. It explicitly says that they could not harm anyone except by Allah's permission. This phrase is the key to the theological coherence of the verse.

The verse affirms two truths together. First, magic may function as a harmful created cause. Second, that cause has no independent power and cannot operate outside Allah's will. There is no contradiction between these two claims. Sunni Islamic theology affirms created causes while denying independent causality.

Fire burns by Allah's permission. Food nourishes by Allah's permission. Medicine heals by Allah's permission. Poison harms by Allah's permission. Magic, if it harms, harms only by

Allah's permission. Created causation does not violate monotheism because Allah is the Creator and controller of all causes.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah, discussion of divine decree and created causes; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa, discussions on causality, decree, and magic; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

4. Condemnation concerns moral status, while effect concerns created causality

The critic confuses two different categories: moral status and causal effect. The moral status of magic is that it is forbidden, harmful, and connected to disbelief. Its causal status is that it may cause harm only if Allah permits. These two categories are not contradictory.

For example, alcohol may intoxicate. That is causal effect. Islam condemns drinking it. That is moral status. Usury may produce financial gain. That is causal effect. Islam condemns it. That is moral status. Magic may cause harm. That is causal effect. Islam condemns it. That is moral status.

Once this distinction is made, the allegation disappears. [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not saying magic is morally false because it has no effect. It is saying magic is morally evil because its path and effects are corrupt, and its harm remains under Allah's permission.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa.

5. The Qur'an does not condemn magic as mere illusion only

Some forms of deception may be illusion, trickery, or manipulation of perception. However, [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not limited to theatrical deception. It discusses harmful magic connected to devils, forbidden learning, marital separation, and spiritual loss. The Qur'an's condemnation therefore does not depend on saying that all magic is fake.

This is a strength, not a contradiction. The Qur'an gives a more complete account: some occult practices are deception, some involve psychological manipulation, some involve devilish assistance, and all forbidden magic is spiritually dangerous. The key theological point remains that no harm occurs independently of Allah.

Therefore, acknowledging harmful effect does not weaken the condemnation. It explains why magic is dangerous and why believers must avoid both practising it and seeking magicians.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith on the seven destructive sins.

6. The Sunnah confirms that magic is both real in effect and forbidden in ruling

The authentic Sunnah classifies magic among the seven destructive sins. This proves that Islam does not treat magic as permissible or spiritually neutral. At the same time, the Sunnah contains

reports that the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was affected by magic, while Allah protected his prophethood, guidance, and message. Sunni Muslim scholars explain these reports in a way that preserves both realities: magic may affect worldly perception or bodily condition by Allah's permission, but it does not overpower revelation, cancel prophethood, or give magicians independent power.

This confirms the same principle found in [Qur'an 2:102](#). Magic may have an effect, but it is forbidden. Its effect is limited, created, and subject to Allah. Its moral ruling remains severe condemnation.

Thus, the Qur'an and Sunnah are consistent. They do not deny every effect of magic. They deny magic's legitimacy and independence.

Relevant sources: Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith on the seven destructive sins and reports concerning the Prophet being affected by magic; Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, parallel narration on the seven destructive sins; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

7. The contradiction exists only in the critic's assumption, not in the Qur'an

The critic assumes that condemnation and effect cannot coexist. But they coexist in every serious moral system. Harmful acts are often condemned precisely because they have effects. The Qur'an's position is therefore coherent: magic is real enough to be dangerous, but not powerful enough to escape Allah's control; harmful enough to be condemned, but not beneficial enough to justify pursuit; spiritually dangerous enough to be linked to disbelief, but not sovereign enough to threaten monotheism, meaning the oneness of Allah, "tawhid".

The verse's message is internally stable. Do not learn magic. Do not think it benefits. Do not think it acts independently. Do not think its practitioners are safe. Do not trade the Hereafter for occult harm.

There is no contradiction in this message. It is clear, morally serious, and theologically precise.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Al-Fawzan, Iman al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

8. Final judgement on Claim (u)

Claim (u) fails because acknowledging the effects of magic does not contradict condemning magic. [Qur'an 2:102](#) condemns magic precisely because it is harmful, spiritually corrupt, and connected to disbelief. At the same time, it denies that magic has independent power by stating that no harm occurs except by Allah's permission. The verse therefore distinguishes moral ruling from causal effect. That distinction removes the alleged contradiction completely.

Part 22: Refutation of Allegation (v)

Allegation (v)

The verse is used to claim that Islam promotes occult beliefs.

1. The allegation reverses the actual function of Qur'an 2:102

The claim that [Qur'an 2:102](#) promotes occult belief is the opposite of what the verse does. The verse does not invite people to practise magic. It does not praise magicians. It does not present occult knowledge as wisdom. It does not tell Muslims to seek help from spirits, devils, talismans, symbols, charms, planetary forces, secret names, or hidden rituals. Instead, the verse condemns magic as disbelief, harm, and spiritual loss.

The structure of the verse is anti-occult from beginning to end. Sulayman is cleared of disbelief. The devils are condemned as the real disbelievers. Harut and Marut warn, "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve." The learners acquire what harms and does not benefit. The verse states that no harm occurs except by Allah's permission. It ends by declaring that those who purchased such knowledge had no share in the Hereafter.

A text that calls something disbelief, harm, non-benefit, and a cause of loss in the Hereafter cannot fairly be accused of promoting it. The critic's claim depends on treating the Qur'an's warning against occultism as if it were an invitation into occultism. That reverses the text's meaning.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

2. Islam distinguishes belief in the unseen from occultism

The allegation depends on confusing two different categories: belief in the unseen and occult belief. Islam affirms unseen realities such as Allah, angels, devils, revelation, the Hereafter, Paradise, Hell, and divine decree. This is not occultism. It is revealed belief. Occultism, by contrast, seeks hidden power, manipulation, forbidden access, or secret control through unlawful means.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) condemns the second category. It does not condemn belief in angels or devils as part of revelation. It condemns the pursuit of magic and devilish knowledge. Therefore, the verse does not promote occultism simply because it acknowledges unseen realities. To argue otherwise would collapse all revealed religion into occultism, which is historically and theologically careless.

The Islamic position is precise. Muslims believe in what Allah revealed concerning the unseen, but they are forbidden from seeking unlawful hidden knowledge, consulting magicians, invoking devils, practising magic, wearing prohibited amulets, using talismans for supernatural protection, or pursuing occult techniques. This is a direct rejection of occult religion.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa.

3. Qur'an 2:102 dismantles occult power by denying independent causality

Occult belief usually gives hidden forces, spirits, rituals, symbols, or specialists a kind of independent power. [Qur'an 2:102](#) directly rejects that idea. It states that magicians could not harm anyone except by Allah's permission. This is one of the strongest anti-occult statements in the verse.

The verse does not merely say magic is bad. It also says magic is powerless independently. Its harm, if it occurs, is not self-sufficient. It is not outside Allah's decree. It is not a rival force to divine sovereignty. This is pure monotheism, meaning the oneness of Allah, "tawhid".

This clause prevents both panic and fascination. The believer does not fear magic as if it is an autonomous power. The believer does not admire magicians as possessors of divine secrets. The believer knows that every created cause is under Allah's rule. This is not occultism. It is the destruction of occultism at its root.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

4. The Sunnah classifies magic as a destructive sin, not as Islamic spirituality

The authentic Sunnah confirms the Qur'anic position. The Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, listed magic among the seven destructive sins. This is decisive. Islam does not classify legitimate spirituality as a destructive sin. It classifies magic that way because it is spiritually ruinous and often involves disbelief, devils, deception, or harm.

This defeats the allegation that Islam promotes occult belief. The Prophetic teaching does not say, "Use magic carefully." It does not say, "Magic is a spiritual tool." It does not say, "Magicians are holy people." It places magic among the gravest destructive sins.

Sunni Muslim scholars built on this evidence and treated magic as a major crime against monotheism and human welfare. Shaykh Abd al-Aziz ibn Baz, Shaykh Salih al-Fawzan, and Shaykh Muhammad ibn Salih al-Uthaymin discuss magic as a violation of faith and monotheism, especially when it involves seeking help from devils or offering acts of worship to them. This is the opposite of occult promotion.

Relevant sources: Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith 2766 and 6857; Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, parallel narration; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Uthaymin, Al-qawl al-mufid ala kitab al-tawhid.

5. Lawful protection in Islam is not occult counter-magic

Critics sometimes confuse Islamic protective recitation with occult practice. This is a serious category error. Islam forbids magic, but it permits lawful protection through worship of Allah: prayer, remembrance, recitation of the Qur'an, supplication, repentance, reliance upon Allah, and authentic prophetic invocations.

This is not occultism because the direction of dependence is completely different. Occultism seeks hidden control through created beings, secret forces, symbols, spirits, or forbidden rituals. Lawful Islamic protection seeks refuge in Allah alone. It does not claim independent power for words, objects, people, or rituals apart from Allah's permission. It is worship, not manipulation.

The difference is also practical. Islam forbids going to magicians, soothsayers, fortune-tellers, astrologers, and those who claim hidden knowledge. Islam does not replace magic with Islamic magic. It replaces occult dependence with pure worship and trust in Allah.

Relevant sources: Ibn Baz, Turuq al-wiqayah min al-sihr; Al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, reports concerning lawful protective recitation; Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, Sahih Muslim, reports concerning lawful protective recitation; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

6. The verse exposes occult exploitation

Occult practices often exploit fear, grief, jealousy, marital conflict, illness, financial desperation, revenge, or emotional vulnerability. [Qur'an 2:102](#) exposes this destructive path. It specifically mentions separation between a man and his wife, which is one of the most painful examples of occult harm. It then declares that the knowledge harms and does not benefit.

This is morally serious. The verse warns the vulnerable person not to seek occult solutions. It warns the jealous person not to destroy a marriage. It warns the desperate person not to trade the Hereafter for hidden power. It warns the believer not to fear magicians as independent agents. It warns society not to tolerate a market of devilish manipulation.

Therefore, the verse does not promote occult beliefs. It protects people from occult exploitation. It does not feed superstition. It shuts down the religious legitimacy of magic.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

7. The allegation depends on a false secular standard

The critic often defines all belief in unseen beings as occult. Under that definition, every Abrahamic religion becomes occult because Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all affirm angels, devils, revelation, and the Hereafter. That definition is too broad to be useful.

A fair distinction must be made. Revealed belief in the unseen is not occult practice. Occult practice is the unlawful pursuit of hidden power, secret manipulation, or forbidden contact with unseen forces. Islam affirms the first and condemns the second.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) is a clear example of this distinction. It speaks about angels and devils as real created beings, but it forbids the magical path connected to devils and harmful knowledge. The verse therefore gives a rational boundary: believe what Allah revealed, avoid what Allah forbade, and never treat created hidden forces as independent powers.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Majmu al-fatawa; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

8. Final judgement on Claim (v)

Claim (v) fails because [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not promote occult belief. It condemns magic as disbelief, harm, non-benefit, and spiritual ruin. It denies independent occult power by stating that no harm occurs except by Allah's permission. It distinguishes revealed belief in the unseen from forbidden occult practice. Authentic Sunni Islamic teaching treats magic as a destructive sin and a violation of monotheism, not as Islamic spirituality. The allegation therefore reverses the verse's meaning.

Part 23: Refutation of Allegation (w)

Allegation (w)

The story is said to be absent from "authentic" revelation and therefore fabricated.

1. The allegation assumes a non-Islamic definition of "authentic revelation"

This claim usually means that because the account of Harut and Marut is not found in the critic's preferred canon, it must be fabricated. That is not an argument against the Qur'an. It is a circular assumption. It begins by excluding the Qur'an from "authentic revelation" and then concludes that anything uniquely Qur'anic is fabricated because it is not found elsewhere.

From the Islamic standpoint, the Qur'an is the final revelation from Allah. Therefore, a report does not need to appear in the Torah, New Testament, Book of Enoch, rabbinic literature, or any other earlier source before Muslims may accept it. If Allah reveals a matter in the Qur'an, that is sufficient proof for Muslims.

The critic is free to reject the Qur'an, but that rejection cannot be smuggled in as evidence. To say "this is absent from my canon, therefore fabricated" is not neutral scholarship. It is canon-based prejudice.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

2. Absence from earlier scripture does not prove fabrication

Even if the account were absent from surviving earlier scriptures, that would not prove fabrication. Earlier scriptures and religious traditions are not complete records of every event involving angels, devils, prophets, or ancient communities. They do not contain every historical or unseen matter known to Allah.

The Qur'an often gives information that corrects, clarifies, confirms, or supplements what earlier communities possessed. Its role is not to merely repeat earlier scripture. Therefore, the absence of a detail from earlier sources is not a defect. It may be precisely the point: final revelation gives the correct account where earlier communities preserved incomplete, altered, or confused knowledge.

The claim is especially weak because absence is a fragile argument. A text can be absent from surviving records but still represent a true event. Loss of documentation, oral transmission, selective preservation, and religious editing are common in ancient history. Therefore, absence from earlier sources is not proof of fabrication.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih.

3. Qur'an 2:102 is itself authentic revelation in Sunni Islam

The account of Harut and Marut is not outside revelation. It is in the Qur'an. For Sunni Muslims, [Qur'an 2:102](#) is mass-transmitted revelation, recited continuously by the Muslim community from the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to the present. Its authenticity as Qur'an is not dependent on external Jewish or Christian confirmation.

This is a critical point. The claim says the story is absent from authentic revelation, but for Muslims it is present in the most authentic revelation: the Qur'an itself. Quranic translation repositories preserve the relevant wording of [Qur'an 2:102](#): Sulayman is cleared, the devils are blamed, Harut and Marut are mentioned in Babylon, the warning is given, magic is described as harmful, and no harm occurs except by Allah's will.

Therefore, the allegation only works if the critic assumes the Qur'an is false before examining the verse. That is not a refutation; it is a presupposition. The proper internal question is whether [Qur'an 2:102](#) is coherent within Qur'anic theology. It is. It affirms angelic obedience, human accountability, the prohibition of magic, the innocence of Sulayman, the guilt of devils, and Allah's absolute control over harm.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir.

4. The Qur'an's account is not dependent on apocryphal confirmation

Some critics use a double standard. If a Qur'anic detail resembles an earlier text, they allege borrowing. If it does not appear in an earlier text, they allege fabrication. This makes the criticism unfalsifiable. Similarity becomes plagiarism, and difference becomes invention.

A fair approach would admit that the Qur'an may present a distinct revealed account. Its authority does not require apocryphal confirmation. In fact, if the Qur'an merely repeated earlier apocryphal literature, critics would accuse it of dependence. When it differs, they accuse it of fabrication. This shows that the accusation is not driven by consistent methodology.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) stands on its own as a revealed correction. It is not validated by being found in apocrypha, and it is not invalidated by being absent from a critic's preferred sources.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Reeves and Reed, Enoch from Antiquity to the Middle Ages; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

5. The verse's restrained form argues against fabricated storytelling

Fabricated religious stories often expand dramatic details to attract attention: long dialogues, miracles, punishments, sensational sins, romance, cosmic scenes, and elaborate characters.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) does not do that. It mentions Harut and Marut only briefly and only within a moral warning about magic.

The verse does not narrate the sensational stories found in some later reports. It does not give a dramatic fall of angels. It does not describe a woman seducing them. It does not describe them drinking wine, committing murder, or being punished in elaborate form. It gives the sober minimum needed for guidance: there was a trial, they warned, people learned harmful magic, and Allah alone permits harm. Ibn Kathir's tafsir presentation also preserves this warning-centred explanation, namely that Harut and Marut did not teach anyone until first warning that they were only a test and that the learner should not fall into disbelief.

This restraint weakens the fabrication claim. The verse reads as theological correction, not legendary invention. It is compact, disciplined, and controlled by monotheism.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir.

6. Sunni Islamic methodology distinguishes Qur'an from weak later reports

A major problem in this allegation is that it often treats later legendary material as if it were the Qur'an's own story. The Qur'an says only what [Qur'an 2:102](#) says. Later reports about Harut and Marut must be examined separately. Some are from earlier Jewish or Christian transmitted material, meaning Israelite reports, "Israiliyyat". Some are weak. Some are not suitable for doctrine.

Sunni Islamic methodology does not need to defend every later story. It defends the Qur'anic text. The Qur'anic text itself is authentic revelation, and it is the criterion by which extra reports are judged. If a later report contradicts sound doctrine or lacks reliable transmission, it is not binding.

Therefore, the claim of fabrication must be directed at what the Qur'an actually says, not at later embellishments. When the Qur'anic text is isolated from those embellishments, the allegation loses force.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, introduction and commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir.

7. The claim misunderstands how final revelation corrects earlier traditions

Final revelation is not required to be a copy of earlier revelation. The Qur'an confirms truth, corrects distortion, clarifies ambiguity, and judges disputed claims. Therefore, the absence of a Qur'anic account from earlier scripture may indicate not fabrication, but correction or completion.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) is exactly such a correction. It rejects the association of Sulayman with disbelief. It places blame on devils. It identifies magic as forbidden and harmful. It records the angels' warning. It denies independent magical power. It condemns those who purchase such knowledge.

This is not a fabricated insertion into revelation. It is a theological judgement that earlier communities either did not preserve, corrupted, or failed to understand correctly. A critic who denies revelation may reject that conclusion, but he cannot disprove it merely by pointing to absence in other texts.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

8. Final judgement on Claim (w)

Claim (w) fails because it defines "authentic revelation" in a circular way that excludes the Qur'an before the discussion begins. For Sunni Muslims, [Qur'an 2:102](#) is itself authentic revelation. Its account does not need confirmation from the Torah, New Testament, apocrypha, or rabbinic literature. Absence from earlier surviving sources does not prove fabrication. The verse is restrained, coherent, anti-magic, and theologically integrated. The allegation therefore rests on canon-based prejudice, not evidence.

Part 24: Refutation of Allegation (x)

Allegation (x)

The Qur'an is accused of theological borrowing due to surface similarities with Jewish lore.

1. The allegation mistakes surface similarity for dependence

This claim is weaker than a direct plagiarism claim because it does not identify a matching source. It argues from resemblance. The critic points to broad similarities between [Qur'an 2:102](#) and Jewish lore, such as angels, forbidden knowledge, magic, Sulayman, devils, or ancient traditions, and then concludes that the Qur'an must have borrowed the material.

That conclusion does not follow. Surface similarity can show that two traditions speak about related subjects, but it cannot by itself prove borrowing. To prove borrowing, one must show a specific source, a plausible transmission route, close overlap in wording or structure, and dependence strong enough to explain the Qur'anic form of the account. Without that, the argument remains speculative.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) is not a loose collection of Jewish motifs. It is a tightly controlled theological correction. It clears Sulayman of disbelief, condemns devils, identifies magic as harmful and non-beneficial, records the warning of Harut and Marut, affirms that harm occurs only by Allah's

permission, and warns that the buyer of magic has no share in the Hereafter. These are not merely decorative similarities with earlier lore. They are parts of a distinct Qur'anic argument.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext.

2. Shared subject matter is not theological borrowing

A subject can appear in more than one religious tradition without one text borrowing from the other. Angels, devils, magic, prophetic honour, forbidden knowledge, divine testing, and judgement are not private possessions of one community. They belong to the wider field of revealed religion and ancient religious memory.

The Qur'an frequently addresses subjects also known to Jews and Christians. This does not make the Qur'an derivative. From the Islamic perspective, the Qur'an confirms truth, corrects distortion, clarifies ambiguity, and judges disputed claims. Therefore, when [Qur'an 2:102](#) speaks about Sulayman, magic, devils, and forbidden knowledge, the presence of related themes in Jewish lore does not prove borrowing. It may simply show that the Qur'an is addressing a matter known, disputed, or corrupted among earlier communities.

The critic's argument works only by assuming that any overlap must be dependence. That assumption is unfair. A later text can correct an earlier community's claim without being copied from it. The Qur'an's relationship to earlier traditions is not passive repetition. It is correction and judgement.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

3. Qur'an 2:102 is theologically opposed to occult lore

If the Qur'an were simply borrowing Jewish occult lore, one would expect it to preserve the prestige of secret knowledge, angelic mysteries, hidden names, magical technique, or esoteric power. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does the opposite. It condemns the magical path as disbelief, harm, and loss.

The verse strips magic of religious legitimacy. It denies that magic has independent power. It says that harm occurs only by Allah's permission. It says that those who acquire such knowledge learn what harms and does not benefit them. It makes magic a path of spiritual ruin, not sacred knowledge.

This anti-occult function is crucial. The Qur'an is not borrowing theological meaning from occult lore. It is overturning the religious assumptions that make occult lore attractive. It tells the reader that hidden power is not salvation, that devilish knowledge is not wisdom, and that forbidden knowledge is not benefit.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

4. The Qur'an's treatment of Sulayman is corrective, not derivative

The verse opens by clearing Sulayman of disbelief. This is not a minor detail. It is the gateway into the whole passage. The Qur'an's concern is to protect the honour of a prophet and to reject any association between prophethood and sorcery.

A borrowing theory cannot adequately explain this correction. If the Qur'an were merely taking over Jewish lore, why does the passage begin by rejecting a claim about Sulayman? Why does it place guilt on the devils? Why does it use the narrative to condemn magic rather than preserve magical tradition? Why does it insist that no harm occurs except by Allah's permission?

The answer is that [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not dependent theology. It is revealed correction. It enters a field of claims and settles the matter according to pure monotheism, meaning the oneness of Allah, "tawhid". Sulayman is innocent. Devils are guilty. Magic is forbidden. Humans are responsible. Allah alone controls harm.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih.

5. Similarity without the same structure proves very little

A serious source-critical comparison must examine structure, not merely vocabulary. [Qur'an 2:102](#) has a distinctive structure: prophetic exoneration, devilish guilt, angelic warning, human acquisition, marital harm, divine permission, harm without benefit, and loss in the Hereafter. This sequence is not reproduced by the broad category "Jewish lore".

The critic may find one Jewish tradition involving Solomon and demons, another involving fallen angels, another involving forbidden knowledge, and another involving magic. But scattered motifs do not equal a source. A collection of thematic parallels is not the same as a matching narrative.

This is the weakness of the theological borrowing claim. It relies on the impression that the material "sounds Jewish" rather than proving that the Qur'an borrowed its theology from a specific Jewish source. The Qur'an's structure remains distinct and internally coherent.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Reeves and Reed, Enoch from Antiquity to the Middle Ages; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

6. The allegation uses a double standard

When [Qur'an 2:102](#) differs from Jewish lore, critics say the Qur'an misunderstood earlier material. When it resembles Jewish lore, they say the Qur'an borrowed it. This is not a fair method. It makes the accusation impossible to disprove because similarity and difference are both made to count against the Qur'an.

A consistent method would ask: does the Qur'an reproduce the same account, in the same structure, with the same theological meaning, from a demonstrable source? The answer is no.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) is not the Book of Enoch. It is not a Biblical passage. It is not a rabbinic story copied into Arabic. It is a Qur'anic correction whose logic is governed by monotheism, prophetic honour, prohibition of magic, and accountability before Allah.

The double standard shows that the borrowing claim is often driven by prior rejection of revelation rather than evidence. A critic who begins with "the Qur'an cannot be revelation" will treat any overlap as borrowing. That is not proof. It is a presupposition.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih.

7. Surface similarity may reflect correction of corrupted memory

From the Islamic standpoint, earlier communities preserved some truth and also altered, confused, or embellished other matters. Therefore, if Jewish lore contains partial or distorted memories related to angels, magic, Sulayman, or forbidden knowledge, that does not embarrass the Qur'an. It is precisely the kind of situation final revelation addresses.

The Qur'an does not need to deny every point of contact with earlier traditions. Rather, it confirms what is true, corrects what is false, and clarifies what is confused. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does this by clearing Sulayman, condemning devils, warning against magic, and placing all harm under Allah's permission.

Therefore, surface similarity does not prove theological borrowing. It may show that the Qur'an is correcting a religious field in which fragments of truth and distortion already existed.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith.

8. The theological content of Qur'an 2:102 is distinctly Qur'anic

The theological centre of [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not merely that magic exists or that angels are mentioned. Its centre is the purification of belief. The verse protects prophethood, condemns devilish teaching, identifies magic as a destructive trial, establishes human responsibility, denies autonomous occult causality, and connects the pursuit of magic with loss in the Hereafter.

This theological pattern is distinctly Qur'anic. It is governed by divine sovereignty, prophetic honour, moral accountability, and the distinction between beneficial knowledge and forbidden knowledge. A claim of theological borrowing must explain why the alleged borrowed material is transformed so thoroughly into Qur'anic monotheism.

The more natural reading is that [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not borrowing theology from Jewish lore. It is judging the subject according to revelation. Similarities in topic do not erase the Qur'an's independent theological structure.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

9. Final judgement on Claim (x)

Claim (x) fails because surface similarity with Jewish lore does not prove theological borrowing. [Qur'an 2:102](#) has a distinct structure and purpose: it clears Sulayman, condemns devils, warns against magic, presents Harut and Marut as a trial, affirms human responsibility, denies independent magical power, and warns of loss in the Hereafter. The allegation relies on motif-matching rather than proof of dependence. Similarity may reflect shared subject matter, correction of corrupted memory, or the Qur'an's role as final criterion. It is not evidence that the Qur'an borrowed its theology.

Part 25: Refutation of Allegation (y)

Allegation (y)

The verse is claimed to reflect Muhammad's alleged misunderstanding of earlier scriptures.

1. The allegation assumes the conclusion it needs to prove

This claim is circular. It begins by assuming that the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, authored the Qur'an from earlier materials. Then, when [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not match the critic's preferred reading of earlier scriptures, the critic calls it a misunderstanding. However, that conclusion only follows if revelation is rejected before the analysis begins.

From the Islamic standpoint, the Prophet did not compose [Qur'an 2:102](#) from Biblical or Jewish material. He conveyed revelation from Allah. Therefore, difference between the Qur'an and earlier scriptures is not automatically misunderstanding. It may be correction, clarification, or judgement over distorted claims.

A serious critic must prove that the Prophet had access to a specific earlier source, misunderstood it in a demonstrable way, and produced [Qur'an 2:102](#) as a mistaken version. Merely saying that the Qur'anic account is different from earlier material does not prove misunderstanding. Difference is not error unless the earlier source is first proven to be the controlling standard.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction.

2. Qur'an 2:102 shows correction, not confusion

The verse is too deliberate to be explained as misunderstanding. It begins with a clear correction: Sulayman did not disbelieve. It then identifies the real guilty party: the devils disbelieved. It explains the dangerous nature of magic. It records the warning of Harut and Marut. It denies independent magical power. It concludes with spiritual loss for those who purchase such knowledge.

This is not the structure of confusion. It is the structure of judgement. The verse is not struggling to retell a borrowed story. It is issuing a theological verdict. It distinguishes prophet from devil, warning from temptation, trial from sin, created effect from independent power, and harmful knowledge from beneficial knowledge.

A misunderstanding usually produces muddled categories. [Qur'an 2:102](#) produces sharp categories. Prophethood is defended. Devilish magic is condemned. Angelic warning is preserved. Human responsibility is affirmed. Allah's sovereignty is asserted. This is not confusion. It is doctrinal precision.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu.

3. The alleged "earlier scriptures" do not contain the Qur'an 2:102 account

The claim of misunderstanding earlier scriptures is weak because the specific [Qur'an 2:102](#) account is not found in the Torah or New Testament as a narrative for the Prophet to misunderstand. The verse's distinctive combination of Sulayman's exoneration, devils teaching magic, Harut and Marut in Babylon, the warning against disbelief, marital separation, harm only by Allah's permission, harm without benefit, and loss in the Hereafter is not reproduced in the Biblical canon.

If the alleged source is not in the earlier scriptures, then the claim that the Prophet misunderstood those scriptures collapses. The critic may shift to non-Biblical Jewish lore, apocrypha, or later traditions, but that is a different claim. It cannot be framed as misunderstanding the Torah or New Testament unless the alleged source is actually there.

This is a major weakness in the polemic. The critic accuses the Qur'an of misunderstanding earlier scripture while failing to produce the earlier scriptural passage that was supposedly misunderstood.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Reynolds, The Qur'an and the Bible: Text and Commentary; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

4. Difference from later Jewish lore is not evidence of misunderstanding

If the critic shifts from "earlier scriptures" to later Jewish lore, the allegation still fails. Difference from Jewish lore does not prove misunderstanding. It may prove correction. Jewish lore is not automatically authoritative over the Qur'an. It may contain truth, error, embellishment, symbolic development, polemical expansion, or legendary material.

Sunni Islamic tafsir recognises this when dealing with Israelite reports, meaning transmitted material from earlier Jewish or Christian sources, "Israiliyyat". Such reports are not automatically accepted as authoritative. They are weighed carefully and cannot override the Qur'an or authentic Sunnah.

Therefore, if [Qur'an 2:102](#) differs from an apocryphal or rabbinic account, the Sunni Islamic conclusion is not that the Prophet misunderstood it. The conclusion is that the Qur'an gives the

correct revealed account and that external material must be judged against revelation, not the other way around.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, introduction and commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

5. The Prophet's opponents did not prove a human source

The allegation also fails historically. If the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, had merely misunderstood earlier scriptures from a Jewish teacher or source, his opponents had every motive to expose that source. The Qur'an was challenged publicly. The Prophet faced intense opposition. Accusations of human teaching were raised, but no decisive teacher, text, lesson, or transmission chain was produced to explain the Qur'an.

A claim of misunderstanding requires more than saying "he must have heard something." It requires evidence of access and error. Which scripture did he misunderstand? Who taught it? In which language? Where is the source passage? Why does the Qur'an's account differ so sharply in theological structure? Why does it function as anti-magic correction rather than confused retelling?

Without answers, the allegation remains speculation. It is an attempt to explain revelation away, not a demonstrated historical conclusion.

Relevant sources: Ibn Hisham, Al-sirah al-nabawiyyah; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction.

6. Qur'an 2:102 is more coherent than the misunderstanding theory

The misunderstanding theory must explain why a supposedly mistaken retelling produces such a precise theological result. [Qur'an 2:102](#) protects prophetic integrity, condemns devils, rejects magic, affirms angelic warning, preserves human responsibility, denies independent magical power, and warns of the Hereafter. These elements are not random. They form a unified doctrine.

The critic must believe that a misunderstanding somehow produced a passage that is internally disciplined by pure monotheism, moral accountability, and anti-occult teaching. That is a poor explanation. A better explanation, within Islamic theology, is that the Qur'an is revelation correcting false claims.

The verse's clarity is especially strong in the phrase "they could not harm anyone except by Allah's permission." This clause alone refutes occult exaggeration and protects monotheism, meaning the oneness of Allah, "tawhid". A confused borrower would be unlikely to produce such a carefully balanced theological principle while allegedly misunderstanding the source.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

7. The claim treats earlier scriptures as immune from corruption

The allegation assumes that if the Qur'an differs from earlier scripture or lore, the Qur'an must be wrong. That assumes the earlier material is perfectly preserved and correctly interpreted. Islam does not accept that assumption. The Qur'an teaches that earlier communities received revelation but that later distortion, concealment, misinterpretation, and confusion occurred among them.

Therefore, difference between the Qur'an and earlier material cannot automatically be labelled misunderstanding. The Qur'an may be correcting what earlier communities misreported. In [Qur'an 2:102](#), this corrective role is explicit: Sulayman did not disbelieve. This opening correction shows that the verse is responding to a false attribution, not reproducing it.

The accusation therefore places the wrong text on trial. It assumes earlier material is the judge and the Qur'an is the defendant. In Islamic theology, the Qur'an is the final criterion, meaning the standard by which disputed religious claims are judged.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

8. The charge of misunderstanding cannot explain the verse's anti-magic purpose

The verse is not merely recounting an obscure story. It is addressing a practical and theological danger: the corrupt pursuit of magic. It warns against disbelief, exposes the devils, clears Sulayman, identifies the learners' moral failure, denies independent harm, and declares the knowledge harmful and non-beneficial.

A misunderstanding theory cannot adequately explain why the verse's whole purpose is anti-magic and monotheistic. If the Prophet had misunderstood earlier material, the critic must explain why the alleged misunderstanding produced a passage that is more morally controlled, more anti-occult, and more theologically precise than the supposed source material.

The Qur'anic account is not a confused copy. It is a correction that protects prophethood and monotheism from occult corruption.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

9. Final judgement on Claim (y)

Claim (y) fails because it assumes human authorship and error without proving either. The specific [Qur'an 2:102](#) account is not present in the Torah or New Testament as a narrative that the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, could have misunderstood.

Difference from later Jewish lore is not evidence of misunderstanding, because the Qur'an functions as correction and criterion. The verse itself is coherent, precise, anti-magic, and monotheistic: Sulayman is cleared, devils are condemned, Harut and Marut warn, humans choose, and no harm occurs except by Allah's permission. The misunderstanding claim is therefore speculative, circular, and historically unproven.

Part 26: Refutation of Allegation (z)

Allegation (z)

Some critics claim that [Qur'an 2:102](#) reflects similarities with non-Biblical Jewish "fallen angels" traditions, such as the Book of Enoch, and therefore argue indirect borrowing despite the absence of any canonical Biblical source or scholarly consensus.

1. The allegation is deliberately weaker than a direct borrowing claim

This claim is usually advanced after stronger allegations fail. If the critic cannot show that [Qur'an 2:102](#) was copied from the Torah, the New Testament, or a single identifiable Jewish text, the accusation is softened into "indirect borrowing." This shift is important. It means the critic has moved away from demonstrable textual dependence and is now relying on broad resemblance, possible atmosphere, and speculative transmission.

A claim of indirect borrowing still carries a burden of proof. The critic must show that the alleged non-Biblical Jewish material contained the relevant account, that it was accessible to the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, that the Qur'anic account depends on that material, and that the Qur'an's distinct theological structure is better explained by borrowing than by revelation, correction, or independent divine disclosure.

The allegation does not meet that burden. It admits there is no canonical Biblical source and no scholarly consensus. It then argues from similarity anyway. That is not a conclusive argument. It is an inference built on uncertainty.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction.

2. The Book of Enoch does not contain the Qur'an 2:102 narrative

The Book of Enoch, especially the Watchers material, contains traditions about heavenly beings who descend, take women, produce giant offspring, and teach forbidden arts. However, this is not the [Qur'an 2:102](#) narrative.

[Qur'an 2:102](#) contains a different structure. It speaks of Sulayman being cleared of disbelief, devils teaching magic, Babylon, Harut and Marut, an explicit warning against disbelief, people learning what separates a man from his wife, harm occurring only by Allah's permission, harmful knowledge without benefit, and the loss of the Hereafter for those who purchase such knowledge.

The Book of Enoch does not give this structure. It does not present Harut and Marut by name. It does not centre the narrative on Sulayman's exoneration. It does not present Babylon as the setting of this trial in the Qur'anic way. It does not place the controlling warning, "We are only a

trial, so do not disbelieve," on the tongues of the angels. It does not make the denial of independent magical power the theological centre of the passage.

Therefore, even if one accepts that there are broad thematic overlaps concerning angels and forbidden knowledge, the specific Qur'anic account is not Enochic.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1; VanderKam, Enoch: A Man for All Generations; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

3. "Fallen angels" is not the Qur'anic presentation of Harut and Marut

The Enochic Watchers are usually presented as beings who rebel, desire women, transgress heavenly boundaries, teach corrupt arts, and become causes of earthly corruption. That is not how [Qur'an 2:102](#) presents Harut and Marut.

The Qur'anic text does not say Harut and Marut rebelled. It does not say they lusted after women. It does not say they married women. It does not say they produced giants. It does not say they were punished for sin. It does not say they became devils. It does not say they invited people into disbelief. Their only direct speech in the verse is a warning: "We are only a trial, so do not disbelieve."

This is a decisive distinction. The Qur'an's Harut and Marut are not Enochic fallen angels. They are mentioned in connection with a divine test and warning. If they are understood as angels, they must be understood within the Qur'anic doctrine that angels obey Allah and do what they are commanded. The sinful parties in [Qur'an 2:102](#) are the devils and the human learners who ignore the warning.

The "fallen angels" label is therefore an imported category. It is not the Qur'anic category.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Qur'an 66:6; Al-Tabari, Jami al-bayan, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah.

4. The Qur'an's theological aim is opposite to Enochic angel-fall mythology

The Enochic Watchers tradition is concerned with the corruption of heavenly beings, forbidden unions, giants, and the spread of destructive arts before the Flood. [Qur'an 2:102](#) is concerned with something else: the innocence of Sulayman, the guilt of devils, the prohibition of magic, the warning of Harut and Marut, the moral responsibility of learners, and Allah's absolute control over harm.

This difference is not superficial. It is theological. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not invite fascination with angelic rebellion. It does not give a dramatic mythology of heavenly beings falling into lust. It does not explain the origin of giants or pre-Flood corruption. It gives a sober warning against magic and a correction of false claims against a prophet.

The Qur'anic passage is governed by monotheism, meaning the oneness of Allah, "tawhid". Its controlling statement is that no one can be harmed except by Allah's permission. This clause strips magic of independent power and prevents occult exaggeration. The Enochic Watchers

story does not function in that exact Qur'anic way. The Qur'an is therefore not borrowing its theology from Enochic tradition. It is presenting a distinct revealed judgement.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1; Reeves and Reed, Enoch from Antiquity to the Middle Ages; Al-Fawzan, Ianat al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid.

5. Similarity in motif does not establish indirect borrowing

The strongest point critics can raise is that both [Qur'an 2:102](#) and some Jewish non-Biblical traditions discuss heavenly beings and forbidden knowledge. However, motif similarity is not enough to prove borrowing.

Motifs such as angels, forbidden knowledge, magic, devils, moral corruption, and divine judgement were widespread in ancient religious discourse. A motif can appear in more than one tradition without direct dependence. The critic must show a specific line of transmission and a specific narrative match. Without that, "indirect borrowing" becomes a vague label for unexplained similarity.

The weakness is especially clear here because the Qur'anic details are distinctive. Harut and Marut are named differently from the Watchers. The setting is Babylon. The passage is tied to Sulayman. The angels warn against disbelief. The effect mentioned is separation between spouses. Harm is explicitly denied independent power. The result is loss in the Hereafter.

A critic cannot take the broad motif "angels and forbidden knowledge" and ignore these defining differences. That is selective comparison.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction; Reeves and Reed, Enoch from Antiquity to the Middle Ages.

6. Absence of scholarly consensus weakens the allegation

The claim itself admits that there is no scholarly consensus. That matters. When a borrowing theory depends on contested parallels, uncertain transmission, and non-identical narratives, it cannot be treated as a settled refutation of the Qur'an.

Academic disagreement does not automatically make a view false, but it does mean the critic cannot present the view as decisive. At most, the critic may say that some scholars have explored possible relationships between Qur'anic material and late antique Jewish or Christian traditions. That is far weaker than proving that [Qur'an 2:102](#) was indirectly borrowed from the Book of Enoch or fallen-angels traditions.

For a polemical claim to succeed, it must do more than point to a debated possibility. It must establish dependence. The allegation does not do so. It remains conjectural.

Relevant sources: Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction; VanderKam, Enoch: A Man for All Generations.

7. The Qur'an may correct corrupted memories without borrowing from them

From the Islamic perspective, earlier communities may preserve fragments of truth alongside distortion, embellishment, and error. If some non-Biblical Jewish traditions contain distorted memories about heavenly beings and forbidden knowledge, the Qur'an's mention of Harut and Marut does not require borrowing. It may be revelation correcting a confused religious field.

This distinction is essential. A final revelation may address known themes without deriving from the corrupted forms in circulation. [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not simply repeat Jewish lore. It corrects the matter according to pure monotheism: Sulayman is not guilty; devils are guilty; angels warn; magic is forbidden; humans are accountable; harm occurs only by Allah's permission.

Therefore, any surface similarity with non-Biblical Jewish lore can be understood as the Qur'an entering a disputed religious topic and giving the correct judgement. The critic must prove borrowing, not merely assume it.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

8. Sunni Islamic tafsir does not depend on Enochic material

The central meaning of [Qur'an 2:102](#) does not require the Book of Enoch. A reader can understand the verse's main teaching from the verse itself: Sulayman is innocent, devils are disbelievers, magic is forbidden, Harut and Marut were a trial, the angels warned people not to disbelieve, people learned harmful knowledge, magic cannot harm except by Allah's permission, and those who purchased it lost the Hereafter.

Sound Sunni Islamic tafsir may discuss reports around the verse, but it does not need Enochic mythology to establish the verse's doctrine. Ibn Kathir's method is important here because he does not allow legendary material to control the meaning of the Qur'an. Reports from earlier communities, known as Israelite reports, "Israiliyyat", are not the foundation of belief.

This means that even if late antique traditions existed around fallen angels, they are not necessary to explain [Qur'an 2:102](#). The Qur'anic passage is self-contained in its theological message.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102; Ibn Taymiyyah, Muqaddimah fi usul al-tafsir; Al-Dhahabi, Al-Israiliyyat fi al-tafsir wa al-hadith.

9. The claim fails to explain the Qur'an's restraint

If [Qur'an 2:102](#) were borrowed from fallen-angels lore, it is striking that it omits the most distinctive features of that lore. It omits angelic lust, angelic marriage, the birth of giants, the pre-Flood setting, the Watchers' names, the detailed list of forbidden arts, and the dramatic punishment scenes. Instead, it gives a concise warning against magic and focuses on monotheism.

This restraint is difficult for the borrowing theory. Borrowing theories usually depend on recognisable inherited material. Yet the Qur'an omits the very features that would make the

alleged source identifiable. What remains is not the Enochic story, but a Qur'anic judgement about magic.

The simpler explanation is that [Qur'an 2:102](#) is not reproducing Enochic fallen-angels mythology. It is giving a distinct revealed account with a different aim and a different theological structure.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1; Reeves and Reed, Enoch from Antiquity to the Middle Ages; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, commentary on Qur'an 2:102.

10. The Qur'anic account is stricter in monotheism than the alleged parallels

The Qur'an's account is not merely different from the alleged parallels. It is stricter in monotheistic control. It does not allow magic to appear as a hidden science that grants autonomous power. It does not allow devils to function as independent rivals to Allah. It does not present angels as morally chaotic beings outside divine command. It does not glorify forbidden knowledge. It condemns the entire path and places every possible effect under Allah's permission.

This is why the "borrowing" label is misleading. Even if the Qur'an is addressing themes known in Jewish lore, it transforms the entire field under "tawhid", meaning the oneness of Allah. The result is not borrowed theology. It is anti-occult correction.

The verse therefore stands as a critique of magic, not a relic of fallen-angels mythology. Its message is: do not attribute disbelief to Sulayman; do not follow devils; do not pursue magic; do not imagine occult power is independent; do not trade the Hereafter for harmful forbidden knowledge.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Al-Fawzan, Iman al-mustafid bi-sharh kitab al-tawhid; Ibn Baz, Hukm al-sihr wa-kayfiyyat al-wiqayah minhu; Ibn Uthaymin, Sharh al-aqidah al-wasitiyyah.

11. The allegation is ultimately probabilistic, not demonstrative

The strongest version of this allegation can only say that [Qur'an 2:102](#) appears in a late antique world where Jewish, Christian, and other traditions about angels, demons, magic, and forbidden knowledge circulated. That may be an observation about historical environment, but it is not proof of borrowing.

A demonstrative claim would need exact source identification, clear transmission, structural correspondence, and theological continuity. The allegation lacks these. Instead, it relies on possible influence, broad similarity, and contested academic theories.

From a Sunni Islamic standpoint, the conclusion remains firm. [Qur'an 2:102](#) is revelation. It may address themes that earlier communities discussed, but it does so as correction and guidance. It is not dependent on the Book of Enoch, and it is not a confused remnant of fallen-angels mythology.

Relevant sources: Qur'an 2:102; Sinai, The Qur'an: A Historical-Critical Introduction; Reynolds, The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext; Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-jawab al-sahih li-man baddala din al-Masih.

12. Final judgement on Claim (z)

Claim (z) fails because non-Biblical Jewish fallen-angels traditions, including the Book of Enoch, do not contain the [Qur'an 2:102](#) narrative in its names, setting, structure, moral logic, or theology. Harut and Marut are not presented in the Qur'an as Enochic fallen angels. The verse does not narrate angelic rebellion, lust, marriage, giants, or pre-Flood corruption. It presents a Babylonian trial, an angelic warning, human responsibility, the condemnation of magic, the exoneration of Sulayman, and Allah's absolute control over harm.

At most, critics can point to broad motif similarity: angels, forbidden knowledge, and corruption. That is not enough to prove indirect borrowing. The absence of a canonical Biblical source and the absence of scholarly consensus make the allegation weaker. The Qur'an's account is distinct, restrained, monotheistic, anti-occult, and theologically coherent. The claim of indirect borrowing therefore remains speculative and fails as a refutation of [Qur'an 2:102](#).

Final Consolidated Conclusion

The 26 allegations against [Qur'an 2:102](#) are not sustained when the verse is read according to its wording, Sunni Islamic tafsir, and the Salafi/Athari principles governing Allah's decree, angelic obedience, human accountability, and the prohibition of magic.

The verse is not a divine endorsement of sorcery, not a contradiction of monotheism, not a confusion of angels and devils, not a borrowing from Biblical, Enochic, Jewish, or Babylonian mythology, and not an incoherent story later rescued by tafsir. Its structure is clear: Sulayman is innocent, devils are guilty, Harut and Marut warn, human learners choose, magic is harmful, and all harm remains under Allah's permission.

The strongest and safest conclusion is that [Qur'an 2:102](#) functions as a monotheistic warning against magic and occult dependence. It protects prophethood, condemns devilish corruption, preserves angelic obedience, affirms human responsibility, and directs all fear, reliance, and protection back to Allah alone.

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