

Jewish Foundations of Islam

Second Lecture

The Genesis of the New Faith

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The word "culture" in its ordinary English meaning, is perhaps not often employed in speaking of the pre-Mohammedan tribesmen of northern and western Arabia. Their life is typical of something more interesting. There are certain groups of men, and phases of primitive civilization, the mention of which always creates a picture of hardship and valor, the triumph of human skill and endurance over natural conditions full of danger and privation. We find a flavor more appetizing than the taste of high life in Cooper's novels, and in the biographies of Daniel Boone and Kit Carson. When we read of the typical "cowboys" of a generation ago, we expect no mention of books and reading, of household luxuries and bric-a-brac; what we seek, and find, in the story of their life on the plains is a picture more entertaining, and also far more truly representative of their civilization or lack of it.

It is this appeal to the imagination which is made by the native of Arabia, in whatever variety of literature he is depicted. We see proud tribes, and their noted heroes, restlessly moving figures in a most forbidding landscape. We think of the exploits of Antar; the savage deeds of the freebooter and poet Shanfara, with every man's hand against him; Ta'abbata-sharran following the trail through the desert; the tent-dweller kindling for a passing stranger his hoarded pile of brushwood, and sharing with him the last handful of dates - nay, giving him the whole of it. The narratives in that great storehouse, the Aghani; the poems of the earliest period; and the quasi-historical works whose material is chiefly derived from these two sources; all give this lively picture of the Arab of Mohammed's day and earlier. They are concerned with the heroic and the picturesque, and hold in some contempt the humdrum ease of the town dwellers. Listen to al-Qutami, of the tribe of Taghlib (Nöldeke *Del. Carm. Arab.*, 31):

You, who admire the life of the city dwellers,
What think you of us, the sons of the open desert?
You may jog the streets on asses; we have our chargers,
Clean-limbed, and our lances, strong and keen for plunder.
When times are straitened, we raid the clans of Dabba;
Then he whose time has come to die -he dies!
Ay, it may happen to us to raid our brethren,
When for our need no other foe comes handy.

They take justifiable pride in the strenuous life of their ancestors, so largely deprived of the comforts and even decencies of civilization; while of course knowing that there is another side to the picture. There is a popular saying which holds up to view one less desirable feature of life in the desert: "Everything is soap for the Bedouin."¹ Doubtless; but those who coined the proverb knew the virtues of this toilet article, and presumably used it. The luxuries of the desert are the necessities of the city. All the time, as far back as any of our sources reach, the city life is there even when little or nothing is said about it.

We are gradually learning, in these days, that the ancient races in the Orient were much farther advanced in their knowledge of arts and crafts, and in their general culture, than we had supposed. The low estimate was a matter of course, while the evidence of high attainment was lacking. Even in the case of unpromising Arabia, I have no doubt that our estimate has been too low. Note, for example, the evidence collected by Wellhausen, *Reste* 201, note 2, in regard to the *written* tradition of the old Arabian poetry. There may have been much more writing of both poetry and prose than we have been wont to imagine. We are aware that the cities of South Arabia were magnificent and their culture well advanced, though our knowledge of them is still meager. Our definite information in regard to the cities in the northwestern part of the peninsula is very slight indeed, but even here we have ground for a probable conclusion.

The caravan trade did little for the Bedouins; they continued to live as they always had lived; but it did much for the emporia along the route. The products and symbols of a high civilization, in great number and variety, had for many centuries been familiar to the merchants and towns-people of the Hijaz. The influence of such acquaintance, long continued, is inevitably profound. As for Mekka, aside from the "through" traffic in which their participation was but slight, there were the local "caravans of winter and summer" mentioned by Mohammed in Sura 106; the caravan of winter going down to Yemen, and that of summer to the cities of Palestine,

Syria, and Phoenicia. Mekka even had some importance as a junction, from which a trade route ran by way of Riad to Gerrha on the Persian Gulf. These merchants carried exports, and brought back imports. They also brought a change in modes of thought and habits of life, a wider horizon. How much of a gulf there was between the civilization of the roving clans of Suleim or Hudheil and that of the Qoreish of Mekka, we are not in a position to say; but a gulf there certainly was.

The Koran, in that portion of it which was composed at Mekka, gives the impression of a community both prosperous and enlightened. Those citizens (not named) who are attacked by the prophet as troublesome opponents are not merely wealthy and influential, there were among them men for whose knowledge and wider experience he had a wholesome respect. This means not only the Jews; though in knowledge of books and of religious history their communities certainly were no slight distance in advance of their Arab neighbors.

In such centers of an old civilization as Mekka, Yathrib, Khaibar, and Teima the ability to read and write had for centuries, as a matter of course, gone far beyond the requirement of mercantile transactions. The acquisition of these accomplishments was very easy, and the advantage derived from them very obvious. Schools of some sort must have been ancient institutions in the Hijaz, even though we know nothing in regard to them. Our sources give us no sure ground for conjecture as to the proportion of illiteracy in Mekka and Medina, nor as to the attainments of Mohammed's companions in general. There is a tradition, not given in Ibn Hisham's *Life of the Prophet*, but quite credible as to the main fact, to the effect that in the second year of the Hijra, after the battle of Bedr, some of the Mekkan captives were made to serve as schoolmasters, to teach the Muslim boys. This has sometimes been too hastily interpreted to mean that the Muslims themselves were for the most part illiterate. The implication is not necessary, however. We at the present day hire teachers for our children, not because we are unable to read and write, but because we are busy. Those who had migrated from Mekka with Mohammed were now reduced to dire straits in order to earn their living. They could not long remain as parasites on the so-called "Helpers" of Medina who had given them hospitality, but must shift for themselves in every possible way. Doubtless many, both of the emigrants and of the Helpers, were illiterate; but we can hardly doubt that the men of the better class had had the benefit of some schooling. We happen to know that this was true even of some of the slaves. Mohammed's legislation in Sura 24:33 implies that written contracts were a matter of course, and that his followers would have no difficulty in making them.

In regard to the Jews of either city we have better ground for an estimate. They were an educated people. If, as the available evidence makes probable, their settlements in this part of Arabia were ancient and chiefly the result of a considerable migratory movement, we could take it for granted that they brought with them and maintained the traditions of culture which they carried forth and perpetuated in other parts of the world. Their worship required a succession of learned men, and their laws necessitated a general religious training. The Arab tales and traditions, in their mention of the Israelites of the Hijaz, give everywhere the impression of a people relatively high in civilization. The respect with which Mohammed, even in his utmost exasperation, speaks of this "people of the Book" shows that for him they stood on a superior plane; and this not merely because of their religious inheritance, but also because they possessed knowledge of history and literature to an extent which differentiated them, as a people, from any native Arab community. It is not merely a few men that he has in mind; the manner in which he speaks of "the children of Israel" shows that his thought is of the Jewish people in general, as he and his fellows had come in contact with them. In our conception of the state of civilization represented by them we probably shall underestimate rather than the contrary.

What literature may we suppose the Jews of the Hijaz to have possessed, in the time of Mohammed? On the theory of their origin here presented the only possible theory, I maintain, to account for the plain facts before us - the question can be answered with very high probability. If these Hebrew settlements had existed since the sixth century B.C., and had kept in touch with the outside world (as they could not have failed to do, in view of the constant and very lively traffic), their history in this respect was like that of other Jewish colonies. Certainly they had all the *sacred* literature possessed by their neighbors in Palestine and Babylonia. They were indeed in a part of the world utterly different from any of the regions occupied by their brethren of the Dispersion. Life in Arabia had its unavoidable requirements, and they had become Arab tribesmen, at least externally; but they kept their religion, and their traditions; it is hardly conceivable that they should have done otherwise. Religious feeling, long-established customs, pride of race, consciousness of the great superiority of the Israelite faith to the native paganism, the influence of frequent visitors from the Jewish communities in the north and east, the enduring reputation of such learned Arabian Jews as Simeon of Teima and doubtless others whose names we do not know - these factors, especially, were potent in maintaining Arabian Judaism. Obvious and acknowledged superiority is not readily thrown away. It would have been easier to forsake the faith and the inherited practices in Rome or Alexandria than in the oases of the desert. The colonists, here as elsewhere, brought with them their sacred books, and scribes were of course raised up as they were needed.

Outside the Koran we should hardly expect to find any contemporary allusion to the *learning* of these Israelites. We do know that two of the large Jewish tribes of Medina, the Nadir and the Quraiza, were called the *Kahinani* (i.e. the two *kahin* tribes); the name indicating that they claimed, doubtless with good reason, that their membership included certain priestly families.² In Ibn Hisham's *Life of the Prophet* (ed. Wüstenfeld, p. 659) there is preserved a poem by a Jewish contemporary of Mohammed which deserves attention. It dates from the third year of the Hijra, when Muslims and Jews were already in open hostility. One of the latter, Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf, who was connected with the tribe Nadir, had made himself especially obnoxious to the prophet, and was accordingly assassinated, by high command. A well known Muslim poet, Ka'b ibn Malik, composed verses justifying the murder, blaming the

Jews for their failure to support the true prophet, the heaven-sent messenger. A formal reply, as usual in the same rhyme and meter, was returned by Sammak of Nadir, and in it occur the following lines:

*ara 'l-ahbara tunkiruhu-jami'an
we-kulluhum lahu 'ilmun khabiru
we-kanu 'd-darisina likulli 'ilmin
bihi 't-taura lu taniqu wa-'z-zuburu*

The doctors all, I note, refuse him credence,
All of them learned, men of worldly wisdom;
They who are versed in all the heavenly teaching
Uttered for us in Torah and in Psalter.

The verses are unquestionably authentic, and in view of the circumstances under which they were uttered we can be quite certain that no one in Medina at that time would have denied the claim which they make. In the Israelite tribes of the city there were men whose reputation for learning was generally known. The verses are also interesting for their Hebrew loanwords, four in number; reminding of August Müller's remark (quoted above, p. 17) in regard to the "Jewish Arabic" spoken by the Israelites of the Hijaz. These same words appear frequently in the Koran, and it is evident that the most of the terms of this nature which Mohammed employs had been in common use long before his time.³

The Koran occasionally - and, be it noted, also in the Mekkan period - takes notice of the Jewish scholars (*ahbar*)⁴, the rabbis (*rabbanis*), the word denoting a still more learned class (Geiger, p. 52), as in 3:73 and 5:48, 68. In 26:197 Mohammed boasts that "the learned (*ulema*) of the children of Israel" had given him encouragement. This incidental testimony, supported as it is by the whole Koran, is certainly to be taken at its face value. To assert that there *were* no Israelite scholars in Mekka and Medina, and that Mohammed did not know the difference between the learned and the unlearned, is easy, but quite in disregard of the evidence. All the history of his dealing with "the people of the Book" - the amount of exact information, from Biblical and rabbinical sources, which he received; the encouragement given him while he seemed a harmless inquirer; the long and bitter argument, in which he was continually worsted; and the final rejection of all his prophetic claims - shows him in close contact with an old and perfectly assured religious tradition, far too strong for him. The history would have been the same if he had made his appearance, first as pupil and then as dangerous innovator, in any center of Israelite culture.

The sacred books were there, in Mekka, and Mohammed had seen some of them - though he takes care not to say so. It is altogether probable, moreover, that each of the principal Jewish communities in the Hijaz possessed considerable collections of volumes-scrolls and codices; not only the Torah, the Prophets, and other books of the Bible; not merely also the authoritative rabbinical writings, as they successively appeared; but also the most important and most widely discussed works of the world-literature, including translations from such languages as the Syriac and Ethiopic. Libraries grow up slowly; but even a small nucleus is a very strong magnet, and the man who loves books will collect them, when, as in the present case, they are within easy reach. The Jews, by long tradition, were a people of books and reading; and wherever their culture struck deep root, some sort of literary activity was a matter of course. In the generations immediately succeeding the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem by the Romans they clung closely to their canonical books and their religious tradition, letting everything else go by the board. This was partly the result of the calamities which had overtaken them, looked upon as a severe lesson, and partly in opposition to the Christian literature which was growing up, professedly based on the Hebrew and Jewish scriptures, canonical and extracanonical.

This attitude underwent a gradual change, of necessity, and that not only in the lands of the Dispersion. Before the time of Mohammed the haggadic midrash was gathering and adapting material from the Gentile literature, generally giving it a new religious coloring. The legends regarding Alexander the Great accord an interesting example. Any phrenetic narrative, pagan or Christian, might be laid under contribution, for no religion can build a fence around a good story. In a subsequent lecture, dealing with the narratives of the Koran, attention will be called to a remarkable series of legends in the 18th Sura, all belonging to the West Asiatic folklore. The collection was not made by Mohammed; the stories were merely abridged and adapted by him in characteristic fashion. It has been observed that a very considerable portion of these same legends is to be found in the homilies of Jacob of Sarug, a Mesopotamian Christian who wrote at the end of the fifth century; see especially the first chapter in Huber, *Die Wanderlegende von den Siebenschläfern*. The first in the Koranic series is a Christian tale, that of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus. Every Christian element has been removed from it, however, and it would serve equally well as a story of Israelites persecuted for their faith. There is even some evidence that the Jews of Mekka regarded the legend as their own property, and quizzed Mohammed in regard to it (Nöldeke-Schwally, 139-143). Next comes a parable which, as many scholars have observed, sounds like a typical Hebrew *mesal*. Thereupon follow old pagan legends in a Jewish redaction, Moses taking the place, first, of Alexander the Great, then of the old Babylonian hero Gilgamesh (see the [Fourth Lecture](#)). It is perfectly evident that Mohammed's source was an already fixed collection of Jewish tales, existing at Mekka, in whatever manner he may have received them.

This I should suppose to be typical of a class of literature, designed for popular instruction, which might be found in any or all of the Israelite settlements, from Teima to Mekka. That it was in the Aramaic language, and written with the Aramaic alphabet, would be a matter of course; some direct evidence touching this question will be noticed presently. It is unlikely that any portion of this "world-literature" existed in the Arabic language in the time of Mohammed. The interesting narratives might be well known, however, even if they were not obtained from the Jews. The Arabs of Hira were bilingual, and so also, no doubt, were many of those on the Greek frontier; and the art of the story-teller flourished mightily in Arabia. But in the case just mentioned we certainly are dealing with *a document*, not with oral tradition.

Could Mohammed read and write? This may seem a very strange question, in the presence of the Koran. Would not the production, by an illiterate man, of a great literary work, admirable throughout in its discriminating use of words, the skillful structure of its sentences, and the surprising mastery of all the *nuances* of a very highly developed grammatical science, be in fact the miracle which it claims to be? The answer, however, is not such a matter of course as it seems. The grammar, i.e. the forms of the literary language, had long been completely developed in the pre-Mohammedan poems, which were a multitude and familiar throughout the Arabian peninsula; and oral tradition can accomplish wonders. It is with the Arabic language only that the question is ordinarily concerned; but if it should be answered in the affirmative, it is necessary to go farther, and inquire whether there is any likelihood that the prophet could also read Hebrew or Aramaic. This might at the outset seem very improbable indeed, but there are no known facts which could warrant the assertion that it is impossible.

The direct evidence, it is needless to say, is scanty and difficult of interpretation. The orthodox Muslim Tradition generally (but not quite consistently) maintains that the prophet could neither read nor write. It is quite evident that dogmatic considerations were chiefly influential here. We have to reckon with a tendency, not simply with a record of known facts. As for the testimony of the Koran, it can be, and has been, interpreted in more than one way. It is quite natural that the prophet should not take occasion to affirm his ability, if he possessed it. The real question is whether he does not *deny* the ability. Some have claimed in support of this view the passage 29:47, in which the angel of revelation says to Mohammed, "You have not been wont to recite any (sacred) scripture before this, nor to transcribe it with your right hand; otherwise those who set it at nought might well have doubted." But this is a very dubious argument, to say the least. As Nöldeke-Schwally, 14, remarks, it can be turned the other way. The natural implication of the passage is that the prophet was writing down the Suras of this particular "Book," though he never before had undertaken any such portentous task (cf. also 87:6). And I believe that it will be found probable, when all the evidence is taken into account, that Mohammed did write down the whole of the Koran 'with his right hand.' This passage will come under consideration again, in the sequel.

The argument which has weighed heaviest with those who would have Mohammed illiterate is the fact that he repeatedly describes himself as "*ummi*," a curious Koranic adjective which always expresses contrast with the "people of the Book." Interpreting this as "unlettered," and supporting the interpretation by the Tradition and the prevailing low estimate of Arabian culture, Nöldeke in his *Geschichte des Qorans* (1860) adjudged Mohammed illiterate, or nearly so. Wellhausen adopted this view, expressing it with emphasis, and it was generally accepted; Sprenger (*Das Leben und die Lehre des Mohammad*, 1861-1865) was one of a few who maintained the opposite. More recently, there has been a growing tendency to predicate for the prophet some literary training; thus Grimme, Rudolph, Schulthess, and others. In Nöldeke-Schwally, 14, it is shown that *ummi* cannot mean "illiterate"; and the view there maintained is that it designated those who do not have ("or know") the ancient holy scriptures. Even this explanation, however, is unsatisfactory. It does not at all account for the statement in 2:73 (see below); nor does it provide a reasonable derivation of the strange adjective, which certainly cannot be explained by *'am ha-ares*(!), nor by any native Arabic use of *umma*, "nation". On the contrary, this is one of the Jewish-Arabic locutions of which August Müller speaks, being simply the transfer into Arabic of the Hebrew *goi*, *goyim*. It was not coined by Mohammed, but was taken over by him from the speech which he heard. It designated any and all *who were not of the Israelite race* (as has already been said, and is well known, Mohammed does not distinguish Christians from Israelites). The passage 2:73, which has made trouble for previous explanations of the problematic term, expresses the indignation and scorn with which the prophet replies to certain *proselytes* in one of the Medinese tribes, who had tried to trick or ridicule him by means of some "scripture" of their own composition - a most natural proceeding for would-be Israelites. He has just been speaking of the Jews, and now continues: "And among them there are certain *goyim*, who do not know the scriptures, but only hope to appear to, and who think vain things. Woe to those who write out scriptures with their hands and then say, 'This is from God!'" Here, the adjective is plainly used in reproach and contempt; elsewhere, it means precisely "Gentile," most obviously in 3:69! The Koran, then, gives no ground whatever for supposing Mohammed unlettered.

On one point, at all events, there has been very general agreement among students of the Koran, namely, that Mohammed did not wish to seem to be one to whom reading and writing were familiar accomplishments. This, however, is a little too sweeping a statement of the case. He did not wish to seem to be a man of book-learning; to be dealing out what had been obtained from writings. He had not copied books, nor parts of books, nor written down what any man had dictated. The reason for this is obvious: he would not weaken the assurance, constantly maintained, that his outgivings were of superhuman origin. God was now producing and perfecting for the Arabs *a holy book*, delivered through Arabian messenger in the same way in which the Jews and Christians had received their scriptures. The prophets of Israel had spoken by divine inspiration, not from book-knowledge. Mohammed himself certainly never doubted, from the beginning of his ministry to the day of his death, that his 'Koran' was the product of divine illumination, nor would

he have others doubt. We are reminded of one of the great teachers of the New Testament. The apostle Paul had read Christian gospels, and had talk with disciples and companions of Jesus; but neither in his own thoughts nor in his writings would he allow these facts any weight. The truth was revealed to him, he repeatedly declares; "I conferred not with flesh and blood"; "They who were of repute imparted nothing to me" (Gal. 1:1, 2:6). Mohammed would have used the same words: the Koran came him from above, not from any human teachers, nor from the reading books.

This is very different from a profession of unfamiliarity with reading and writing, nor is it easy to believe that he could have made any such profession. When we think of the period of preparation - certainly no brief period - which preceded the beginning of the Koran and the public appearance of the prophet, it seems truly incredible that he should not have made himself familiar with these very ordinary accomplishments. It is altogether likely, indeed, that he had possessed them from his boyhood. The family of Hashim, to which he belonged, was respected in Mekka though neither wealthy nor especially influential. His grandfather 'Abd al Muttalib and his uncle Abu Talib, in whose care he was brought up might certainly have been expected to give him some of the education which Mekkan boys of good family were wont to enjoy. The fact that was chosen by the prosperous widow Khadija (whom he afterwards married) as the man to take charge of her trading ventures would seem make it almost certain that he was known to have some acquaintance with "the three Rs."

Supposing that all this is granted, the probability that Mohammed had learned to read Hebrew or Aramaic in any effective way may nevertheless seem remote. Not that the acquisition would have been difficult, a short time would have sufficed; but because he could get what he wanted in a much quicker and easier way. The alphabet could indeed be mastered in a few hours; and the two languages, in both vocabulary and grammar, bear enough resemblance to the Arabic to enable one who is accustomed to read and write the latter to labor through the sentences of a Jewish document after a comparatively short period of study with the aid of a Jewish instructor. In view of Mohammed's great interest in the Jewish scriptures, and the length of time during which he must have been receiving instruction in them; in view also of certain features in the Koran, it is easy to believe that he may have gained this gentle eminence in comparative Semitic philology. It is perhaps not too fanciful a conjecture that the brief exclamatory utterance which is believed with good reason to have constituted the very beginning of the Koran contains reference to this fact. Sura 96:3-5: "Recite! for thy Lord is the most gracious One; who teaches the use of the pen; teaches man what he had not known." The three lines are built upon the word *qalam*, "pen," which furnishes the threefold rhyme. Doubtless the thought of the Jewish and Christian scripture is in the background; but we should hardly expect the human element in the divine revelation to be so strongly emphasized, in this brief outburst, unless the message to the Arabs was also in mind. There is a personal note in the announcement: "*Thy* Lord is most gracious." It is natural to think that the nascent prophet here speaks out of the consciousness of his own experience.

However this may be, no wielding of the *qalam*, nor ability to spell out the words of an ancient sacred book, can account for Mohammed's acquaintance with Hebrew and Jewish lore. It is quite evident from the volume and variety of the material, derived from literary sources, which the Koran brings before us that it cannot, in the main, have been derived from the prophet's own reading. It would indeed have been easy for him to peruse, with the help of a teacher, some portions of the Hebrew sacred writings; it seems the easiest explanation of some of the phenomena which we can observe in the Koran that he did this; but, even if this may be supposed, the amount of such laborious perusal must have been small at best. The manner in which he gained his extensive, even though superficial acquaintance with the Hebrew scriptures and the Jewish halakh and haggada was by oral instruction, teaching which must have covered a very considerable period of time.

We have no definite and trustworthy information either as to the place or places, where the instruction was given, or as to any individual who gave it (see, however, what is presently to be said in regard to the passage 16:105). Presumably the prophet's own city, Mekka, was the principal place, and perhaps it was the only one, during his preliminary training and the earlier part of his career. It has often been surmised, and sometimes treated as an assured fact, that Mohammed gained some, or much of his religious information abroad, while on his travels as a caravan merchedise, especially in Syria. The conjecture, however, is neither well founded nor helpful. There is in the Koran nothing whatever that could not easily have been obtained in Mekka and Medina, nor any sort of material from which an origin outside of Arabia seems likely. The stories of Mohammed's distant journeyings are purely fanciful; it is not likely that he ever went north of Teima, the distributing center where the caravan merchandise was taken over by the carriers to the north and east. Nothing in the Koran gives the suggestion of a man who had been abroad; one receives distinctly the contrary impression.

The number of the prophet's authorities must have been small. It is possible to assert this from our knowledge of the man himself. He was not one who could go about freely and openly, asking for information - even before the idea of an Arabian revelation first entered his head; nor was it ever characteristic of him to take others into his confidence. In the *hadith* there are some very circumstantial narratives which show that on occasions when Mohammed was in serious need of counsel, even Omar and the trusted companion and adviser Abu Bekr were held off at arm length.⁵ We should have known this from the Koran, without the aid of the *hadith*. He was not a man to make intimate friends; if he had been, he never would have stepped forth as a prophet. He consulted privately as few as possible of those who could give him what he wanted, and kept his own counsel. Knowing how he was wont to treat - and maltreat - his material, we can say without reserve that he was very fortunate in the choice of his teachers. He can hardly have discussed with them much of what they told him. If he had done so, he certainly would have been saved from many of the blunders into which he fell.

It would seem probable, from what we know of the mental attitude of the man, revealed in every feature of his life and work, that even in the presence of learned men he did not wish to acknowledge to them, or to himself, that he was acquiring information which was totally new. Whatever he thus received was a divine gift, to be refashioned according to his own divinely aided wisdom. This conception of the matter would have been especially easy if (as we may suppose) he had already learned to spell out Hebrew words and decipher sentences for himself. Probably few of his contemporaries, aside from the teachers themselves, knew whom he had been consulting; and certainly no one of the latter, not knowing what other instructors Mohammed might have had, would be inclined to accept responsibility for the travesty of Hebrew history which the Arabian prophet put forth. He had not been given this history in connected form, but in fragments of narrative, largely unrelated - and he trusted Gabriel to put them together for him. His studies certainly attracted very little attention at the time. In his youth and early manhood, and until his public appearance as a prophet, he was an insignificant personage, not particularly noticed by anybody (see Snouck Hurgronje, op. cit., 657). Mekkan tradition preserved no record of his teacher or teachers. The legends of the monk Bahira, of his Ten Jewish Companions, etc., are all perfectly worthless, mere romancing. His "studies" were indeed observed and commented upon. In two very important passages the Koran refers to human instruction received by the prophet, in both cases in answer to the cavilling charge that his divine wisdom was only what might be acquired by any one who was willing to waste his time in listening to "old stories." The first of the passages is 25:5 f. "The unbelievers say: This is only falsehood of his own devising, and other people have helped him to it. And they say: Old stories, which he has written out for himself; and they are dictated to him morning and evening." This is instruction *given in Mecca*, extending over some time. The stories from the Old Testament are especially referred to. Mohammed does not deny the human teacher, but only insists that the teaching came down from heaven. What the scoffing Mekkans said was certainly true as to the process by which the narrative material in the Koran was generally obtained. The teacher was some one whose continued intercourse with Mohammed they could observe, there in their own city. It was at home, not abroad, that the prophet received at least the Biblical (and haggadic) narratives which occupy so large a part of the Koran. The word *qaum*, "people," in this passage is indeed quite indefinite; it need not imply more than a single instructor. Since, however, the material referred to is Jewish, and since also we know that during nearly the whole of the Mekkan period it was upon the Jews and their knowledge of holy writ that he relied, it is a fair inference that the reference is to as representative of this "people," the Israelite colony in Mekka.

A still more important passage, significant in more ways than one, is 16:105, also of Mekkan origin. The angel of revelation is the speaker. "We know very well that they say: It is only a mortal man who has taught him. *But the language of him to whom they refer is foreign*, while *this* language is clear Arabic!" The person here referred to may or may not be the same one who is mentioned in 25:5. Certainly nothing opposes the supposition that both passages point to the same individual, while it is clearly supported by two considerations especially: these portions of the Koran are of about the same date; and Mohammed never would have frequented two or more teachers if one would suffice. It plainly is implied here that the Mekkans knew of but one, namely "*that one whom they have in mind*." Here, then, we may fairly conclude, is Mohammed's chief source, very likely his only major source of instruction aside from what he was constantly seeing and hearing, in the Jewish community which he frequented.

Especially interesting is the statement regarding the language. The man was a Jew; additional reason for this statement will be given in the sequel. He was not of Arabian birth, but came from without. As already remarked, the old and highly prosperous Israelite colonies in the Hijaz were frequently enlarged, both from Arabia and from the outside world. On the one hand, they inevitably attracted considerable companies of proselytes. Whole Arab tribes or clans would be likely to join them, assimilating more or less completely their religion and culture.⁶ Small groups of foreigners arriving in the country would see their best prospect of protection and success in entering the strong Hebrew settlements and professing the Israelite faith. I have shown reason for believing that we have in 2:73 a highly interesting allusion to certain of these "Israelites for revenue only." (page 38). In the first lecture, moreover (p. 15), I spoke of Jews who came from foreign parts to join their co-religionists in the Hijaz. One of these was the man to whom the prophet is now alluding. This learned rabbi (for such he certainly was), resident in Mekka among those of his own race and presumably speaking their dialect, had not been in Arabia long enough to enable him to speak Arabic correctly. Any discourse uttered, or dictation provided, by him would at once have been recognized as '*ajami* (the word employed in the passage just translated). The word most commonly, but not necessarily, points to the Persian domain, and on all accounts it seems the most probable conjecture that this was a Babylonian Jew who had come down with one of the caravans from the northeast. (It seems characteristic of Mohammed to resort to such an outsider, for his private tutoring, rather than to any of those with whom the Arabs of Mekka were well acquainted.) There are some features of the Koranic diction, especially in the proper names, which suggest a teacher who was accustomed to Syriac forms;⁷ and a portion of the material taken over by Mohammed, especially the legends in the 18th Sura (mentioned above; and see especially the Fourth Lecture) and the quite unusual bit of mythology introducing the Babylonian angels Harut and Marut (Sura 2:96)⁸ would naturally point the reader to southern Mesopotamia.

Whether Mohammed had only one habitual instructor in Mekka, or more than one, he certainly learned from many, and in many ways. An essential framework of the new faith he had built up from his own observation and deep meditation, without consulting anybody. By far the most important factor in his religious education was the close and the continued acquaintance with the actual practice of a superior religion. He had frequented the Jewish quarter in his native city until he had learned much in regard to the children of Israel, "whom Allah prefer over the rest of the world" (45:15, and elsewhere): their fundamental beliefs, their book-learning, their forms of

worship, and some of the law and customs which regulated their private and social life. Without this personal experience, observing the actual example with his own eyes and serving it for a considerable time, he could not possibly have conceived Islam.

Doubtless regarded as a promising convert, he was permitted to see the sacred books and to witness the divine service. The impression made upon him was profound. There is a very significant passage in the third Sura which has not received due attention. In verses 106-110 the prophet contrasts the Muslims with the unbelievers among the Jews, while acknowledging that some of the latter are true believers. In the past, as he I often declared, the children of Israel were the preferred of Allah, but this is true no longer. (106) "You (the Muslims) are the best people that have been brought forth for mankind; ... if the people of the Book had believed, it would have been better for them. *There are believers among them*, but the most of them are perverse. (107) They can do you little harm; and if they do battle against you, they will turn their backs in flight. (108) Shame is decreed for them ... and they have incurred the wrath of God; and poverty is stamped upon them; this, because they denied the signs of God, and slew the prophets unjustly (repeating the list of charges and penalties given in 2:58, 84 f.). (109) Yet all are not alike among the people of the book is an upright folk, *reciting the signs of God in the night season, and prostrating themselves.*" Rudolph, p. 8, strangely holds, against the whole context, that this last verse may refer to the Christians; apparently unaware that the Jews, as well as the Christians, kept vigils and prayed with genuflections and prostrations.

Certainly Mohammed had witnessed nocturnal Jewish devotions, both the prayer ritual and the recitation (chanting) of the Hebrew scriptures. From the former he devised his own prescription of a prayer season in the night (11 :116; 17: 80 f.; 76: 25 f.; and see p. 136); while it was in partial imitation of the latter that he devised the form of his *Qur'an*, with its rhythmic swing and - specially - the clearly marked-off verses (*ayat*, "signs."). It was in order to assert the originality of his own "recitation," moreover, in distinction from that of the Jews, that he uttered the words of 29:47: "You (Mohammed) have not been wont to recite any scripture before this, nor to transcribe it with your right hand." He had neither recited Jewish scriptures nor copied them - a charge which would inevitably have been made by the Mekkans.

It is perhaps useless to conjecture what writings other than the Hebrew scriptures, specimens of the widespread Aramaic literature, might have been shown to him and perhaps read by him, at least in part. One might think of Bible stories in popular form, or of other religious narratives. In spite of the very strong probability that the most of what he received was given to him orally, and chiefly on the basis of oral tradition, there is a certain amount of literary transmission to be taken into account. I may be permitted to refer to a conjecture of my own, published in A Volume of Oriental Studies presented to Edward G. Browne (1922), pp. 457ff. The story of the Seven Sleepers and *Decius*, mentioned above, appears in the Koran (18:8) as "the men of the Cave and *ar-Raqim*. As soon as the

suggestion of Aramaic script is made, the almost perfect identity of **רְקִים** and **רְקִים** is apparent. The problematic name in the Koran is the result of a misreading. The mistake might possibly occur in more than one variety of Aramaic script, but would have easy explanation only in the "square character" employed in the Jewish writings. Horovitz, p. 95, was inclined to doubt this solution of the long-standing riddle of "ar-Raqim," for two reasons: (1) no other similar example of misreading has been found in the Koran; and (2) the prefixed Arabic article is unexplained. The first of these objections can hardly be termed weighty, under the circumstances; and as for the second, since *raqam* has the form of an Arabic *adjective*; the prefixing of the article was very natural. Mohammed himself would have been especially likely to add this original touch. The coincidence is too exact to be accidental, since the hypothesis offers no difficulty at any point.

It can hardly be doubted, in view of the evidence thus far presented that Aramaic writings were numerous in Mekka and Medina, as well as in the other Jewish centers in northwestern Arabia. I have shown that the legends of the 18th Sura were clearly obtained from a Jewish recension, and it now appears (as of course would be expected) that the language was Jewish Aramaic. Was it Mohammed himself who made the misreading *Raqim*?⁹ The supposition is by no means necessary but it seems easier than any other. If the belief that he could read such document is felt to be too difficult, it may at least be maintained that the stories had been read (translated) for him, and that he had thereafter spelled out some part for himself. As has already been said, however, the task of learning to read Aramaic would have been very easy, especially while spending much time in a bilingual community.

Concerning the Jewish Aramaic spoken in this region we have of course very little information. We do happen to know a few of its peculiarities which doubtless were many. Dialects are easily formed, and go their own devious ways. The Hijazi Jews were in a position very favorable for developing peculiarities of speech, both home-grown and borrowed. The nearer Christian communities made their contributions; and here, where there was comparatively little occasion for controversy, such transfer was easy. Arabian Christianity - some of it - had much in common with Judaism (Wellhausen, *Reste*, p. 200), and the influence of course worked both directions. The Jews in southern Babylonia and Yemen, especially took their toll of new words from their Christian or pagan neighbors and then passed them on to the Hijaz, where not infrequently the Aramaic became Arabic. There is an interesting survival from this Hijazi dialect - a specimen of billingsgate - in one of the poems of Hassan ibn Thabit, Nöldeke, *Del. Carm.*, 70, 12.¹⁰ There is an especially opprobrious epithet which was applied to the Qoreish of Mekka by the adherents of Mohammed at Medina. The poet now launches it at the enemy: *ya sakhina!* The meaning of the term was soon lost; the scholiast and the native lexicons, clinging to the

Arabic root, proffer a ridiculous explanation; Nöldeke notes, *originis ignotae*. It is the Aramaic **שְׂחִינָא**, "scab!" a term of abuse not infrequently heard in modern times. The Qoreish were a scab, a sore, on the fair face of the Hijaz. The word was as familiar in Mekka as in Yathrib.

A few other examples of Hijazi Aramaic - words used in meanings unknown or unusual elsewhere can be inferred with very high

probability from the Koran. Thus **זְכוּתָא**, "alms," whence the Arabic *zakat* (see the concluding

lecture); **מְלָא**, "religion"; **כְּפַר**, "unbeliever" (see Horovitz, p. 60); **שְׂרָקוּ**, "divine help," Arabic *furqan*,¹¹ certainly the term regularly used in this sense by the Jews of this region, as occasionally in the Targums as the rendering of Hebrew *yeshu'a*, *yeshu a*,

קְרָאָן and **שְׂוֹרָא**, meaning respectively "lection" and "section" (or "chapter"). The former would be the regular Jewish Aramaic counterpart of the Syriac *qeryan*; and the latter could very naturally arise as a literary term designating a "closed series" of sentences (or especially of *pesuqim*). Both terms certainly were taken over into Arabic before Mohammed's time. It must be remembered that he had no intention of adorning the "pure Arabic" of his Koran with speech borrowed from any other language. He likes to mystify by inventing strange words now and then, but that is quite another matter.¹² In such passages as 10:39; 11:16; 2:21 it is plainly implied that the term *sura* is perfectly familiar to his hearers; and as for *qur'an* the use of the verb (imperative) in the all-important passage 96:1 shows that he thought of the verbal noun as belonging to his own language. But such technical terms in Arabic are usually of foreign origin.

An obvious peculiarity of this dialect is that - as in Syriac - the Biblical proper names which in Hebrew are written *Yisra el*, *Yishma el*, etc., was pronounced Isra'el, Ishma'el, etc. This might, of itself, have originated a mere dialectic variation in Aramaic, without outside influence; but there is another fact to be taken into account. The Biblical proper names generally, as they occur in the Koran, are not modeled closely upon the classical Hebrew or Aramaic forms, but - as in other parts of the world - are conformed to the language of the land. The most of the names were early taken over into Arabic in forms borrowed or adapted from the neighboring regions where the inhabitants were Jewish or Christian. The Arabs of Yemen, Mesopotamia, and the Syrian border made their several contributions; and as these gained currency in the native speech, they naturally were adopted by the Jews of the Hijaz. At all events, the names were all, without exception, received by Mohammed from the Jews of Mekka, among whom they doubtless had been in use for a long time.

We happen to have evidence of the occurrence in pre-Mohammedan times of the names Adam, Ayyub, Da'ud, Sulaiman; as well as 'Adiya, Samau'al, Sara, and Yuhanna, which do not occur in the Koran (see Horovitz, *Untersuchungen*, 81 ff.). Others which probably are pre-Islamic though the evidence is doubtful, are Ibrahim, Isma'il, Nuh, and Ya'qub. And certainly these concerning which we happen to possess evidence are merely a few out of many which were in use. Harun (for Aharon) antedates the Koran, as we know with certainty from the verses of 'Abu bas ibn Mirdas preserved in Ibn Hisham, 661; and this doubtless is true also of its counterpart Quran (for Korah), concerning whom Mohammed narrates, in Sura 28:76, and probably also in 33:69, what he had learned from the *haggada*; as shown by Geiger, 165 f. *Fa'ul* is a favorite form in Arabic for reproducing strange names; thus Da'ud, Qabus, Faghur

La'udh, qamus (for **Ὀκεανός**), and many others. The pairing of names and other words, moreover, by fashioning a paronomastic counterpart to an already existing form, is also thoroughly characteristic of the native speech; it must be remembered that Mohammed did no create the Arabic language. The pair Qabil and Habil (Cain and Abel), not occurring in the Koran and perhaps long antedating it, may serve as an example. It is probable that Yajuj was fitted to Majuj long before the rise of Islam; and as for Talut, the "tall" king (verb *'tala*) who opposed Jalut, this is typical Arabian humor - of which Mohammed possessed very little. The prophet took faithfully what he found; and he was not so simple as to make himself ridiculous in the eyes of the "people of the Book" by appearing ignorant of the well known Biblical names. I have already conjectured (above) that the names Harut and Marut were brought to Mekka from the Arabs at the southern border of Babylonia. The name Ilyas may have been, as Horovitz, 82, observes, conformed to a genuine Arab name; but it is perhaps quite as likely that it was derived from Abyssinia along with the names Yunus and Fir'aun, and a large number of other words which were borrowed thence by the Arabs many generations before Islam (see below). It often has been said that Mohammed himself "must have heard from Christians" this or that name. Now there is no clear evidence that Mohammed ever received anything directly from a Christian source; but however that may be, there is no good reason for supposing that any one of the proper names in the Koran was first introduced by him into Hijazi Arabic.

In the case of two of the Koranic Biblical names there may be a reasonable suspicion of error in the written transmission, either by Mohammed or by some one of his predecessors. El-Yesa' for Elisha' may be a mere whimsicality of the popular oral tradition, but it is easiest to think of it as originating in the sight, rather than the hearing, of the name. Yahya, for John (the Baptist), is more puzzling. Whether it is a genuine Arabian name (as some have held) or not, it is strangely remote, in both form and sound, from either Yohanan or **Ἰωάννης**. I have long believed it probable (with Barth Casanova, and possibly others; see Horovitz, 167, bottom) that the explanation is to be found in a misreading of Yuhanna written in Arabic characters, this name being known to us as pre-Islamic.

Especially characteristic of the Jewish-Arabic dialect is the formation of curious mongrel words, partly Aramaic (or Hebrew) and partly Arabic sometimes a legitimate mixture, at other times reminding of the whimsical creations which appear now and then in bilingual communities - and when some of the early German settlers in Pennsylvania used the word *Schnecke* for "snake." *Zabur*, already mentioned, is formed on an Arabic root which bears no relation to the original Hebrew word. *Taurat* mentioned in the same

connection, was originally written with the consonant *ya* as though from תוריתא, a mixture of Hebrew and Aramaic. *Ummi* for עמי (see above) is quite characteristic. *Ma'un*, Sura 107:7, is the זעון of Ps. 90:1 and 71:3 interpreted by Arabic 'aun. It probably was in familiar use among the Arabian Jews long before Mohammed's time. *Mathani* 15:87 and 39:24, is the plural of מתניתא with the meaning "teaching." In the former passage, the numeral "seven" seems utterly inappropriate and

improbable, no matter what theory of its meaning is held. I think that we have here the Aramaic סבא, and that *sab'un min al-mathani* was a standing phrase in the Jewish circles known to Mohammed. "We have brought you an abundance of teachings and the magnificent Koran" has the right sound. The peculiar employment of *saut* ("whip") for "(divinely wrought) catastrophe," with the verb

of "pouring out," in 89:12, also has behind it a popular Jewish-Arabic phrase, derived from the overflowing scourge" (שוט) of Is. 28:15. The word *hanif* has given rise to an amount of conjecture. From the way in which Mohammed employs it we may safely conclude that he heard it frequently from the Jews, and used it as they did. His idea of its meaning is best seen in 22:32, cf. also 2:129 and 3:89; it describes those who separate themselves from the worship of false gods. Abraham fled from Ur of the Chaldees as

a (שוט), a heretic; and the Hijazi Jews, connecting the word with Arabic *hanafa* "to turn aside," used the Arabic adjective as a term of high praise descriptive of their great ancestor. *Hawiya*, 101:6, one of the numerous Koranic names of "hell," is a Jewish-

Arabic adaptation of the חנה, "final calamity," of Is. 47:11, cf. vs 14. See the Oriental Studies presented to Edward G. Browne, pp. 470 f. It is not at all likely that Mohammed himself originated the term. *Almu'tafikat*, the collective name of Sodom, Gomorrah, and

the cities "destroyed" with them, is a typical mixture: an Arabic form based on the Aramaic root אפך, reminiscent of the Hebrew

usage with derivatives of הפך. Equally typical is the phrase *rabb al-'alamin*, which adapts a Jewish Aramaic formula (found, in more than one form, as far back as the book of Tobit, 13:6, 10), by introducing the purely Arabic *rabb*, "Lord." Only a bilingual community could have produced this combination.

These are specimens, others might be added to the list. Besides, the Koran contains many Aramaic loanwords, most of them doubtless long current in Arabic, and not all of them of Israelite origin. It has been a favorite theory, that Mohammed mistook the meaning of not a few of the foreign words which he happened to have heard, and used them in an illegitimate way. An occasional slip of this

nature would not be surprising; the use of the word 'illyun (עליון) in 83:18ff. seems to be an example; but in general it certainly is the case that he merely illustrates usage current in Mekka and Medina. That it is prevailingly Jewish usage is everywhere obvious. When, for example, he tells the incident of the manna and quails, using *mann* and *salwa*; we know with certainty that his narrator was one who had been brought up in the language of the Targums. It would be interesting to know in what way his curious

word *yaqtin*, for Jonah's gourd (37:146) is related to the Hebrew קיקיון and whether the new creation is in any way his own. But conjecture in such a case is fruitless.

The use of the Aramaic language by the Hijazi Israelites in their own settlements might have been taken for granted without any illustration. This was the medium of common intercourse among the Jews of the Dispersion generally; used in its various forms from Egypt and North Africa to Persia, and from Asia Minor to Italy; as universal a racial speech as Yiddish has been in modern times, and withal a literary language of high rank, though largely supplanted in this capacity by Greek in the most strongly Hellenistic regions. The Targums and the haggada went everywhere, and popular dialects, like the one now under consideration, were a matter of course. The way in which the language flourished in Italy, in the Middle Ages, is a particularly instructive example.

The Ethiopic loanwords in the Koran have often been thought to indicate one source from which Mohammed received personal instruction. A few of them, of not infrequent occurrence, belong to the religious terminology; thus *fatara*, "create," *munafiq*, "hypocrite," *al-hawariyun*, "the Apostles," and several others. Nöldeke has collected all these Koranic words, 21 in number, in his *Neue Beiträge zur semitischen Sprachwissenschaft*, 47-58; and it is easy to see from his list that only a part of them have to do with religious conceptions. To suppose that Mohammed himself had learned all these from Abyssinians would necessitate the additional supposition that he had lived for some time in an Abyssinian community, where he had learned to speak the Ethiopic language. But

there are other facts to consider. There are many Ethiopic loanwords in Arabic aside from those in the Koran (see Nöldeke, *ibid.*), and something is known in regard to their origin. Siegmund Fraenkel, *Die aramäischen Fremdwörter im Arabischen*, pp. 210-216, in discussing the numerous Arabic words of Ethiopic origin dealing with ships and shipping, showed that these were a partial fruit of the long period during which the Arabs and Abyssinians were associated (as already mentioned) in charge of the traffic through the Red Sea.¹³ It was through this long and close association that at least the principal gain of Ethiopic words, the many secular and the few religious terms, was made by the Arabs, before the rise of Islam.

Mohammed had heard more than one language spoken, and seen more than one written, in his own city. The atmosphere in which he grew up was not merely commercial, nor was it by any means uncivilized. It was at home, not in the course of any travels, that he learned what he eventually put to use. His "Arabic Koran," a work of genius, the great creation of a great man, is indeed built throughout from Arabian materials. All the properties of the Koranic diction, including the foreign words and proper names, had been familiar in Mekka before he appeared on the scene. The fundamental doctrines, as well as the terminology, were provided, and close at hand, for one who had the wisdom to see and the originality to adopt them. By good fortune, it was Israelite schooling of which he availed himself, during the years of his preparation. The teacher (or teachers) whom he frequented "morning and evening" could, unquestionably, give him by far the greater part of what we find in his new system of faith and practice for the Arabian people. The leading ideas of early Islam are all prominent in the ancient religion which he had observed, and whose teachings he had heard. Some of them, no doubt, had been familiar, as Jewish or Christian doctrine, to all the best informed Arabs of Mekka; to some extent, indeed, they had their counterpart in the native paganism. But the paramount influence of Judaism is manifest in every part of the Koran.

The One God. The strict monotheism which has always been characteristic of Islam was nowhere more sharply pronounced than in the Koran. It was not a new idea in pagan Arabia, but the extraordinary emphasis given to the doctrine by Mohammed was the result of Jewish teaching. The term Allah, "the God," was already well known to the native tribesmen. There is, for instance, the familiar passage in the *mu'allaqa* of the poet Zuhair (lines 27f.):

Keep not from Allah what your heart enfolds,
Thinking 'tis hid; he knows each word and deed.
Payment may lag, all booked and kept in store
For the Last Day, or vengeance come with speed.

Or the line from one of an-Nabigha's poems (*Diwan*, ed. Ahlwardt, 19, line 17b.):

For Allah gives no man his recompense.

Ahlwardt, *Bemerkungen über die Echtheit, u.s.w.*, pronounced this poem spurious, but on quite insufficient grounds. Nöldeke has called attention, on the contrary, to the fact that the poem is addressed to a Christian prince, and that the poet is known to have had frequent intercourse with Christians.¹⁴ This might suggest Christian origin for the use of the term "Allah" in pre-Islamic time; but the presence of a similar and long-standing monotheistic usage in pagan Arabia makes the supposition unnecessary. The ultimate origin may be neither Christian nor Hebrew.

The South Arabian inscriptions have brought to light a highly interesting parallel. In a number of them there is mention of *the* God, who is styled "the Rahman" (Merciful). A monument in the British Museum, deciphered by Mordtmann and D. H. Müller, is especially remarkable.¹⁵ Here we find clearly indicated the doctrines of the divine forgiveness of sins, the acceptance of sacrifice, the contrast between this world and the next, and the evil of "associating" other deities with the Rahman. As Margoliouth, *Relations between Arabs and Israelites*, 68, remarks, "the Qur'anic technicality shirk, association of other beings with Allah, whose source had previously eluded us, is here traced to its home." Moreover, we may now see a reason why Mohammed made his persistent attempt, in the Suras of the later Mekkan period, to introduce the specifically Arabian term (as he very naturally regarded it) "ar-Rahman" in place of "Allah," but ultimately abandoned it (17:110). It is of course to be borne in mind that the religious conceptions found in these South Arabian monuments are all ancient and widespread in western Asia, with their counterparts in the cuneiform documents as well as in the Aramaic inscriptions.

The supposition of any Christian element in Mohammed's idea of God is certainly remote. If he had ever consulted with Christians (which I find very difficult to believe), he would presumably have heard the monophysite doctrine, which would have been likely to give him the strong impression of (at least) two Gods. The adoration of the Virgin Mary, moreover, had reached a pitch which easily accounts for the Koranic teaching (doubtless obtained from the Jews) that the Christian Trinity consisted of Allah, Mary, and Jesus (5:116; Cf. 4:169, and especially 72:3). In one of the early Suras, 112, a vigorous little composition, the evil of associating others with Allah is attacked: "Say, Allah is One; Allah the eternal; he did not beget, nor was he begotten; nor his he any equal!" Some have interpreted this as alluding to the pagan minor deities, "daughters of Allah," mentioned in 53:19 f. But the denial of "equality" in the

last verse, compared with 72:3, just mentioned, shows plainly enough that the polemic here is not against pagan worship. And the intensity of the prophet's feeling finds its most probable explanation in the Israelite reaction against the Christian doctrine.

The Written Revelation. It was from the Jews of Mekka that Mohammed learned of a divinely revealed *book*. This probably was the first great awakening and transforming idea that he received: Allah gives "guidance and help" (*huda we-furqan*) through revelations written down by inspired men. It took hold of him with tremendous force, and started him on the path which he thenceforth followed. He himself saw portions of these heaven-sent scriptures, handled with such veneration; and he also was profoundly impressed by the intimate acquaintance with them shown by these learned men: "they know the Book as they know their own children!" (2:141, 6:20). When at length he formed the idea of the Arabian Book, he was resolved that his followers should learn it, reading half the night, if need be (73:1-4).¹⁶ He knew - certainly he often had been told - that what he had seen and heard of the Bible was but a small part of the whole. The archetype of all holy scripture is preserved in heaven. Hence the "preserved tablet" of the Koran (85:22). St. Clair Tisdall, *The Original Sources of the Quran*, 119, compares Pirke Aboth v, 6, the heavenly tables of the Law. Mohammed of course had no intention of merely reproducing in the Koran, as his own revelation, any portion of what had been translated or paraphrased for his benefit. He makes one formal citation of Old Testament scripture (a very noteworthy fact), in Sura 21:105, naming its source as "az-Zabur" (the Psalter). It is in fact from Ps. 37:29, "the righteous shall inherit the earth." With his profound conviction of his own divine appointment, he could not doubt that his advent had been predicted in the scriptures which had preceded him. He says this in more than one place, of course venturing no more than the vague assertion in regard to the Hebrew writings. The Christian scriptures were far more remote; and here he goes farther, declaring in 61:6 that Jesus foretold a coming prophet named "*Ahmad*."¹⁷ This assertion may have taken shape out of Mohammed's own strong conviction, but it is perhaps more likely that he is repeating what someone had told him.¹⁸

It is very unlikely that Mohammed had ever seen Christian scriptures, of any sort. Certainly he never had become acquainted with their contents, beyond the few quotations and bits of legendary narrative that had reached his ear. Otherwise, with his thirst for information in religious matters, and his wish to show himself acquainted with the previous written revelations, he would have made acquisitions both significant and unmistakable, and would not have remained so profoundly ignorant of Christian history, custom, and doctrine.¹⁹ There are three passages in the Koran which seem clearly to be dependent on the New Testament. (I have been unable to find more than these, even after carefully examining the lists provided by Rudolph and Ahrens.) The *first* is the saying in 7:38, "They (the hostile unbelievers) shall not enter paradise until the camel passes through the eye of the needle" (cf. Matt. 19:24). This a proverb which was known to both Jews and Christians everywhere. The *second* is 57:13, which immediately reminds any one who is familiar with the Gospels of the parable of the Ten Virgins, Matt. 25:1-13. This is one of the most striking, and most universal in its application, of all the popular *meshalim* in the Gospels. By Mohammed's time, many who were not Christians had some knowledge of what was in the Christian scriptures. The *third* is the opening section of Sura 19, verses 1-15, which recount briefly and in poetic diction the story of the birth of John the Baptist as told in Luke 1:5-25, 57-66; a fine bit of purely Jewish narrative in the style of the Old Testament. The aged priest Zachariah, serving in the temple at Jerusalem, prays for a son and heir, though his wife is barren. He is promised a son named John, a name "not previously given." For a sign assuring the fulfilment of the promise, he is dumb for three days. As he comes forth from the temple, he makes signs to the people.

Mohammed had not himself read this account. His mistake in regard to the name "John" (cf. Luke 1 :61) came from misunderstanding the man who told him the story. It is very noticeable that the correspondence with the Gospel narrative *ceases with the first chapter of Luke*. Mohammed's informant seems to have been one who was interested in the story of the priest Zachariah and the birth of John the Baptist,²⁰ *but not at all in the birth of Jesus*. Instead of gleaning any incidents from the second chapter of Luke, Mohammed is now, in his story of Mary and Jesus (verses 16- 34), thrown entirely on his own imagination, of which he makes characteristic use. The sad blunder in vs. 29, identifying Mary with the sister of Aaron, continued in 3:30 ff. and 66:12, is the result of his own ignorant combination, not what any other had told him. It is a fair conjecture that each and all of these three bits of Gospel tradition were delivered to him by his Jewish teachers. There is no difficulty in the supposition, and no other seems quite plausible.

The Prophet, and the Chosen People. Mohammed's doctrine of the *nabi* and his mission was fundamental, one of the few supremely important ideas in Islam. And this, again, the conception of *the prophet* as the final authority on earth, he could only have obtained from Israelite sources. The whole history of Israel centered in prophets. In each successive stage, one of these divinely appointed men was the vice-gerent of God. They were the true leaders of all worldly affairs for they alone possessed the direct revelation; kings held a relatively lower place. Questions of high importance and great difficulty could only be settled "when a prophet should arise." After Mohammed came to the persuasion that the Arabs must have their prophet, the idea of the authority of this vicegerent grew steadily. In the older parts of the Koran it is Allah who must be obeyed; in the Medina chapters it is almost everywhere "*Allah and his prophet*."

What God intended from the beginning to give out to mankind he gave piecemeal, each time through some one prophet to the men of his generation. According to the Israelite tradition, each of the many portions of Hebrew scripture was written by a prophet, a "man of the Book" - as Mohammed declares, for example, of John (Yahya), in 19:13. Moreover, these human depositories of the divine wisdom were all members of a single great family. In all Mohammed's contact with his Israelite teachers he had been impressed with the idea of *the chosen people*. This, again, laid hold of him mightily, and brought forth his conception of the great mission of the

Arabs. Allah had selected, once for all, the family of Abraham. Israel (which for Mohammed of course included the Christians) had had its day, and it was now the turn of Ishmael. On this other branch of the family rested the final choice, and he, Mohammed, was the final prophet.

All of the Koran was sent from heaven, he believed. As for the fits, or seizures, resembling epilepsy, out of which he brought forth some of the messages received in times of most urgent need, I have long believed that they were obtained through self-hypnotism. Before Mohammed made his public claim to prophecy, he had acquired the technique of this abnormal mental condition; in the same way in which countless others have gained it, namely through protracted fasting, vigils, and excited meditation. The first fit, or fits, came upon him unawares, and he recognized a heaven-sent answer to his searchings of heart. As usual in such cases, the means of producing the states came more and more completely under his control; and he used them, in good faith, as a divine gift. After the paroxysm, through which he believed himself to receive illumination from above, followed a struggle with the ideas and phrases of the desired "message," until at last it was worked into shape. Whatever form of words Mohammed thus decided upon was the one to which he was guided by the angel of revelation; of this he was fully persuaded, and his right to give it forth he never doubted. The well known phenomena of self-hypnotism agree strikingly with the description of Mohammed's "fits" given by his biographers. See especially Otto Stoll, *Suggestion und Hypnotismus*, 2te Aufl., Leipzig, 1904, pp. 256-258; also John Clark Archer, *Mystical Elements in Mohammed* (diss.), New Haven, Yale Press, 1924, pp. 71-74, 87; and my essay, "Mysticism in Islam," in Sneath's *At One with the Invisible*, Macmillan, 1921, pp. 144-146.

Other Doctrines. The leading themes of the prophet's early preaching, those on which he chiefly relied to make an impression on his hearers, whether city dwellers or nomad tribesmen, were each and all characteristic features of Judaism. The resurrection of all men, both the just and the unjust; an idea familiar at least since Dan. 12:2 f., and always powerfully influential. The Judgment Day, *yom dma rabba*, when the "books" are opened, and every man is brought to his reckoning. The reward of heaven, the "garden," and the punishment of hell, with the everlasting fire of *Gehinnam*; ideas which Mohammed of course enriched mightily from his own imagination. The doctrine of angels and evil spirits; in particular the activities of Iblis, and of Gabriel, the angel of revelation. Mohammed must have been profoundly impressed by the first chapter of Genesis, judging from the amount of space given in the Koran to the creation of heaven and earth, of man, and of all the objects of nature. He may or may not have heard the verse Micah 6:8; at all events, he reiterates in his earliest Suras the primal duties of man: belief in Allah, humanity, and fair dealing.

The doctrines listed above are all equally characteristic of Christianity; but it was not from Christians that the Arabian prophet obtained them. These beliefs, and the many others connected with them, could not be acquired, and digested, in a few days, or in a few months; and it is utterly impossible to suppose that Mohammed ever had any *continuous* intercourse with Christians. He has some scattered information - a considerable amount, though generally vague or fantastic - about Christian beliefs, and has been told numerous things which occur in Christian scriptures; but of the basal, omnipresent conceptions, the matters of chief popular interest, the polemical theses (against the Jews, for example), characteristic of that religion, even in its crudest forms, he has not an inkling. With Judaism, on the contrary, his acquaintance is intimate and many-sided. He learned his lessons well; and when a thoroughgoing comparison is made of the Koranic material, of all sorts, with the standard Hebrew-Jewish writings then current, we must say with emphasis that his authorities, whoever they were, were men well versed in the Bible, the oral law, and the haggada.

¹ [Landberg, *Proverbs et Dicions du Peuple Arabe*, p. 170].

² [See Nöldeke, *Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Poesie der alten Araber*, p. 54 f.; also Margoliouth, *Relations*, 73, 79]

³ [The Hebrew terms **תורה דרש. חכר** in the quoted verses are obvious enough. *Zubur* comes from **מוסרי** under the influence of a genuine Arabic root *zhr*, "writing"; an especially good example of this Hijazi dialect. It is unnecessary to argue that the Jews of Mekka and Medina did not adopt this word from Mohammed (!); and he, for his part, was not so simple as to invent Hebrew technical terms in place of those already in use].

⁴ [Rudolph, *Abhängigkeit*, 5, note 31, is mistaken in supposing that in Sura 9:35, 31 Mohammed designates *Christian* scholars by this word. The context plainly shows the contrary].

⁵ [E.g. Bokhari, ed. Krehl, II, 105, 156].

⁶ [See Nöldeke, *Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Poesie der alten Araber*, p. 551].

⁷ [The name Yajuj was probably adapted by the Arabs-Jewish and Christian - of southern Iraq from the "Agog" which appears in the Syriac legend of Alexander].

⁸ [See Littmann, in the Andreas *Festschrift*, 70-87, and Horovitz, *Kor. Untersuchungen*, 146 ff.].

⁹ [Huber, *Die Wanderlegende*, p. 319, remarks that the use of written sources by Muhammed seems plainly suggested; yet he feels himself bound by the prevailing opinion decide against this].

¹⁰ [See the *Diwan of Hassan ibn Thabit*, ed. Hirschfeld, CLXXV, 9; and the scholion, p. 102].

¹¹ [The native interpreters of the Koran of course did not know the origin of the word, but from the meaning of the common Arabic verb combined with such passages as 25:1 and 3:2 decided that it signified "revelation." It *never* has this meaning in the Koran, however, but in all the cases of its occurrence signifies precisely "*divine aid*." The claim has often been made in modern times that the word is of Christian origin, but this is absolutely out of the question; only the *Jewish* use can explain it].

¹² [His fondness for high-sounding and perhaps unusual words is very characteristic but; that he was able to recognize any of them as *of foreign origin* (Wellhausen, *Reste*, 205, note) may well be doubted].

¹³ [There is a curious reference to sea-faring Arabs in the *Futuh Misr* of Ibn 'Abd al Hakam, p. 122, line 3, in the chapter dealing with the settlements of the Arab tribes Al-Fustat. A certain locality in the old city is said to have been occupied by the *rubbaniyu min Ghafiq*. Now these "sea-captains of Ghafiq" are something of a puzzle, since this was a Syrian tribe, always far from the sea. I suspect that we have here a confusion with Yemenite maritime town of Ghalifiqa, the well-known harbor of the city Zebid on the Red Sea, doubtless very active in the long-continued sea traffic in company with the Abyssinians. See nevertheless, in the same work, p. 3, line 16].

¹⁴ [See my *Commercial-Theological Terms in the Koran*, p. 18, note].

¹⁵ ("Eine monotheistische sabäische Inschrift," in the *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, vol. X (1896), pp. 285-292].

¹⁶ [Verse 20, added later to relieve the severity of the prescription, makes it plain that the opening verses were not intended to apply to the prophet alone, but to any pious Muslim who was comfortably "wrapped up" for his night's sleep].

¹⁷ [Of course not *Muhammed*, for every such prediction must have its element of mystery].

¹⁸ [I can see no plausibility in the conjecture, first made by the Muslims (e.g. Ibn Hisham 149 f.), and very often repeated, sometimes adorned with a play on Greek words, that the allusion is to the Gospel of John, 14:26; 16:7].

¹⁹ [Richard Bell, *The Origin of Islam in its Christian Environment*, has an excellent chapter on Muhammad's attitude to Christianity. This subject will be considered further in the next lecture].

²⁰ [Mohammed tells the story again in 3:33 a., besides alluding to it in 21:89 f]

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Jewish Foundations of Islam
Fourth Lecture

The Narratives of the Koran¹

Charles Cutler Torrey

We have seen in the preceding lectures that the Koran brings to view a rather long procession of Biblical personages, some of them mentioned several times, and a few introduced and characterized repeatedly. The experiences of the chief among them are described in stereotyped phrases usually with bits of dramatic dialogue. The two main reasons for the parade have been indicated: first, the wish to give the new Arabian religion a clear and firm connection with the previous "religions of the Book," and especially with the Hebrew scriptures; and second, the equally important purpose which Mohammed had of showing to his country men how the prophets had been received in the former time; and how the religion which they preached (namely Islam) was carried on from age to age, while the successive generations of men who rejected it were punished.

In all the earliest part of the Koran there is no sustained narrative, nothing like the stories and biographies which abound in the Old Testament. The ancient heroes are hardly more than names, which the ever turning wheel of the Koran keeps bringing before us, each one laden with the same pious exhortations. Mohammed certainly felt this lack. He was not so unlike his country men as not to know the difference between the interesting and the tiresome, even if he did not feel it very strongly. We know, not only from the Tradition but also from the Koran itself, that his parade of Noah, Abraham, Jonah, and their fellows was received in Mekka with jeers. His colorless scraps of history were hooted at as "old stories"; and we happen to be told how on more than one occasion he suffered from competition with a real *raconteur*. The Mekkans, like St. Paul's auditors at Athens (Acts 17:21), were ready to hear "some new thing," if only to laugh at it, but their patience was easily exhausted. One of Mohammed's neighbors, an-Nadr ibn al-Harith, took delight in tormenting the self-styled prophet, and when the latter was holding forth to a circle of hearers, he would call out, "Come over here to me, and I will give you something more interesting than Mohammed's preaching!" and then he would tell them the stories of the Persian kings and heroes; while the prophet saw his audience vanish, and was left to cherish the revenge which he took after the battle of Bedr. For the too entertaining adversary, taken captive in the battle, paid for the stories with his life.

Mohammed of course knew, even without any such bitter lesson, what his countrymen would enjoy. It is quite evident, moreover, that he himself had been greatly impressed by the tales of patriarchs, prophets, and saints which had come within his knowledge; for he was in most respects a typical Arab. And while we know, especially from the introduction to his story of Joseph, that he eventually formed the purpose of adorning his Koran with some extended narratives in order to attract as well as to convince his hearers, it probably is true that an equally strong motive was his own lively interest in these famous personages and their wonderful deeds. There are certain incidents, or bits of folk-tale, which he elaborates merely because they delight him, not at all because of any religious teaching which might be squeezed out of them. This appears, for instance, in his tales of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, of Dhu 'l-Qarnain (Alexander the Great), and of Joseph in Egypt. His imagination played upon these things until his mind was filled with them. Here was entertainment to which the people of Mekka would listen. Even stronger, doubtless, was the hope that the Jews and Christians, who had loved these tales for many generations, would be moved by this new recognition of their divine authority, and would acknowledge Islam as a new stage in their own religious history.

It is significant that all these more pretentious attempts at story-telling fall within a brief period, the last years in Mekka and the beginning of the career in Medina. They had a purpose beyond mere instruction or mere entertainment, and when that purpose failed, there was no further attempt in the same line. As to the relative proportions of Jewish and Christian material of this nature which Mohammed had in store, it will presently appear that the supply obtained from Jewish sources greatly predominates. Moreover, in the case of the only one of the longer legends which is distinctly of Christian origin there is good evidence that it came to Mohammed through the medium of a Jewish document.

But the time when Mohammed began to put forth these few longer narratives, his Koran had grown to about one-third of the size which it ultimately attained. He must have taken satisfaction in the thought that he was beginning to have the dimensions of a sacred book, the scriptures of the new revelation in the Arabic tongue. The addition of a number of entertaining portions of history, anecdote, and biography would considerably increase its bulk, as well as its resemblance to the former sacred books.

Here appears obviously one very striking difference between the narratives of the Koran and those of the Bible. The latter were the product of consummate literary art, written at various times, for religious instruction, by men who were born story-tellers. They were preserved and handed down by a process of selection, gradually recognized as the best of their kind, and ultimately incorporated in a great anthology. In the Koran, on the contrary, we see a totally new thing - a most forbidding undertaking: the production of narrative as divine revelation, to rate from the first as inspired scripture; narrative, moreover, which had already been given permanent form in the existing sacred books. Here was a dilemma which evidently gave the Arabian prophet some trouble. If he should merely reproduce the story of Joseph, or of Jonah, wholly or in part, from the Jewish tradition, he would be charged with plagiarism. If he should tell the stories with any essential difference, he would be accused of falsifying.

A skillful narrator might have escaped this difficulty by his own literary art, producing something interesting and yet in keeping with the familiar tradition. But Mohammed was very far from being a skillful narrator. His imagination is vivid, but not creative. His characters are all alike, and they utter the same platitudes. He is fond of dramatic dialogue, but has very little sense of dramatic scene

or action. The logical connection between successive episodes is often loose, sometimes wanting; and points of importance, necessary for the clear understanding of the story, are likely to be left out. There is also the inveterate habit of repetition, and a very defective sense of humor. In short, any one familiar with the style of the Koran would be likely to predict that Mohammed's tales of ancient worthies would lack most of the qualities which the typical "short story" ought to have. And the fact would be found to justify the prediction.

In Sura 11:27-51 is given a lengthy account of Noah's experiences; the building of the ark, the flood, the arrival on Mount Ararat, and God's promise for the future. It contains very little incident, but consists chiefly of the same religious harangues which are repeated scores of times throughout the Koran, uninspired and uniformly wearisome. We have the feeling that one of Noah's contemporaries who was confronted with the prospect of forty days and forty nights in the ark would prefer to take his chances with the deluge.

It must in fairness be reiterated, however, that this task of refashioning by divine afterthought would have been a problem for any narrator. Mohammed does slip out of the dilemma into which he had seemed to be forced; and the manner in which he does this is highly interesting - and instructive. The story, Jewish or Christian, is told by him in fragments; often with a repeated introductory formula that would seem to imply that the prophet had not only received his information directly from heaven, but also had been given numerous details which had not been vouchsafed to the "people of the Book." The angel of revelation brings in rather abruptly an incident or scene in the history of this or that Biblical hero with a simple introductory "And when ..." It says, in effect: "You remember the occasion when Moses said to his servant, I will not halt until I reach the confluence of the two rivers"; and the incident is narrated. "And then there was that time, Mohammed, when Abraham said to his people" thus and so. It is not intended, the formula implies, to tell the whole story; but more could be told, if it were necessary.

The more closely one studies the details of Mohammed's curious, and at first sight singularly ineffectual, manner of serving up these old narratives, the more clearly is gained the impression that underlying it all is the deliberate attempt to solve a problem.

The story of Joseph and his brethren is the only one in the Koran which is carried through with some semblance of completeness. It begins with the boy in the land of Canaan, and ends with the magnate in Pharaoh's kingdom, and the establishing of Jacob and his family in Egypt. It is the only instance in which an entire Sura is given up to a single subject of this nature. The following extracts will give some idea of the mode treatment.²

Gabriel says to Mohammed: Remember what occurred *When Joseph said to his father, O father! I saw eleven stars and the sun and the moon prostrating themselves before me! He answered, O my boy, tell not your vision to your brothers, for they will plot against you; verily the devil is a manifest foe to mankind.* After a verse or two of religious instruction the story proceeds: *The brethren said, Surely Joseph and his brother are more beloved by our father than we; indeed he is in manifest error. Kill Joseph or cast him away in some distant place; then we shall have our father ourselves. One of them said, Kill not Joseph, but throw him into the bottom of the pit; then some caravan will pluck him out. They said O father! what ails you that you will not trust us with Joseph, although we are his sincere helpers? Send him with us tomorrow to sport and play, and we will take good care of him. He said, It would grieve me that you should take him away, and I fear that the wolf will devour him while you are neglecting him. They said, If the wolf should devour him, while we are such a company, we should indeed be stupid! And when they went away with him and agreed to put him in the bottom of the well, we gave him this revelation: Thou shalt surely tell them of this deed of theirs when they are not aware.*

They came to their father at eventide, weeping. They said, O father! we went off to run races, and left Joseph with our things, and the wolf ate him up; and you will not believe us, though we are telling the truth. Their father of course takes the broad hint given him, that they are lying; though they bring a shirt with blood on it as evidence. He accuses them of falsehood, and reproaches them bitterly. Then is told in a very few words how the caravan came, drew Joseph out of the well, and sold him for a few dirhems to a man in Egypt.

Thereupon follows the attempt of the man's wife to entice Joseph. Any episode in which women play a part is likely to be dwelt upon by Mohammed, and he gives full space to the scenes which follow. Joseph refused at first, but was at last ready to yield, when he saw a vision which deterred him. (The nature of this is not told in the Koran, but we know from the Jewish Midrash that it was the vision of his father, with Rachel and Leah.)³ The Koran proceeds: *They raced to the door, and she tore his shirt from behind; and at the door they met her husband. She cried, What is the penalty upon him who wished to do evil to your wife, but imprisonment or a dreadful punishment? Joseph said, She enticed me. One of her family bore witness:⁴ If his shirt is torn in front, she tells the truth; if it is torn behind, she is lying. So when he saw that the shirt was torn from behind, he cried, This is one of your woman-tricks; verily the tricks of you women are amazing! Joseph, turn aside from this! and do you, woman, ask forgiveness for your sin.*

Then certain women of the city said, The wife of the prince tried to entice her young servant; she is utterly infatuated with him; verily we consider her in manifest error. So when she heard their treachery, she sent an invitation to them, and prepared for them a banquet,⁵ and gave each one of them a knife, and said, Come forth to them! And when they saw him, they were struck with admiration

and cut their hands and cried good heavens! This is no human being, it is a glorious angel! Then said she, This is he concerning whom you blamed me. I did seek to entice him but he held himself firm; and if he does not do what I command him surely he shall be imprisoned, and be one of the ignominious. He said Lord, the prison is my choice instead of that to which they invite me. But if thou dost not turn their wiles away from me, I shall be smitten with love for them, and shall become one of the foolish. His Lord answered his prayer, and turned their wiles away from him; verily he is one who hears and knows.

This is characteristic of the angel Gabriel's manner of spoiling a good story. Aside from the fact that we are left in some uncertainty as Joseph's firmness of character, it is not evident what the episode of the banquet had to do with the course of events; nor why the ladies were provided with knives; nor why Joseph, after all, was put in prison. The things are all made plain in the Midrash, however.⁶

The account of Joseph's two companions in the prison, and of his ultimate release, is given in very summary fashion. *There entered the prison with him two young men. One of them said, I see myself pressing out wine; and the other said, I see myself carrying bread upon my head and the birds eating from it. Tell us the interpretation of this.* After religious discourse of some length, Joseph gives them the interpretation and it is implied, though not definitely said, that his prediction was completely fulfilled. The dream of Pharaoh is then introduced abruptly. *The King said, Verily I see seven fat cows which seven lean ones are devouring; and seven green ears of grain and others which are dry. O ye princes, explain to me my vision, if you can interpret a vision. The princes naturally give it up. The king's butler remembers Joseph, though several years have elapsed, and he is summoned from the prison. He refuses to come out, however, until his question has been answered: "What was the mind of those women who cut their hands? Verily my master knows their wiles." The women are questioned, and both the officer's Wife and her companions attest Joseph's innocence. He is then brought out, demands to be set over the treasuries of all Egypt, and the king complies.*

Joseph's brethren now enter the story again. Nothing is said about a famine in the land of Canaan, nor is any other reason given for their arrival, they simply appear. The remainder of the tale is in the main a straightforward, somewhat fanciful, condensation of the version given in the book of Genesis, with some lively dialogue. There are one or two touches from the Midrash. Jacob warns his sons not to enter the city by a single gate. The Midrash gives the reason;⁷ the Koran leaves the Muslim commentators to guess - as of course they easily can. When the cup is found in Benjamin's sack, and he is proclaimed a thief, his brethren say, "If he has stolen, a brother of his stole before him." The commentators are at their wits' end to explain how Joseph could have been accused of stealing. The explanation is furnished by the Midrash, which remarks at this point that Benjamin's mother before him had stolen;⁸ referring of course to the time when Rachel carried off her father's household gods (Gen. 31:19-35).

The occasion when Joseph makes himself known to his brethren is not an affecting scene in the Koran, as it is in the Hebrew story. The narrator's instinct which would cause him to work up to a climax was wanting in the Mekkan prophet's equipment. The brethren come to Egypt for the third time, appear before Joseph, and beg him to give them good measure. He replies, *Do you know what you did to Joseph and his brother, in the time of your ignorance? They said, Are you then Joseph? He answered, I am Joseph, and this is my brother. God has been gracious to us. Whoever is pious and patient, - God will not suffer the righteous to lose their reward.* This is simple routine; no one in the party appears to be excited.

Jacob wept for Joseph until the constant flow of tears destroyed his eye sight. Joseph therefore, when the caravan bringing his parents to Egypt set out from Canaan, sent his shirt by a messenger, saying that it would restore his father's sight. Jacob recognizes the odor of the shirt while yet a long distance from it, and says, "Verily I perceive the smell of Joseph!" The messenger arrives, throws the shirt on Jacob's face, and the sight is restored. The story ends with the triumphant entrance into Egypt, and the fulfilment of the dream of Joseph's boyhood; they have all bowed down to him.

Before the impressive homily which closes the chapter, Gabriel says to Mohammed (verse 103): "This tale is one of the secrets which we reveal to you"; and he adds, referring to Joseph's brethren: "You were not with them when they agreed upon their plan and were treacherous."⁹ This might seem to be a superfluous reminder; but its probable intent is to say here with especial emphasis, not only to Mohammed but also to others that no inspired prophet, Arabian or Hebrew, can narrate details, or record dialogues, other than those which have been revealed to him. Conversely, every prophet has a right to his own story.

The tale of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (27:16-45) gives further illustration of Mohammed's manner of retelling in leaps and bounds. Here also is shown, even more clearly than in the story of Joseph, his tendency to be mysterious. The material of the narrative is taken from the Jewish haggada,¹⁰ but much is omitted that is quite necessary for the understanding of the story. Change of scene is not indicated, and the progress of events is often buried under little homilies delivered by the principal characters (I omit the homilies).

Solomon was David's heir; and he said: O you people! We have been taught the speech of birds, and we have been given everything. Verily this is a manifest favor.

There were assembled for Solomon his hosts of jinn, and men, and birds; and they proceeded together until they came to the Valley of the Ants.¹¹ An ant cried out: O you ants! Get into your dwellings, lest Solomon and his armies crush you without knowing it. Solomon smiled, laughing at her speech, and said: O Lord, arouse me to thankfulness for thy favor ... Here follows a homily. We are left in some doubt as to whether the ants suffered any damage; for the tale proceeds:

He reviewed the birds, and said, How is it that I do not see the hoopoe? Is he among the absent? I surely will torture him with severe tortures, or I will slaughter him, or else he shall bring me an authoritative excuse. He was not long absent, however; and he said: I have learned something which you knew not. I bring you from Sheba sure information. I found a woman ruling over them; she has been given all things, and she has a mighty throne. I found her and her people worshipping the sun. Solomon said, We shall see whether you have told the truth, or are one of the liars. Take this letter of mine, and throw it before them. Then return, and we will see what reply they make.

She said: O you chieftains! A noble letter has been thrown before me. It is from Solomon, and it says, "In the name of God, the merciful Rahman; Do not resist me, but come to me resigned." O you chieftains! Advise me in this matter. They said, We are mighty men of valor, but it is for you to command. She said, When kings enter a city, they plunder it, and humble its mighty men. I will send them a present, and see what my messenger brings back.

Solomon preaches to the messenger, threatens him and his people, and bids him return. Then he addresses his curious army: Which of you will bring me her throne, before they come in submission? (There was need of haste, for after the queen had once accepted Islam, Solomon would have no right to touch her property.) *A demon of the jinn said, I will bring it, before you can rise from your seat. He who had the knowledge of the Book said, I will bring it before your glance can turn. So when he saw the throne set down before him, he said, This is of the favor of my Lord* (and he adds some improving reflections of a general nature). The native commentators explain that the throne was brought to Solomon under ground, the demons digging away the earth in front and filling it in behind; and all in the twinkling of an eye - according to the promise. The reader must not suppose, however, that this underground transit was from South Arabia to Palestine. Mohammed left out the part of the story which tells how Solomon's army was transported through the air to a place in the neighborhood of the queen's capital.

He said, Disguise her throne! We shall see whether she is rightly guided, or not. So when she came, it was said, Was your throne like this? She replied, it might be the same. Then they said to her, Enter the court. And when she saw it, she supposed it to be a pool of water, and uncovered her legs to wade through. But Solomon (who was not absent) said: It is a court paved with glass! She said, O Lord, verily I have been wrong but I am now resigned, with Solomon, to Allah the Lord of the Worlds. That is, she became a Muslim. The Koran drops the story here, not concerned to tell that Solomon married her.

Of the queen's interest in the *wisdom* of Solomon, which plays such part in the Biblical narrative, and still more in the Jewish midrash, not a word is said here. This feature must have been known to Mohammed but it did not suit his purpose. His own quaintly disjointed sketch doubtless achieved the effect which he intended. The mystery of the half-told would certainly impress the Mekkans; and the Jews would say, *We know* these incidents, and there is much more of the story in our books! So Mohammed would achieve a double triumph.

The account of Jonah and his experiences given in 37:139-148 is unique in the Koran. The whole Biblical narrative, without any external features is told in a single breath, a noteworthy example of condensation. Even the hymn of prayer and praise from the belly of the whale receives mention in vs. 143. As has already been observed, Jonah is the only one of all the fifteen *Nebiiim Acharonim* to receive mention in the Koran. The name of the Hebrew prophet is given (here as elsewhere) in a form ultimately based on the Greek; seeming to indicate - as in so many other cases - origin outside Arabia. The nutshell summary may have been made by Mohammed himself, after hearing the story read or repeated (though he nowhere else condenses in this headlong but complete fashion); or it may have been dictated to him, and then by him decorated, clause by clause, with his rhymed verse-endings.

Verily, Jonah was one of the missionaries. When he fled to the laden ship, he cast lots, and was of those who lost. The whale swallowed him, for he was blameworthy; and had it not been that he celebrated God's praises, he surely would have remained in its belly until the day when men rise from the dead. So we cast him upon the barren shore; and he was sick; and we made a gourd to grow over him. And we sent him to a hundred thousand, or more; and they believed, and we gave them prosperity for a time.

The narrative of "Saul and Goliath" (Talut and Jalut) gives a good illustration of the way in which the Mekkan prophet's memory sometimes failed him.

The leaders of the children of Israel ask their prophet to give them a king (2:247). He argues with them, but eventually says: *God has appointed Talut as your king. They said, How shall he be king over us, when we are more worthy to rule than he, and he has no abundance of wealth? He answered, God has chosen him over you, and has made him superior in knowledge and in stature* (cf. I Sam.

9:2) ... *So when Talut went forth with the armies, he said: God will test you by a river: Whoever drinks of it is not of mine; those who do not taste of it, or who only sip it from the hand, are my army. So all but a few drank of it. When they had passed beyond it, some said, We are powerless this day against Jalut and his forces. But those who believed that they must meet God said, How often has a little band conquered a numerous army, by the will of God! He is with those who are steadfast. So they went forth against the army ... and by the will of God they routed them; and David slew Jalut, and God gave him the kingdom.*

Here, obviously, is confusion with the tale of Gideon and his three hundred picked men (Judg. 7:4-7). The casual way in which David finally enters the narrative is also noteworthy.

The first half of the 28th Sura (vss. 2-46) gives an interesting outline of the early history of Moses, following closely the first four chapters of Exodus. It illustrates both the general trustworthiness of Mohammed's memory, for it includes practically every item contained in these chapters often with reproduction of the very words; and also a certain freedom his treatment of the Hebrew material, for he introduces, for his own convenience, some characteristic little changes and embellishments. This is the longest continuous extract from the Old Testament which the Koran contains. Mohammed does not treat the story as an episode of Hebrew history, but carries it through, in his cryptic fashion, without specific mention of the "children of Israel." The Sura dealing with Joseph and his brethren had already been put forth (it can hardly be doubted), but he makes no allusion to it, nor to the entrance of Hebrew into Egypt.

Pharaoh exalted himself in the earth, and divided his people into parties. One portion of them he humbled, slaughtering their male children, a suffering their females to live; verily he was of those who deal wicked. But we were purposing to show favor to those who were humbled in the land, and to make them leaders and heirs; to establish them in the earth, and to show Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts what they had to fear from them.

Haman appears consistently in the Koranic narrative (also in Suras 29 and 40) as Pharaoh's vizier. Rabbinic legends mention several advisors of Pharaoh (Geiger, 153), but Mohammed had in mind a more important officer. He had heard the story of Esther (and of course retained it in memory), and both name and character of the arch anti-Semite appealed strongly to his imagination. That he transferred the person as well as the name, to Egypt is not at all likely. Gabriel knew that there were two Hamans.

And we gave this revelation to Moses' mother: Give him suck; and when you fear for his life, put him into the river; and be not in fear, nor grieved; for we will restore him to you, and make him one of apostles. So Pharaoh's family plucked him out, to be an enemy and misfortune to them; verily Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts were sinners. Pharaoh's wife said, Here is joy for me and thee! Slay him not; haply he may be of use to us, or we may adopt him as a son (repeating the words which Potiphar uttered to his wife, in the case of Joseph). But they knew not what was impending.

Events develop as in the Biblical narrative. Moses' mother is hindered by divine intervention from letting out the secret, in her anxiety. The child's sister follows him, keeping watch, unobserved, from a distance. The babe refuses the breast of Egyptian nurses, as the Talmud declares (*Sotah*, 12 b); so it comes about that he is restored to his mother. Arrived at manhood, Moses enters "the city" stealthily, and finds two men fighting: "The one, a member of his party; the other, of his enemies." He is called upon for help, and kills the "enemy" with his fist - the blow of an expert boxer. He repents of his deed, utters a prayer, and is forgiven; but on the following day, as he enters the city cautiously and in apprehension, the same scene is set: the same man is fighting with another of the hostile party, and cries out for help. Moses reproaches his comrade ("Verily you are a manifest scoundrel!"), but again intervenes. As he approaches, to deal another knock-out blow, the intended victim cries out: "O Moses, do you mean to kill me, as you killed a man yesterday? You are only aiming to be a tyrant in the land, not to be one of the virtuous!" Just then a man came running from the other end of the city, saying, "O Moses, the nobles are taking counsel to kill you! So be off; I am giving you good advice." Thereupon Moses starts for Midian.

The account of the happenings in Midian is given with characteristic improvement. Here again is illustrated the prophet's lively interest in those scenes in which women figure prominently. He doubles the romance in the story, patterning it, in a general way, upon the account of Jacob and Rachel. Seven daughters at the well are too many, he recognizes only two; and Moses serves them gallantly, thereafter accompanying them home. *One of them came to him, walking bashfully, and said: My father is calling for you, to pay you for drawing water for us. And when he came to him, and told him his story, he said, Fear not; you have escaped from an impious people.* Mohammed neither names the father of the girls nor shows the least interest in him; he is merely a necessary property of the story. We could wish, however, that Mohammed (or Moses) had shown a more decided preference for the one or the other of the daughters. One of them said, O father, hire him! The best that you hire are the strong and trusty. He said: I wish to marry you to one of these two daughters of mine, on the condition that you work for me eight years;¹² and if you shall wish to make it a full ten years, that rests with you. I do not wish to be hard on you, and you will find me, if God wills, one of the upright. Moses replied: So be it between thee and me; whichever of the two terms I fulfil, there will be no grudge against me; and God is the witness of what we say. So when Moses had completed the term [which term?], *and journeyed away with his family [which daughter?], he became aware of a fire on*

the side of the mountain. He said to his family, Wait here; I have discovered a fire. Perhaps I may bring you news from it, or a firebrand, so that you may warm yourselves. So when he came up to it, a voice called to him, out of the tree, on the right side of the wady in the sacred valley, Moses! I am God, the Lord of the Worlds. Throw down your rod. And when he saw it move as though it were a serpent, he fled from it without turning back. O Moses, draw nigh and fear not, for you are safe!

The narrative then recounts the miracle of the leprous hand, the appointment of Aaron, and the first unsuccessful appearance before Pharaoh and his magicians. Instead of the story of the brickmaking task, which occupies the fifth chapter of Exodus, Mohammed introduces a feature which he adapts from the story of the Tower of Babel. *Pharaoh said, O you nobles! I know not that you have any god except myself. So now Haman, burn for me bricks of clay, and build me a tower, so that I may mount up to the god of Moses; verily I consider him a liar. And he and his hosts behaved arrogantly and unjustly in the earth, nor considered that they shall be brought back to us. So we took him and his army and cast them into the sea; behold therefore how the wicked are punished.*

Gabriel concludes by saying to the prophet (as at the end of the story of Joseph): *You were not on the west side when we decreed the matter for Moses, nor were you a witness; ... nor were you dwelling among the people of Midian ... It is only by mercy from your Lord (that these things are revealed to you).*

This narrative of the early life of Moses is particularly instructive, not only as illustrating Mohammed's manner of retelling the Biblical stories, but also as showing, better than any other part of the Koran, the freedom with which he could adorn his own account with properties deliberately taken over by him from other Biblical stories with which he was familiar. That he felt himself to be quite within his rights, as a prophet, in so doing, may be considered certain.

The 18th Sura holds a peculiar place in the Koran. The narratives of which it is mainly composed are at once seen to be different in character from the types which elsewhere are so familiar. While in every other part of the sacred book Mohammed draws either upon the Biblical and rabbinic material or else upon Arabian lore, in Sura 18 we are given a sheaf of legends from the world literature. The stories have the characteristic Mohammedan flavor, it is true; yet the Sura has distinctly an atmosphere of its own, and the prophet makes no allusion elsewhere to any part of its narrative material.

First comes the famous legend of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus. Certain youths fled to a cave in the mountains to escape the persecution of the Christians under Decius (c. 250 A.D.). Their pursuers found their hiding place, and walled it up. They were miraculously preserved in a Rip van Winkle sleep, and came forth some two hundred years later, in the reign of the emperor Theodosius II, when some workmen happened to take away the stones. The legend arose before the end of the fifth century, and soon made its way all over western Asia and Europe. Since it is a Christian tale, and since also there is particular mention of the Christians in the opening verses of the Sura, some have drawn the conclusion that this little collection of stories was designed by the prophet to attract the adherents of that faith especially. There is, however, nothing else in the chapter to give support to this theory, while on the other hand there is considerable evidence that even the opening legend came to Mohammed through the medium of a Jewish document. Aside from the fact that Muslim tradition represents the Jews of Mekka as interested in the tale (see Beidawi on vs. 23), and the additional fact that each of the following narratives in the Sura appears to be derived from a Jewish recension, there is a bit of internal evidence here which should not be overlooked. In vs. 18 the speaker says, "Send some one ... to the city and *let him find out where the cleanest food is to be had*, and bring provision from it." This emphasized care as to the legal fitness of the food at once suggests a Jewish version of the legend. A Christian narrator, if the idea occurred to him at all, would have needed to specify what he meant (e.g. food not offered to idols). It is to be observed that this motive does not occur in the homily of Jacob of Sarug, nor is the anything corresponding to it in any of the early Christian versions which I have seen; those for instance published by Guidi, *I Sette Dormiense* and Huber, *Die Wanderlegende*. There is no Christian element in this story, as it lies before us in the Koran; it might well be an account of the persecution of Israelite youths.

As usual, the narrative begins without scene or setting. Gabriel says to Mohammed, *Do you not think, then, that the heroes of the story the Cave and of ar-Raqim¹³ were of our marvellous signs? When the youths took refuge in the cave, they said, Lord, show us thy mercy, at guide us aright in this affair of ours. So we sealed up their hearing in the cave for a number of years. Then at length we awakened them; and we would see which of the two parties made better calculation of the time which had elapsed.... You could see the sun, when it arose, pan to the right of their cave, and when it set, go by them on the left; which they were in a chamber within ... You would have thought them awake, but they were asleep; and we turned them over, now to the right now to the left; and their dog stretched out his paws at the entrance. If you had come upon them suddenly, you would have fled from them in fear. Then we awakened them, to let them question one another. One said, How long have you tarried? Some answered, A day, or part of a day. Others said, Your Lord knows best how long; but send one, with this money, into the city; let him find where the cleanest food is to be had, and bring back provision; let him be courteous, and not make you known to any one. If they get knowledge of you, they will stone you, or bring you back to their religion; then you will fare ill forever. So we made their story known; ... and the people of the city disputed about them. Some said, Build a structure over them; their Lord knows best about them. Those whose opinion won the day said, We will build over them a house of worship.*

The verses which follow show that the prophet was heckled about this tale, and felt that he had been incautious. The existing versions of the legend differed, or were non-committal, as to the number of the Sleepers. Some of Mohammed's hearers were familiar with the story, and now asked him for exact information. It may be useless to conjecture who these hearers were, but the probability certainly inclines toward the Jews, who heckled Mohammed on other occasions, and of all the inhabitants of Mekka were those most likely to be acquainted with this literature. If, as otherwise seems probable, it came to the prophet's knowledge through them, and in an anthology made for their use, they would very naturally be disposed to make trouble for him when he served out the legends as a part of his divine revelation. The Koran proceeds:

They will say, three, and the fourth was their dog; or they will say, five, and the sixth was their dog (guessing at the secret); others will say, seven, and their dog made eight. Say: My Lord best knows their number, and there are few others who know. Do not dispute with them, unless as to what is certain; nor apply to any one of them for information. Say not in regard to a thing, I will do it tomorrow; but say, If God wills. Remember your Lord, when you have forgotten, and say, Mayhap my Lord will guide me, that! may draw near to the truth in this matter. They remained in their cave three hundred years, and nine more. Say: God knows best how long they stayed.

After this comes (vss. 31-42) a parable of a familiar sort: the god fearing poor man, and his arrogant neighbor the impious rich man, upon whom punishment soon descends. This might be Jewish, or Christian or (much less probably) native Arabic. It is not difficult to believe that Mohammed himself could have composed it entirely, but more likely it was abbreviated by him from something which formed part of the (Aramaic?) anthology which was his main source in this Sura.

Farther on (verse 59) begins the story of Moses and his attendant journeying in search of the fountain of life. This is a well known episode in the legend of Alexander the Great, whose place is here taken by Moses. Mohammed certainly was not the author of the substitution, but received it with the rest of the story. To all appearance, we have here a Jewish popular adaptation of the legend. The opening words of the Koranic version, however, takes us as far back as Alexander the Great. Moses says to his attendant, "I will not halt until I reach the meeting-place of the two rivers, though I go on for many years!" Now this brings in a bit of very ancient mythology. In the old Babylonian epic of Gilgamesh the hero, after many labors and trials, goes forth in search of immortality. He hears of a favorite of the gods, Utnapishtim, who has been granted eternal life. After great exertions Gilgamesh arrives at the place where the ancient hero dwells, "at the confluence of the streams." Utnapishtim attempts to give some help, but Gilgamesh fails of his main purpose. The Koran proceeds:

Now when they reached the confluence, they forgot their fish, and made its way into the river in quick passage. After they had proceeded farther, Moses said to his attendant, Bring out our luncheon, for we have suffered weariness in this journey of ours. He answered: Do you see, when we halted at the rock I forgot the fish (and only Satan made me forget to mention the fact), and it took its way into the river marvelously. He cried, That is the place which we were seeking! And then turned about straightway on their track. They had taken with them dried fish for food, and the magical water restored it to life. This motif occurs in other legends; but the ultimate source of the main account is plainly the narrative in Pseudo-Callisthenes, which in the forms known to us contains also this particular incident. Gilgamesh, Alexander, and Moses all find the place of which they were in search, but Moses' fish alone achieves immortality. It is important to observe, moreover, that Moses, like Gilgamesh, finds the ancient hero to whom God had granted eternal life. The Koran does not name him, but he is well known to Muslim legend by the name al-Khidr ("Evergreen"?).¹⁴

The story of Moses now enters a new phase. He becomes temporarily the peripatetic pupil of the immortal saint; the attendant who figured in the preceding narrative disappears from sight. *So they found a Servant of ours, to whom we had granted mercy, and whom we had taught our wisdom. Moses said to him, May I follow you, with the understanding that you will impart to me of your wisdom? He replied, You will not be able to bear with me. For how can you restrain yourself in regard to matters which your knowledge does not compass? He said, You will find me patient (if God wills), and I will not oppose you in anything. If then you will follow me, he said, you must not question me about any matter, until I give you account of it.*

The wise man who does strange things, ultimately explained by him, is well known to folk-lore. The amazement, or distress, of the onlooker is of course always an essential feature. The penalty of inquisitiveness, "If you question, we must part!" (as in the tale of Lohengrin), might naturally occur to any narrator - especially when the wise man is an immortal, who of necessity must soon disappear from mortal eyes. This feature, however, is not at all likely to have been Mohammed's own invention, but on the contrary is an essential part of the story which he repeats. Whoever the inquisitive mortal may have been in the legend's first estate, as it came to the Arabian prophet it was a Jewish tale told of Moses. More than this cannot be said at present.

The Servant of God scuttles a boat which he and Moses had borrowed; kills a youth whom they happen to meet; and takes the trouble to rebuild a tottering wall in a city whose inhabitants had refused them shelter. On each of the three occasions Moses expresses his concern at the deed. Twice he is pardoned, but on his third failure to restrain himself the Servant dismisses him, after giving him information which showed each of the three deeds to have been fully justified.

Last of all, in this Sura, comes the narrative of the "Two-Horned" hero - again Alexander the Great. Verse 82 introduces the account with the words: "They will ask you about Dhu l'-Qarnain ('him of the two horns')". What interrogators did Gabriel have in mind? According to the Muslim tradition, the Jews were intended; and this is for every reason probable. The Koranic story, like its predecessor which told of the fountain of life, is based on Pseudo-Callisthenes; but it contains traits which point to a Jewish adaptation. Haggada and midrash had dealt extensively with Alexander; and (as in the case of the story of the Seven Sleepers) no other of the prophet's hearers would have been so like to test his knowledge of great events and personages. What Mohammed had learned about Alexander seems in fact to have been very little. He tells how the hero journeyed, first to the setting of the sun, and then the place of its rising; appearing in either place as an emissary of the One God. The major amount of space, however, is given to the account of the protection against Gog and Magog (Yajuj and Majuj), the great wall built by Alexander. This fantasy on traits of Hebrew mythology suggests the haggada, and increases the probability, already established that all of the varied folk-lore in this 18th Sura was derived from Jewish collection of stories and parables (probably a single document designed for popular instruction and entertainment).

When to the longer narratives which have been described are added the many brief bits mentioned in the preceding lecture, and the fact is borne in mind that Mohammed's purpose is to give only a selection, occasionally mere fragments, it is evident that he had imbibed a great amount of material of this nature. It included (1) Biblical narrative more or less altered; (2) Jewish haggada, in already fixed form; (3) a small amount of material of ultimately Christian origin; and (4) legends belonging to the world-literature, available at Mekka in the Aramaic language. The treatment is Mohammed's own, with abridgment in his characteristic manner, and embellishment mainly homiletic. For the chronological and other blunders he alone is responsible. Finally, it is to be borne in mind that the prophet knew, better than we know, what he was trying to do. In the case of some habitual traits which we find amusing, such as the grasshopper-like mode of progressing, and the omission of essential features, we may well question to what extent they show shrewd calculation rather than childlike inconsequence. Since his purpose was not to reproduce the Jewish scriptures, but to give the Arabs a share in them, his method may be judged by the result. His hearers were not troubled by the violation of literary canons, for they felt themselves in the presence of a divine message intended for them especially. If they were mystified, they were also profoundly stirred and stimulated. Around all these Koranic narratives there is, and was from the first, the atmosphere of an Arabian revelation, and they form a very characteristic and important part of the prophet's great achievement.

¹ [Weil's *Biblische Legenden der Muselmänner* (1845) contains both Koranic legends and those of later origin. Dr. Alexander Kohut gave an English translation of a number of them with notes, in the N. Y. *Independent*, Jan. 8, 15, 22, and 29, 1891, under the title "Haggada Elements in Arabic Legends"].

² [On the Jewish and Mohammedan embellishment of the story of Joseph, see Israel Schapiro, *Die haggadischen Elemente im erzählenden Teil des Korans* (1907)].

³ [*Sotah* 36 b; Jer. *Horayoth* 2, 46d; *Tanhumah wayyeshab*, 9].

⁴ [According to the Jewish midrash this was a baby in the cradle; *Yashar*, *wayyeshab* 86a-89a; see Ginzberg's note in his [Legends of the Jews](#)].

⁵ [*Yashar*, l.c. 87a-87b; *Tanhumah wayyeshab*. 5. The former may have used the Koran (Ginzberg)]

⁶ [*Yalkut* I, 146; *Midrash Hag-Gadol* (ed. Schechter), I, 590].

⁷ [*Ber. Rab.* 91,6; *Tan. B.* I, 193f., 195; *Midrash Hag-Gadol* I, 635].

⁸ [*Ber. Rab.* 102, 8; *Tan. B.* 1,198; *MHG* I, 653].

⁹ [Observe also the use of this formula in 3:39 and 28:44, 461.]

¹⁰ [I omit the references, which are given by Geiger, pp. 181-186].

¹¹ [This episode is probably Mohammed's own creation, based on his hearing of Prov 6:6-8].

¹² [Mohammed of course avoids the number given in the Biblical story of Jacob].

¹³ [This curious name, as has already been said (see p. 46), is the result of an easy misreading of the name *Decius* written in the Aramaic script].

¹⁴ [For the literature dealing with these ancient folk-tales and their use in the Koran, see the notes in Nöldeke-Schwally, 140 ff., and Horowitz, *Koranische Untersuchungen*, 141 a. See also what was said, in regard to the probable form in which these legends were available at Mekka, in the Second Lecture, p. 36].

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Jewish Foundations of Islam

Fifth Lecture

Mohammed's Legislation

Charles Cutler Torrey

While Mohammed was in Mekka, before the flight to Yathrib, he was not in a position to put forth laws. He and his comparatively few adherents were barely tolerated by their fellow citizens, and their conduct was closely watched. It was made clear to them that while they remained in Mekka they must do as the Mekkans did. Mohammed himself, during all this time, can hardly have meditated any formal and definite prescription for his "Muslims" beyond faith in God and his prophet, simple rites of prayer, and the universally recognized duties of kinship, charity, and fair dealing. Even after the emigration, during the first year or thereabouts, while the Muhajirun ("immigrants") and the Ansar ("helpers" in Yathrib) and the prophet himself were getting their bearings, the time for formal legislation had not come.

There was another important consideration which postponed the necessity. It was not yet clear to Mohammed how he was to be received by the Jews and Christians, especially the former, now that he was established, with a greatly increased following, beyond the reach of persecution. The Jews had their laws and customs, which already were fairly well known to him. If he should be accepted by them as the Arabian Prophet, continuing the line of their own prophets and, as he repeatedly insists, "confirming what they had already received," then the Jewish regulations in some considerable part, might be normative for the Muslims. He instructed his followers to pray with their faces toward Jerusalem, and to abstain from certain foods which were prohibited in the Mosaic code. It was of course obvious to him that not all the Jewish dietary laws and religious observances could be prescribed for the Arabs; and aside from this he wished, as we have seen (p. 69), to retain every native rite and custom compatible with strict monotheism and civilized usage. The possibility of some compromise or mutual agreement, would have to be considered.

It is noteworthy that Mohammed's idea of the "people of the Book," as regards their influence in Arabia and their importance to his cause, does not appear to have been changed by his removal from the one city to the other; also, that the attitude of his Jewish hearers; as a whole toward his teaching (so far as can be shown by the allusions and addresses to them in the Koran) was substantially the same during his last years in Mekka as it was in Medina at the outset of his career in that city. The Jewish population of the Hijaz was both extensive and homogeneous, and the settlement at Mekka was by no means small. There was constant communication from city to city, and the Israelite estimate of the Arabian prophet was well understood and the same all the way from Mekka and Ta'if to Teima. Mohammed nevertheless had received considerable encouragement from certain Jews in Mekka. Some had accepted Islam; others, doubtless, had flattered him, or even hailed him as a prophet, in the hope of bringing him over to Judaism. He certainly exaggerates this Jewish support in such Mekkan passages as 13:36 ("Those to whom we gave the scriptures rejoice in that which has been revealed to thee"); 28:52f; 29:46; 46:9, etc. Other contemporary passages show that he had considerable controversy with the "men of the scriptures," though he tried to avoid it, and hoped that these stubborn opponents would soon see the light. Thus for example 6:20, 89, 148; 7:168; 28:48. "Contend with the people of the Book only in a mild way — except with those who are a bad lot" (29:45).¹ It is plain that he was desperately desirous of obtaining from the Jews some general and authoritative recognition, not merely the adherence of a few. The Jews of Mekka, for their part, had no reason to offer formal opposition to a small and persecuted sect. The strife between the adherents of the new revelation and the unbelievers of Qoreish may even have been entertaining to them. Mohammed very naturally persuaded himself that their prevailing indifference meant more than mere tolerance, and that the support which he had received from the minority would eventually be given by the majority.

The change came with the removal to Yathrib. It was not so much change in the attitude of the Jews as in Mohammed's comprehension of the attitude. A new political situation had suddenly arisen. The Muslims were in possession of the city, yet even now were a small force in the Hijaz; and sure to have trouble soon. The Jewish settlements in the outskirts of the city were large, wealthy, and in part well fortified. It was no time for long parleying. Mohammed was lord of the city (henceforth "Medina"; *madinat an-Nabi*, "the city of the Prophet"), and in a position to demand - as he certainly did - that the "people of the Book" should now at last join the evidently triumphing cause, acknowledge the authority of its leader, and profess faith in the new Arabian scripture which "confirmed" their own. Neutrality would be a great danger - as it proved to be. For the first time since Mohammed's first appearance as the Arabian prophet, a large and representative body of the Jews was compelled to "show its hand." It did so, and the reply was negative; they would not accept him as a prophet continuing their line, nor his book as in any way on a par with their own.

Mohammed could not accept this answer as final while there remained any possibility of gaining the support which had seemed to him indispensable. It is quite evident in the long and desperate argument which occupies a large part of the second Sura that he had not abandoned all hope. Some Jews in Medina, as in Mekka, came over to his side, while still others showed themselves undecided (2:70 f.). He continues to speak of their unbelievers as "a party" (2:95, 115, 141); and so also in some of the following Suras. He repeatedly reminds the children of Israel (e.g. in 2:44) that they had been preferred by God above all other human beings. There is also the remarkable utterance in 2:59: "Verily the Muslims, the Jews the Christians, the Sabi'ans, those who believe in God, and the last day, and who do what is right; they shall have their reward with their Lord; there shall come no fear upon them, nor shall they be grieved." The verse is repeated in 5:73; but Mohammed could not long continue to admit all that this seemed to declare, and presently (in 3:79) we read: "Whoever follows any other religion than Islam, it will not be accepted from him, and in the world to come he will be among the lost.

"The time came, not long after the Hijra, when it was clear to the prophet that he must stand on his own feet, with Islam definitely against all other religions, and bound to triumph over them by force as the famous coin-inscription, derived from the Koran, declares (9:33; 61:9). His failure to gain the support of the Jews was the most bitter disappointment of his career². It became increasingly evident to him that he had nothing to expect from them but opposition. They now held a peculiar position in relation to the Muslim community. Mohammed was soon at war with the Mekkans, and in constant danger of trouble with the Bedouin Arabs, who merely wished to help the stronger side, for their own benefit. The Jews for a time held the balance of power. They were perfectly willing to see Mohammed's party wiped out by the Mekkan armies. They had no intention of taking up arms, but did not hesitate to stir up disaffection in the city, and to give secret aid to the enemy. Mohammed, for his part, was soon more than ready to come to open conflict with them, and in the end dealt with them ruthlessly.

The prophet cut loose from the Jews of Arabia, but by no means from Judaism. It was not merely that his Islam was still, and for all time, the faith of the Hebrew prophets; he was now the supreme ruler of a religious and social order which unquestionably must follow the pattern which God, through his prophets, had prescribed. Ever since the day when the conception of holy scripture, of a progressive divine revelation, and of the great line of prophets which he was to continue had dawned upon him, he had been eagerly interested in the laws and customs of the "people of the Book," and had done his best to become familiar with them. His Jewish teachers had taught him, and he could see for himself the vast superiority of their rules of life over the practices of pagan Arabs. Whether the Jews of Mekka and Medina were worthy of their inheritance, or not, the statutes of Moses and the oral legislation were the word of God and never to be set aside. They were indeed to be modified by divine prescription, as will presently appear. Now that the Arab prophet found himself called upon to legislate for his community, without the consultation which he probably had counted upon, he could only take his pattern from the one divinely ordered community of which I had first-hand knowledge.

We should expect to find in the Koran, at this juncture, that Muhammad turned his face toward the Christians, emphasizing their share in the great revelation, and perhaps also adopting some characteristic part of their ritual. We do in fact seem to find that he did both of the things. Soon after arriving at Medina he instituted the fast of Ramadan (2:181 ff.), very probably patterned on the Lenten fast of the Christians. In the third year of the Hijra, in the Sura entitled "The Family of Imran" he devoted verses 30-59 to the Christians; and soon thereafter, in Sura 4, verses 155-157 and 169 f. The fifth Sura, entitled "The Table," i.e. the table of the Eucharist (112ff.), gives a large amount of space to the Christians and their beliefs; always exalting Jesus the Prophet, but controverting the tenets of his followers. It is abundantly evident, here as elsewhere, that he knew very little about the Christians, and hardly anything in regard to their scriptures. Whatever authority they possessed was essentially that of the Hebrew legislation; and it was here, of necessity that Mohammed sought and found his own guidance.

The need was not merely, nor chiefly, of prescriptions relating to the Muslim ritual; there was urgent and rapidly increasing demand for regulation of business transactions and other social relations. The Arabian scriptures were only begun. Mohammed's followers could not sit down and enjoy their new religion, for as yet they hardly knew what it was; they were full of questions and objections, brought forth by new circumstances. "Allah and his prophet" must be coordinated with the most important current events, and the practical problems which were constantly arising must have an authoritative solution. The Muslims must be told in the Koran why they defeated the Mekkans at Bedr, and why they themselves were defeated at Ohod; but also, what was prescribed for them in regard to blood revenge and retaliation, and how the spoils of war were to be divided. Laws regulating the Muslim family, such as those in

the opening portion of the fourth Sura, were very soon demanded; and more than one Sura was required in order to shed a divine light on the most serious of the prophet's own domestic difficulties.

Both the amount and the quality of Mohammed's legislation in the Koran, especially in the regulation of the worldly affairs of public and private life, are remarkable. The laws bear eloquent testimony to his energy, his sincerity (often somewhat childlike), and his great fund of practical wisdom. An especially important feature is the very obvious relation which many of these enactments bear to the Biblical and rabbinical prescriptions. The extent to which the Koran is dependent on these earlier sources has not often been realized. The order is now not "the law and the prophets," but "the prophets and the law"; and in both great divisions the basis is as firm as an Arabian prophet could make it. When all has been said, however, the originality of the man remains more impressive than his dependence.

In one highly important passage (7:156) Mohammed plainly declares own legislation to be a revision and improvement of the Hebrew laws. There is one place only in the Koran where he makes mention of the tables" (*alwah = luhoth*) given to Moses at Sinai, and the whole context there is very significant. He mentions the forty days spent by Moses in the mount (Ex. 24:18), the seventy men afterward associated with him (Num. 11:16, 24), and, three times over (vss. 142, 149, 153), the heaven-sent tables containing "guidance and mercy for those who fear their Lord." The emphasis on the episode of the golden calf (145-152), like the subsequent catalogue of the sins of the Israelites (160-170), has for its purpose the teaching, insisted upon by Mohammed in his own lawgiving, that some of the statutes were given to the people because of their unworthiness to receive better ones³. Moses asks (154), "Wilt thou destroy us for what our foolish ones have done?" His Lord replies (155), "My chastisement shall fall on whom I will; but my mercy embrace all things, and I will write it down (156) for those who shall follow the Apostle, the Prophet of the *goyim*, whom they shall find described in the Law and the Gospel. *He will enjoin upon them what is right, and forbid them what is wrong; he will make lawful for them the foods which are good, and prohibit for them those which are bad* (cf. 3:44 etc.); *and he will relieve them of their burden and the yokes which they have been carrying*" - a phrase which brings to mind the words of St. Paul. But Mohammed, unlike Paul, was legislating.

We may now consider the Koranic precepts in some detail, giving attention only to those which are either taken over directly from the Hebrew legislation or else appear to show its influence.

1. The Religious Legislation

This can be treated briefly, for the facts are well known, and have often been set forth. The "religion of Abraham," to which Mohammed so often appeals, was pure monotheism, in sharp opposition to idolatry. The first two commandments of the Hebrew Decalogue were foundation stones of Islam from the very first. Allah the one and only God; without image or likeness; destruction decreed upon all the idols and symbols of the pagans. The parallel between the Muslim *shahada*, "There is no god but Allah," and the Hebrew Shema' is hardly accidental. That which is especially significant is not the content, nor the form, but the religious use. Muhammad certainly had some acquaintance with the Jewish ritual, and must have been profoundly impressed by the emphasis laid on the declaration of Deut. 6:4f. It was not only the introduction to every formal service of prayer, and otherwise given very frequent repetition, but was also the Hebrew declaration of faith. "In reciting the first sentence of the Shema', a man takes upon him the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven" (Moore, *Judaism*, I, 465, quoting Mishna *Ber.* 2, 2). This is precisely Mohammed's conception of the *shahada* ("testimony"); see for example Sura 3:16, "God witnesses that there is no god but he; and the angels and men who have knowledge, standing firm in the truth, declare, no god but he!" Cf. also 13:29, and Jonah's saving declaration (31:87), which rescued him from the whale's belly. There is to be added the Muslim *tauhid*, the confession of God's *unity* as in Sura 112:1, and in the cry (also battle-cry) *ahad, ahad!* of the believers, which is very strikingly reminiscent of the mighty *ehad!* which ends the first sentence of the Shema'. All in all, it seems highly probable that Mohammed's *shahada* was modeled directly upon the Hebrew formula.

As for the Decalogue as a whole, Mohammed does not give its laws any especial prominence. Each of the ten commandments has its counter-part in the Koran, however. He presumably (like many ancient and modern interpreters) thought of the third commandment as the prohibition of invoking the name of God in a false oath. See 2:224 f. and 5:91. The Jewish sabbath he had thrown overboard while he was in Mekka. The burden of one day in seven in which there could be no trading and no fighting was too heavy for his program. He chose to regard the sabbath law as one of those which were made severe for the sake of temporary discipline, saying in 16:124f. "The sabbath was imposed only on those who were in disagreement concerning it; and verily thy Lord will judge between them, on the day of resurrection, concerning that about which they disagreed." For the Muslim day of prayer he selected the *'aruba* (Day of Preparation) of the Jews. Whether he knew that the Christians in his part of the world observed the first day of the week (if indeed they did) is not to be learned from the Koran.

The borrowing for the Mohammedan ritual was not merely from statute law; time-honored custom was also laid under contribution. The matter of the *qibla* (that is, the direction in which the worshipper turns his face in prayer) has already received mention. Mohammed began by directing his adherents to face Jerusalem in prayer (cf. Dan. 6:11, I Esdr. 4:58, Tobit 3:11f., Judith 9:1); but

when the Jews refused support, after the arrival in Medina, the order was changed in favor of the Ka'ba at Mekka. How keenly Mohammed felt the need of justifying this change, is shown by the length and the vehemence of his utterance in regard to it (2:136-146). He stood in awe of the Jews, and his argument is addressed (indirectly) to them, as well as to his own followers. "The foolish of the people will say, What has turned them from the *qibla* which they had? Say: The East and the West belong to Allah." He then explains that God gave them the former prescription merely as a test, to separate the believers from the unbelievers. Henceforth all Muslims must turn their faces "toward the sacred Mosque," wherever they may be (139, 144f). Gabriel assures the prophet that this is the true and final prescription, and that the Jews recognize it "as they recognize their own Sons," but will not admit it. "No amount of signs and wonders would make them follow your *qibla*, and you are not to follow their *qibla*" (140 f.).

The regulations concerning prayer are very obviously derived in the main Jewish usage. The facts relating to the latter are concisely stated, with full references, in Moore's *Judaism*, II, 216 f., 222. For the early Islamic usage see especially Mittwoch, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des islamischen Gebets und Cultus* (Abhandlungen der preuss. Akad., 913). In both rituals the preliminary ablutions are indispensable (Sura 5:8 etc.) In both, the worshipper prays standing, and then with certain prescribed genuflections and prostrations. The attitudes of the orthodox Muhammedan prayer, which in their essential features undoubtedly represent the prophet's own practice, are best described and pictured in E. W. Lane's *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*. There is in the Koran no prescription of the *five* daily prayers, and it is not clear that they were instituted by Mohammed.⁵ It is not like him to ordain a five-fold service even for *one* day in the week. What he commands in the Koran is characteristic. It is simple, reasonable, and like other features of the new legislation in its adaptation of an already existing ritual to Arabian conditions. The traditional Jewish prescription was three daily prayers, as e.g. in Dan. 6:11. In four passages (11:116, 17:80f, 50:38f, 76:25 f.), all from the Mekka period, the prophet directs his followers to pray three times in the day: in the morning, at eventide, and in the night time better suited to the Bedouin traveling under the stars than to the city-dweller.⁶ Not that prayer is in any way limited to these seasons. Like the Jewish legislators, the prophet reiterates that a man must pray often, whenever and wherever he feels the need; then letting nothing interfere with his devotions or take his thought from them. Prayer may be curtailed in time of danger, 4:102; cf. the Mishna *Ber.* iv, 4. In verse 104 (this being a Sura of the Medina period) it is said that the times of prayer have already been prescribed. The prayer must not be uttered in a loud voice, nor in a whisper, 17:110; so also *Erub.* 64a and *Ber.* 31a. The drunken man may not pray, 4:46; 50 *Ber.*, *ibid.* The correspondence of the Koran with the Rabbinical precepts is noticeable throughout.

"Grace before meat" was always insisted upon in the Jewish laws. It had been customary in pagan Arabia to pronounce the *tahlil* over slaughtered beasts, and Mohammed takes account of this fact in his legislation; but it is quite evident that what he intended to prescribe for his adherents was an approximation to the Jewish custom. "Eat of the lawful and good food which Allah has provided for you, and thank the bounty of your Lord," 16:115; also 2:167, 5:6, 6:118ff., 22:35ff. The Mohammedan of modern times must at least say *Bismillah* ("In the name of God") before partaking of food; Lane, *Manners and Customs*, 1, 183. For the earliest period, a few lines from a little poem composed but a short time after the death of the prophet may serve for illustration. A notorious jailbird who had flown to a cave in the mountains, and for some time lived there in fierce partnership with a leopard, reproaches the beast for being no Muslim:⁷

In the steep mountain side a cave was waiting;
I share its shelter with a newfound friend,
Old Brownie, noble partner, fitting comrade-
Were but better able to unbend!

Our Conversation, when we meet, is silence,
And darting glances, sharp as any blade.
Each were a foe, saw he one sign of shrinking;
But like met like, and generous terms we made.

Down the rocks a water hole is hidden,
Where we must needs resort to quench our thirst.
Each in his turn, we near the spot with caution,
And give full time to him who gains it first.

The mountain goats afford us choice provision,
We share alike the booty of the chase.
I, true believer, eat mine with a blessing,
But, he ungodly wretch, will say no grace!

The primitive Mohammedan service of the "mosque" (*masgid* is an old Arabic word, common in the Nabataean inscriptions), consisting of prayer, reading from the Koran, and an address, was prescribed by the existing conditions; and yet presumably in the

main (like the weekly day of worship) suggested to Mohammed by the service of the synagogue. That at any rate was close at hand and well known to him. After his time, the service was given a more elaborate form, apparently patterned on that of the Christians; see Becker in *Islam*, 3, 384. As soon as the Muslim would found its chief centers in Syria, Egypt, and Mesopotamia, the Christian praxis became very influential; but in the earlier time there is no feature of either ritual or terminology, in the mosque service, that can with any probability be attached to Christian usage.⁸

The fast of the month Ramadan (2:181 ff.) has already been mentioned as probably suggested to Mohammed by the Christian lenten season. It may be doubted whether he had any definite knowledge as to the manner in which the Christian fast was kept. The Jewish customs of fasting were of course known to him. The manner of fasting, abstaining altogether during the day, and eating and drinking after sundown, was Jewish. Another of the many proofs of Mohammed's truly extensive acquaintance with the Jewish ordinances is to be seen in 2:183, where the beginning of the new day (in the month of fasting) is defined as the time "when a white thread can be distinguished from a black thread"; a mode of determining which certainly is taken over directly from the rabbinical prescription in the Mishna (*Ber.* 1, 2), where it has reference to the uttering of the Shema'. The provision for the man who is ill or on a journey, permitting him to keep the fast at another time (2:180 f.), resembles the prescription of the "little passover" in Num. 9:9-11. The oft-repeated and apparently strongly supported tradition, according to which Mohammed at first ordered his followers to fast, like the Jews, on the Day of Atonement, but later substituted Ramadan, has been accepted as genuine by many modern scholars (Geiger, 36 ff, Nöldeke-Schwally, I, 179, Margoliouth, *Mohammed*, 250), but is of very doubtful validity. The subject of the prophet's break with the Jews was so interesting that it called forth numerous "traditions" of the sort (see Margoliouth, *ibid.*). If by his authority the month had been substituted for the day, the latter would certainly have been dropped altogether by the Muslims. The fast of the tenth of Moharram (Lane, *Manners and Customs*, II, 148 f.) must have arisen - like so much else! - after the time of Mohammad. The name, *'ashura*, is Aramaic, and the fast coincided, exactly or nearly with the Jewish fast; but this is all that can be said with certainty.

The Pilgrimage to Mekka hardly requires mention, for it was a longest established Arabian custom; its adoption important to Mohammed not only for the sake of its appeal to the tribes, but also for the solidarity of Islam may be conjectured, however, that its incorporation in the Muslim ritual was also recommended to the prophet by the familiar picture of Jerusalem as the center of the world, the city toward which all pilgrims turn their faces.

2. The Social Legislation

In the social laws of the Koran, in the regulations touching the family, the Muslim community, business transactions, and the punishment of crime, influence of Jewish legislation, both earlier and later, appears very distinctly.

The duty of the child, and of the man in mature age, to revere his parents and to care for them, was a cardinal principle of Arabian family life, long before Mohammed's time. The poems and tales of the nomadic tribes give abundant illustration. The head of the family was honored and; obeyed, and the mother had her minor share of respect. Here again, however, Mohammed turns to the Hebrew decalogue for new authority. In several Suras of the Mekkan period he speaks of an ordinance long ago given by God to men. In 17:24 we read: "Your Lord ordained that you should serve no other god but him; and that you should do good to your father and mother, whether one or both of them attain to old age with you. In 13:13 and 46:14 likewise, the divine commandment is said to have been given "to mankind." It might seem superfluous to look for influence of previous legislation in regard to a duty so universally recognized as that of children to their parents. But Mohammed cannot have been ignorant of the fact that this one of the Ten Commandments was given especial weight by the Jews; and he must have been interested to know how the "people of the Book" interpreted the ordinance. It is obvious that with the command of monotheism heading the list, both in position and in importance, the only one of the remaining nine which could naturally be given the second place is the Fifth. This fact may sufficiently account for Mohammed's collocation of the two commandments (in 17:24); but it is more likely that he had been impressed by the ancient and oft-repeated rabbinic teaching. In both Talmud and oldest midrashim, "Honor thy father and mother" and "Honor the Lord" are expressly yoked together.

In other phases of the same subject the Koran and Jewish teaching are in an agreement which can hardly be altogether accidental. In Lev. 19:3 reverence for the mother is placed before that for the father; the order being doubtless intentional, as teaching the equality of the two parents in this regard. Here is the atmosphere of Palestine rather than of Arabia; but in two of the Koranic passages just cited (31:13; 46:14) the claim of the mother is the one dwelt upon, with mention of the discomfort of pregnancy, the pain of childbirth, the "thirty months" of nursing, and the subsequent care. The old Hebrew laws visited severe punishment on the disobedient son. In the Mohammedan legislation disobedience to parents (*'uququ 'l-walidaini*) is one of the seven great Sins (see Beidawi's comment on Sura 4:35). On the other hand, the Talmud, *Yebamoth* 5b, 6a, expressly declares that a son must not obey a paternal command which is contrary to the divine ordinances. Thus also; the Koran: 29:7, 'If your parents should urge you to join to my worship that of other gods, do not obey them, it is to me that you have to give account.' The same command is given in 31:14.

In general, the injunctions so often laid upon the son or daughter in the rabbinical writings are those which we find in the Koran. 'Speak kindly to your parents, submit to their will, and show your affection for them' (17:24 f.). The prophet Noah, when the deluge is about to begin, manifests his filial piety by praying for his parents (71:29); though the event shows that they were such old reprobates as to make his petition unavailing.

A cardinal Mohammedan duty, one of the five "pillars of Islam," is the giving of alms. No other practical duty is so constantly reiterated by the prophet throughout the Koran. This is indeed an obligation recognized in every civilized and half-civilized community. The poor, the helpless, the unfortunate, must be cared for. Generosity was a characteristic virtue of pre-Mohammedan Arabs. The two technical terms, however, adopted by the prophet for the exercise of Muslim charity are both borrowed from the North-Semitic vocabulary, and therefore doubtless point to North Semitic practice. The Koranic term *zakat* "righteousness" (originally

"purity") is the Aramaic **זכות** employed in this general sense, virtuous conduct" and the like, by both Jews and Christians. The other term, *sadaqa(t)*, is the Aramaic **סדקא** Hebrew **צדקה** having the same meaning. We know that the latter term was widely used in Aramaic speech to mean "alms." It is used thus in the Koran, especially in the latest Suras, but only occasionally and somewhat indefinitely.⁹ As for *zakat*, the word constantly employed in all parts of the Koran, we direct evidence that its Aramaic prototype was ever used to mean "alms" among either Jews or Christians, prior to the spread of Islam in Western Asia. It may be that Mohammed himself originated in the case of this word the easy transition, "righteousness, meritorious action, alms giving," which had long ago taken place in the use of the other word. Far more probably, however, *zakat* had been given the meaning "alms" in the speech of the Arabian Jews--in regard to which we have very little knowledge. At the outset of Mohammed's public teaching we see him employing derivatives of the root *zaka* in a theological terminology which unquestionably is of Jewish origin (see 80:3, 7; 87:14; 91:9; 92:18).

The great emphasis laid upon almsgiving by the Jewish teachers, from Daniel (4:24); and the book of Tobit (4:7-11, 16f.) onward, is faithfully reproduced in the Koran and the Muslim tradition. Sura 3:85f: Those who die in unbelief are not ransomed from hell by any amount of charity even though they have given the earth full of gold.' And then, addressing the true believers: "You cannot attain to righteousness unless you expend of that which you love; and whatever you expend, God knows it." Thus also 57:7-12, and many other passages. Koran and *hadith* repeat the Jewish doctrine, that almsgiving atones for sin. Rabbi Judah is quoted in *Baba Bathra* 10 a as saying, "So great is almsgiving that it brings redemption near." With this may be compared a saying of 'Omar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz¹⁰: "Prayer carries us half-way to God; fasting brings us to the door of his palace; and almsgiving procures for us admission." In such an interesting collection of moral and religious tales as the *Hibbur Yaphe* of Rabbi Nissim ben Jacob (11th century), the original Arabic of which is now being published by Professor Obermann, the reiteration of this teaching, that deeds of charity insure a place in the *'olam habba*, is very noticeable. This is also true of the Mohammedan religious narratives, early and late.

It was always a fundamental principle of the Hebrew-Jewish teaching in regard to the bestowal of charity that the kindly feeling of the giver is of greater value than the gift (Moore, *Judaism*, II, 171 f.). Mohammed can hardly have failed to hear this doctrine, and it may be that we hear a conscious echo of it in Sura 2:265 f.: "Kindly speech and pardon of injury are better than charity followed by unkind treatment ... O you who believe, make not your almsgiving ineffectual by uttering reproaches, or by conduct that gives vexation." There are one or two early passages in the Koran, dealing with charity in general, that sound like a reminiscence of Old Testament prophecy, a bit out of Second Isaiah. In Sura 90:11 ff. the impious and selfish rich man is assailed. "He does not attempt the steep path. And how dost thou know what the steep path is? It is setting free the captives; giving food in the day of famine; to the orphan, him who is near of kin; or to the poor man who lies in the dust. It is to be of those who believe, who encourage one another to patience and to deeds of mercy." A similar utterance is 76:8.

Contributions for the support of the poor and helpless in Islam were at first voluntary, later compulsory. While the Muslims were in Mekka there was no need of a "community chest." Mohammed's exhortations to charity were for the benefit of the giver, rather than of the receiver; they had in view the comforts of the next world, rather than of the present. After the flight to Yathrib the conditions were very different. Contributions to a Muslim fund were indispensable from the first, and the need became more and more urgent. Not only the care of the poor, but the support of an increasing multitude of undertakings, peaceful and warlike, called for constant donations, from all who were able to give. The Koran urges this duty with great and ever-increasing emphasis. A definite portion of certain gains made by the Muslims, such as the booty taken in warfare, was set aside for the common fund (8:42, and elsewhere): "Whatever booty you gain, the fifth part belongs to Allah and his prophet"; and the probable use of it is specified as aid to "kindred and orphans and the poor and the wayfarer." The origin of his prescription of "the fifth" is obscure. Professor Ginzberg has suggested to me the possibility of its derivation from the rabbinical ordinance which sets one-fifth as the maximum for charity. Thus *Kethuboth* 50a, "He who will spend (his property in charity) must not spend more than the fifth part"; that is, he must not squander his goods even for a worthy end. Similarly *Jer Peah* 15a, "It was the saying at Usha that a man may spend one-fifth of his property in alms-giving. This might perhaps have suggested to Mohammed the fraction which he adopts in his law. Another possibility has occurred to me, in consideration of the fact that the Koranic regulation is not concerned with individuals, but with wealth acquired by the state. The first Muslim to legislate concerning state property was the prophet Joseph, who instituted a

communistic regime in Egypt, and designated a fifth part of the produce of the land for its ruler: "And Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth" (Gen. 47:24-26). This certainly was well known to Mohammed; and it is at least an interesting parallel, that one-fifth of the wealth acquired by the Muslim state was to be turned over "to Allah and his prophet," to be administered as the latter saw fit. The ideas of Mohammed and his companions as to the proportion of a man's property which he might expect to contribute "in the way of God" are nowhere in the Koran reflected more definitely than in the general prescription, that each must give all that he can spare" (2:217 f.). Very soon after the prophet's death, however, the *zakat* was made a definite tax, to be exacted from all Muslims.

In all this we may see combined the working of practical necessity; the duty of giving to God, recognized in every religion and in all parts of the world; and the undoubted influence of Jewish, and perhaps all Christian, enactments and customs. In particular, the Hebrew-Jewish law of tithes, which certainly was known to Mohammed, must have given suggestions to him, as well as to the lawgivers who followed him.

The law of retaliation, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," was obeyed in many parts of the ancient world. It is especially familiar in the early Semitic legislation, beginning with the Hammurabi Code and the Mosaic Law. In the history of the pre-Mohammedan Arabs, blood-revenge plays a very conspicuous part, as is well known. The Koran expressly appeals to the authority of the Hebrew scriptures in its legislation concerning these matters. In Sura 5:48 the Hebrew Torah is said to be a source of light and guidance; and verse 49 proceeds: "We prescribed for them in it that life should pay for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and for wounds retaliation (Ex. 21:23, 25); but if any one shall remit it as alms, this shall make atonement for the

crime." The word *Kaffara*, "atonement," cannot fail to recall the **כַּפַּר** of Ex 21:30, which in *Mechilta* (on 21:24) is expressly applied by Rabbi Isaac to the minor injuries here named, and is constantly used in the Talmud where these matters are dealt with. Certainly an Arabic term coined by the Jews of the Hijaz. Mohammed follows both the rabbinical authorities and old Arab custom in permitting payment instead of retaliation; but when this mode of restitution is made to include cases of deliberate murder, he agrees with his ancestors but not with the Old Testament. So also the special law concerning the killing of one Muslim by another (4:94) has no resemblance to Israelite legislation, but is based primarily on Arabian custom. The tendency of the Rabbis was always toward a milder interpretation of the law; there is no better illustration of the fact than the extended comment in *Mechilta* on these verses in Ex. 21. They knew that retaliation is likely to keep the door of revenge open rather than to close it. As Rabbi Doseithai ben Judah remarks, in *Baba Qamma* 83b: "If the eye of the injured party is a large one, and the eye destroyed in exchange for it is a small one, is the matter settled?" The Arabs were hot-blooded people. In the processes of blood-revenge which brought on the celebrated War of Basus, al-Harith ibn 'Ubad demands: "Did you kill the youth Bujair in payment for Kulaib? Is the affair then settled?" The contemptuous answer is given: "I killed him for a shoestring of Kulaib!" "That," retorted al-Harith, "is putting the price of shoestrings too high"; and the war was on.¹¹ Mohammed has something of this sort in mind when he says (Sura 22:59), "Whoever punishes with an injury like that which has been inflicted on him, and then is outraged again, God will surely help him." How this divine aid will be given, is not specified; probably the working principle would be that God helps those who help themselves.

Mohammed, while ruthless in dealing with his foes, was mild by nature. He not only allows payment, in camels, or sheep, or what not, for every sort of injury, including murder; but also repeatedly advises his followers to forgive instead of exacting the full penalty. The law of retaliation stood nevertheless. Not long after the migration to Medina, two young women of the Muslims engaged in a quarrel which began with words and ended with blows. One of the two, ar-Rubayyi' bint an-Nadr, member of an influential family, succeeded in knocking out one of the front teeth of her opponent. The family of the latter demanded vengeance according to the ancient law. It was a clear case, and Mohammed pronounced accordingly. But Anas, the brother of the culprit, arose in his wrath and swore to Mohammed, by Him who had sent him as a prophet that his sister's front *not* be broken out. Now Anas was a mighty Muslim - he fell, somewhat later not in the battle of Ohod, after performing prodigies of valor - and his protest, reinforced by the oath held up the execution of the sentence. Mohammed finally prevailed on the injured family to accept payment instead of retaliation (Bokhari, ed Krehl, II, 203f.).

When the Koran comes to deal with regulations concerning trade and the transaction of business, we might expect to find very little evidence of influence from Jewish legislation. The city Arabs were traders of long experience. Mohammed himself had been a merchant. Aside from the local caravans and the through traffic threading the Hijaz, there were especially the four sacred months of the pagan Arabs and the great annual fair at 'Ukaz; portions of the year largely given over to peaceful trading among the tribes. The basal rules of commerce were of long standing, and hardly to be altered even by a prophet. There were nevertheless matters of importance, not regulated by any general Arabian laws concerning which some prescription was necessary or desirable. How should debtors be treated? Should the Muslim exact interest when making a loan to his fellow-Muslim? May a man pursue his trade on Friday as freely as on other days? Questions similar to these, and to still others with which the Koran deals, had been answered by the Hebrew lawgivers and interpreters; and it is from their decisions especially that Mohammed derives his own doctrine.

The general principles of fair dealing in bargains and commerce could be taken for granted. This subject was touched upon in a preceding lecture. No man in Arabia would have questioned, in theory, the rule that the same weights should be used in selling as in

buying; or that an article of merchandise ought to be what its owner declares it to be. In practice, there were other maxims in other lands. *Caveat emptor*; "the buyer has need of a hundred eyes, the seller has need of but one." The Muslim community had especial need of definite rules. Mohammed saw the desirability of written contracts; and the Koran requires at least two witnesses to formal business documents, as well as in criminal cases (Sura 2:282). In ordinary bargains and loans no writing is required (2:283 f.); it is taken for granted that a man will stand by his word - as in the Jewish practice.

How to deal with the delinquent debtor, was not an easy question. The debtor is quite likely to regard himself as the injured party, if payment is requested, and to resent any attempt to collect the amount which is due. The creditor is always in the wrong. The way in which many of the Arabs were inclined to look at this matter can be seen in a series of poems collected in Buhturi's *Hamasa*, in each of which the joy of the debtor's triumph over his pursuer is shared by his friends. One of the delinquents a Bedouin whose creditor was a merchant of Medina, tells how the latter, armed with the promissory paper and accompanied by several companions, caught him at last in the city. He managed to slip out of their hands, and ran "at a speed no bird could equal." He heard one of them say: "No use; impossible to catch him; let the Bedouins go to hell." He shouted back: "Payment postponed! Fold up the paper, and keep the mice away from it." (*Hamasa*, ed. Cheikho, pp.263 f.) Another sings complacently (*ibid.* 261, bottom):

He counted, on the fingers of his hands,
The dinars which he fondly thought to gain.
Better might he have tried to count the years
That must elapse while he pursues in vain.
He looks for usury; ah, lucky man,
If e'er he sees his principal again!

Still another describes with enthusiasm the preparation which he has made for the expected visit of his creditors (*ibid.*, 263): "I have ready an excellent cudgel of *arzan* wood, thick, strong, with projecting knots."

The verses, and others like them, were recited, handed about, and preserved in anthologies, chiefly because of the popular sympathy with this under dog, the poor debtor. If the creditor had a surplus which he could lend (with or without interest), is it not evident that he could get along without it? Hebrew and Arabian lawgivers felt this pressure. The warm-hearted legislation of Deuteronomy would cancel all debts in the seventh year. (Deut. 15:1f.). Mohammed was naturally unable to make any use of this law for his Arabian commonwealth; but where he introduces the subject of debts in the Koran (2:280) a sabbatical year seems hardly necessary. He says: "If the debtor is in straitened circumstances, let the matter wait until, easier times; but if you remit the debt as alms, it is better for you." The actual Mohammedan legal practice, however, alms from the first, corresponded to the ancient Hebrew usage. The debtor may be imprisoned (cf. Matt. 5:25); he may be compelled to do work in discharge of the debt - the usual recourse where the delinquent is able-bodied; but in no case could free-born Hebrew or Muslim be reduced by his fellows to the status of a mere slave.

In regard to usury, also, the old Hebrew enactments are repeated in the Koran. The Muslim must not exact interest from his fellow-believer, but there is no such restriction when he is dealing with non-Muslims (cf. 2:276-279 with Ex. 22:25 and Deut. 23:19). As in the Jewish usage, the law is concerned not merely with loans of money, but with all bartering or other business transaction in which one seeks profit by another's loss. If the Hebrew takes interest from his brother, Deut. 23:20 declares that God will not prosper his business; and in Sura 30:38 we read: "Whatever you put out at interest, to gain increase from the property of others, will have no increase from God." If debts are witnessed, there must be no bribery of witnesses or judges (2:282; 2:184).

In regard to business transactions on Friday, Mohammed of course legislates for people who were primarily traders rather than tillers of the soil. He could have no use for anything like the strict Jewish law of the sabbath; his prescription would more nearly resemble the looser practice of the Christians. He only insists that trading must cease during the Friday service in the mosque; and he refers with some bitterness to his own unpleasant experience on the occasion when his audience deserted him, because of the arrival of a caravan at Medina, when he was in the midst of a sermon. And it would seem that something of the sort had happened more than once. Gabriel says to Mohammed (62:11), "When they saw an opportunity of trade, or some diversion, they flocked out to it and left you standing. Say to them: That which is with God is better than any diversion or trading!" The view has often been expressed, by the more devout Mohammedan teachers, that the whole day Friday should be kept free from worldly business, and devoted to the business of the life to come.

In the early Mohammedan laws relating to marriage and divorce, concubines, adultery, and the various family relations, there is comparatively little evidence of Jewish influence. The chief determining factor were old Arabian practice, obvious requirement, and Mohammed's own, rather strong leanings.

Sura 4:26f. gives a list of the near relatives with whom marriage is not permitted; and in 24:31 are enumerated those members of the household in whose presence women may be unveiled, or even unclad. Comparison of these lists with those in Lev. 18:6-18 and 20:1

11-21 shows almost perfect agreement. Mohammed indeed prohibits marriage with a niece, which in the Old Testament is permitted. It here seems plain that he was acquainted with the Hebrew laws (Roberts, *Social Laws of the Qoran*, p. 14). The Muslims are permitted to marry Jewish and Christian women, but not the pagan Arabs. As to marriage with slaves, the law is substantially that of Deut. 20:10-14.

The very unsatisfactory legislation of Islam regarding divorce has little resemblance to the Jewish ordinances. The general statement as to the ground of divorce, namely the man's dissatisfaction with his wife (e.g. 2, 226f.), is not unlike that in Deut. 24:1; and in the Koran, as in the Jewish law, the right of divorce was given only to the husband. It is nevertheless hardly to be claimed that Mohammed and his followers were here guided by the Hebrew-Jewish enactments. There are on the other hand two definite prescriptions in the Koran which certainly were derived from the Talmud. The period of waiting in the case of a divorcee is three months (Sura 2:228; cf. the Mishna, *Yebamoth* iv, 10); and the prescribed time for a woman to give suck to her child is two full years (Sura 2:233 cf. *Kethuboth* 60a).

Adultery was severely dealt with, as generally in the ancient world. The punishment prescribed in the Koran is flogging; doubtless the most natural form of punishment, and yet possibly suggested to Mohammed by the rabbinic law. The Mishna, *Kerithuth* 11, 4 prescribes forty stripes for the convicted female, slave; and the Koran (4:30) raises the number while the penalty for free men and women is twice the latter amount (24:2). There is to be noticed also the much discussed verse which in the judgement of the best scholars, ancient and modern, once stood in the Koran, but was afterwards removed, as either abrogated or else not belonging to the original text (i.e. of Sura 33; see Nöldeke-Schwally, *Geschichte des Qorans*, pp.248 ff.). The verse reads: "If a man and a woman, both of full age, commit the crime, stone them relentlessly; the punishment ordained of God." This sounds like Mohammed, and indeed the only reasonable supposition is that he himself composed it. Just when and where, however, did God ordain the penalty of stoning for this crime? In the New Testament, John 8:35, the scribes and Pharisees are quoted as saying to Jesus: "This woman has been taken in adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such; what then sayest thou?" The Mosaic law known to us does not contain the ordinance, however. Has a verse been removed from the Pentateuch as well as from the Koran? Nor is this all. The passage in John containing the episode of the woman has been removed from the Gospel, as not having formed part of the original text. A strange fate seems to have pursued this particular statute!¹²

As to the status of children in the family and in the Muslim community there is a general resemblance, as would be expected, between the prescriptions of the Koran and the Israelite codes. We may see here the moral influence of the practice in the Jewish communities of Mekka and Medina, rather than imitation of specific enactments. The emphasis placed by Mohammed, from the very first on the care of the orphan, is fully as strong as in the Old Testament. He also gives to the daughters of the family, as well as to the other female members, a status such as his countrymen had never given them. In the usage of the pagan Arabs the inferiority of daughters to sons was much more pronounced than it was among their Jewish neighbors. Mohammed put a stop to the barbarous practice of doing away with undesired female infants by burying them alive; he also gave to the Muslim women an altogether new standing through his legislation.

The laws of inheritance in the Koran are especially noteworthy in this regard. The custom of the pagan Arabs had excluded the daughter, the widow, and every other female relative from any right to the family property. In the Hebrew law, on the contrary, there is the incident of the daughters of Zelophehad, Num. 27:1 ff., and the resulting legislation in vs. 8-11, specifying the successive heirs of one who dies leaving no son. It is noteworthy that the order of succession given in the Koran is the same as in the Hebrew law. Mohammed, however, goes still further in permitting the female relatives to benefit, as may be seen in Sura 4:12-15, and again, vs. 175. The sons and daughters of a female slave, if they have been acknowledged by the father of the family, may inherit in like manner.

The Hebrew and Mohammedan laws in regard to slavery resemble each other in many particulars. The Semites, as a race, have always shown the inclination to treat slaves leniently; as their legislation, from the Code of Hammurabi onward, bears witness. It must be borne in mind that with the Mohammedans, even more than with the Hebrews, the slave's religion was an important factor in determining his treatment. In the old Hebrew community, the slave who had accepted circumcision, even though not a proselyte, was a sharer in certain religious privileges, and was accordingly not on the same footing as one who had refused the rite and who therefore, according to the rabbinical law, must be sold to a Gentile master after the expiration of a certain time. In the Mohammedan house, the slave was very likely to be a Muslim, and must be treated as such. There was never lack of harsh and even barbarous treatment, it is needless to say; and much of it, doubtless, was richly deserved; but we certainly have reason to believe that undue severity was the exception, not the rule, in both the Israelite and the Muslim community.

There remains one class of laws to be noticed briefly, namely those dealing with food and drink. In the legislation concerning food, Mohammed shows great interest in the Jewish laws, and evidently intends in a general way to imitate them. Conditions and customs in Arabia necessitated some differences, however. The laws of Israel are now superseded by the Muslim enactments: "The food of the people of the Book is lawful for you, and yours for them" (5:7). In 6:147 he specifies some of the Jewish prohibitions: "To those who were Jews we forbade everything that has a solid hoof; and of cattle and sheep we prohibited the fat, save that which is in their backs

or their entrails, or attached to the bone." He insists, however, both here and in other passages, that these prohibitions were not *originally* given, but were of the nature of a punishment. Thus 4:158, "Because of the wrongdoing of the Jews we forbade them things which we had made lawful for them." 3:87, "All food was lawful to the children of Israel, except what Israel made unlawful to himself before the Law was revealed." In 2:167f., 6:146, and 16:116, Mohammed enumerates things forbidden to Muslims: flesh of what is found dead, blood, swine's flesh, food offered to idols. 5:4 adds to this list: "What has been strangled, killed by a blow or a fall, or by goring; that of which wild beasts have eaten; and whatever has been slaughtered on heathen altars."¹³ In 2:168, 5:5, and 16:116 Mohammed characteristically makes the exception, that if a man is forced to eat some one of these things, driven by his sore need of food, it is no sin. The Talmud, as well known, says the same.

The Mohammedan prohibition of *wine drinking* (which really means, the drinking of any intoxicating beverage) has an interesting history. The ancient Hebrews looked upon drunkenness as one of the serious evils. The story of Noah is an early illustration. One of the later writers says, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging," and there are other similar utterances. The Hebrew ideal, however, was always temperance, by the man's exercise of self-control. "Wine that maketh glad the heart of man" is classed as a blessing, - and has a very honorable place in the scriptures. Such a saint as Rabbi Meir (if the popular tales can be credited) might become intoxicated, under suitable circumstances, without damage to his reputation.¹⁴

The legislation of the Koran in regard to strong drink shows a change of attitude. At the outset Mohammed held the liberal view represented by the Hebrew scriptures and the subsequent Jewish custom. In Sura 16:67-71 the prophet gives a list of the special blessings freely given by God to men, enumerating four: water, milk, *wine* and honey. Sura 47:16 assures the true believers that they shall have plenty of wine in paradise. But in 2:216 and 5:92f. this approval begins to be qualified. How the change came about, what reflection or what happenings may have influenced him, it probably is useless to conjecture. Even here, in the latter years of his career, the prohibition is at first quite mild. 2:216: "They will ask you about wine, and *al-maisir*" (a form of gambling). "Say In them both is sin ¹⁵ and profit to men; but the sin of both is greater than the profit." 4:46 suggests a religious community in which prohibition, if really existing, was recognized as imperfectly effective: "O you believers! Come not to prayer when you are drunk, until you know what you are saying." This injunction may have had its origin in the prophet's experience, or (like so many other prescriptions regarding prayer) have been taken over from the Mishnic law, *Ber.* 31 a. The passage 5:92 f., in one of the very latest Suras, has a much more decided sound: "O you who believe! Verily wine, and *al-maisir* ... are an abomination, of Satan's work avoid them then, that haply you may prosper. Satan desires to put enmity and hatred among you by wine and *al-maisir*, and to turn you away from the remembrance of God, and from prayer."

After the prophet's death, the prohibition was sharpened in Muslim law, perhaps especially under the rule of the stern and ascetic caliph Omar. There is nothing in the possible influence of non-Muslim communities or practices to account for this. As far as Christian usage is concerned, we know that some of the Arabs who preferred Christianity to Islam were taunted with making the choice because within that fold they could enjoy their intoxicating drink unmolested. Early traditions begin to put a very strong emphasis on the law forbidding wine. An old Egyptian *hadith* puts into the mouth of the prophet a list of prohibitions which bears considerable resemblance to certain modern enactments. A solemn curse is pronounced on any one "who drinks wine, or gives it to drink; sells it, or buys it; carries it, or has it brought to him; presses it out, or has another press it out for him; takes possession of it, or profits from its price" (Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam's *Futuh Misr*, 264 f.). Another tradition of the same early period makes Mohammed declare that wine-drinking is "the chief of sins"! (*ibid.*, 271). It is plain that popular resistance to the increasing rigor of the law was the cause of this exaggeration.

Still another outwardly authentic *hadith*, also of Egyptian origin, provides an illustrative anecdote. A man named Dailam, of the tribe of Jaishan, narrates as follows (*ibid.*, 303). "I came to the prophet, and said to him, O Prophet of God, we live in a region where it is very cold in winter, and we make a strong drink from grain; is that permitted? He said, Does it not intoxicate? I answered, Surely! Then it is forbidden, he said. But I came to him a second time, with the same question; and he gave the same answer. I returned, however, once more, and said: See now O Prophet of God; how, if they refuse to give it up, because the habit has got possession of them? He answered, Whenever you find a man is overcome by the habit, kill him!

"The history of this law is like that of not a few others in Islam. New circumstances and needs wrought changes. The varied influence of Judaism (and also, perhaps even more strikingly, of Christianity) continued to be potent in the generations subsequent to the death of the prophet. The laws and customs of the "people of the Book" did not cease to make their profound impression; and considerable portions of the Jewish haggada, in particular, were taken over into the Muslim literature and carried back, in pseudo-tradition, to the Companions, or to the prophet himself. The orthodox tradition itself grew up under the influence of the Jewish tradition. All this is of very minor importance, however, in comparison with the undeniable fact, that the very foundations of Mohammedanism were laid deep in an Arabian Judaism which was both learned and authoritative, altogether worthy of its Palestinian and Babylonian ancestry.

¹ [i.e. the professed enemies who are merely trying to make trouble; the same phrase in 2:145. There is no sufficient reason for supporting that the clause here quoted refers to the hostile activity of the Jews in Medina, and thus permits taking up arms against

them (Nöldeke-Schwally, 155). Mohammed and his adherents had encountered plenty of disagreeable hostility while he was in Mekka, and even Gabriel would not require the Muslims to answer boorish insults politely].

² [Ahrens, "Christliches im Qoran" (ZDMG. lx), 155 ff., seems hardly to appreciate this].

³ [Thus, for example, 4:158; and compare Mark 10:5, Matt. 19:81].

⁴ [In a former lecture I gave my reasons for thinking Nöldeke, Schwally mistaken in assigning to the Medina period].

⁵ [Goldziher, ZDMG. 53 (1899), p. 385; *Jewish Encycl.*, "Islam," p. 653; suggested that the five daily prayers were instituted under the influence of the five prayer times of the Persians. This seems hardly probable. Simon Duran, in his *Qesheth u-Magen* (c. 1400), ed. Steinschneider, 1881 P. 14, asserted that the Muslims borrowed the custom from the Jews, because "there are five prayers on the Yom ha-Kippurim." Joseph Sambari, in his Chronicle 17th century, Bedlelan MS., fol. 7, repeats this from Duran. (I owe these latter references to say for my former pupil, Dr. Philip Grossman, who is preparing the Chronicle for publication.) It seems more likely that the wish to surpass the Jews in devotion, and at the same time to compensate for an inconvenient nocturnal *salat al-justa* (see below), produced this series of prayer seasons soon after the death of the prophet].

⁶ [Is it not altogether probable (in spite of the commentators) that the "*salat al-wusta* of 2.239 intends this nocturnal prayer?]

⁷ [Nöldeke, *Delectus Vet. Carm. Arab.*, p.50.]

⁸ [Brockelmann, in the Sachau *Festschrift*, 214-320n, argues acutely for the Christian origin of the technical term for the initiation of the prayer service, *iqamat as-salat* deriving it from the Syriac terminology. It is a tangled problem, for the verb in question has very wide and varied use in both languages, and the development in the one is almost always paralleled in the other. The fact of borrowing seems to be established by Brockelmann; but this conclusion does not touch the earliest Muslim usage, which is, and should be kept, quite distinct. Whatever adoption of the Christian formula there was, must have taken place in the time of the Omayyads. In the Koran, Mob. uses the verb *qum* as the technical term, "pray," in several passages: see 2:239, 4:103.9:85, 109 (twice); and cf. 18:13. The term probably had its origin simply in the worshipper's attitude (see above), and it is significant that in the Jewish terminology 'amida was thus used (Mittwoch, op cit.; cf. Geiger, 84f.). The varied Koranic use of *aqima* is in every case most naturally explained as purely native Arabic.]

⁹ [This subject is very well treated by R. Roberts, *The Social Laws of the Qoran*, (London, 1925), who takes account also of the Jewish practice]

¹⁰ [In 58:14 there is a clear distinction between the *zakat*, which is definitely prescribed, and the *sadaqa*, which is not. On both terms see especially Snouck Hurgronje in the *Revue de l'histoire des Religions*, vol. 30 (1894), 163-167; Nöldeke, *Neue Beiträge zur semitischen Sprachwissenschaft*, 25.]

¹¹ [Quoted in Robert's *Social Laws of the Qoran* p. 74].

¹² [*Hamasa*, ed. Freytag, 251 f.]

¹³ [The difficulties are by no means insurmountable, however. Mohammed (if the words are really his) was thinking of the mode of punishment rather than of the particular crime; and in the Johannine passage the difficulty may be overcome by supposing a betrothed woman (Deut. 22-24)].

¹⁴ [The most of these prohibitions were all but universal in the ancient civilized world. See 2150 Mishna *Chullin*. 3, Bab. *Chullin*. 39ff.]

¹⁵ [See *The Arabic Original of the Hibbur Yaphe*. ed. Obermann. pp. 121-123].

¹⁶ [Our Koran text says: "*great sin*," but the objection to the adjective *kebir*, on stylistic grounds is well taken (Nöldeke-Schwally, 182, note 3) The word was added later, hardly by the prophet himself].

