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- Id.: *Das syrische Fragment des Ecclesiastes-Kommentars von Theodor von Mopsuestia: Syrischer Text mit vollständigem Wörterverzeichnis*, hrsg. v. W. Strothmann. Wiesbaden 1988. (GOF, 1. Syriaca, 28) [S. 89-143: Wörterverzeichnis]
- Id.: *Syrische Katenen aus dem Ecclesiastes-Kommentar des Theodor von Mopsuestia: Syrischer Text mit vollständigem Wörterverzeichnis*, hrsg. v. W. Strothmann. Wiesbaden 1988. (GOF, 1. Syriaca, 29) [S. 83-131: Wörterverzeichnis]
- Id.: s. Barhadbešabbā 'Arbāyā: *La première partie de l'histoire et controverse de ... Zacharias Rhetor: Historia ecclesiastica Zachariae Rhetori vulgo adscripta*, II., interpr. E.W. Brooks. Louvain 1953. (CSCO 88 = Syr. 42) [S. 155-158: Index Syriacismi]

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"THIS IS THE TORAH THAT GOD SENT DOWN TO MOSES"
SOME EARLY ISLAMIC VIEWS OF THE QUR'ĀN AND OTHER REVEALED BOOKS

In a report about the first revelation received by the prophet Muḥammad, there is an unusual phrase occurring that seems to link the Qur'ān and the Torah. The report, as preserved in al-Bukhārī [194-256], begins by describing Muḥammad's encounter with an angel who demands three times that he recite what would later become the opening verses of sūrat al-'Alaḳ, 96:1-3. Muḥammad describes to his wife Khadijah what had happened. She suggests the Muḥammad speak with Waraḳah b. Nawfal, her cousin.

[Waraḳah b. Nawfal] had become a Christian in pre-Islamic times. He used to write the Hebrew Bible [al-kitāb al-'ibrānī]. He wrote from the Gospel in Hebrew what God wanted him to write. He was an old man and was blind.

Khadijah said to him: "oh cousin, listen to your cousin." Waraḳah said to him [the prophet]: "oh cousin, what did you see?" So the apostle of God related to him an account of what he had seen.

Waraḳah said to him: "this is the *nāmūs* that God sent down to Moses. Oh if I were a young man, if I could be alive when your people drive you out." The apostle of God asked "will I be driven out by them." He said: "yes. There has not yet come a man with what has come to you who was not treated as an enemy."¹

Several aspects of this account are noteworthy, including the irregular description of Waraḳah b. Nawfal as a Christian who wrote the Gospel in Hebrew. Of immediate interest is the reply Waraḳah gives Muḥammad, not only indicating the identity of what has now been revealed to Muḥammad and what was previously revealed to Moses, but also confirming Muḥammad's prophethood by reference to the fact that he will be driven out by his people just as all previous prophets had been driven out.

This latter idea, that all prophets are driven out by their own people, is a theme common in the Qur'ān and in early Islamic exegesis of the Qur'ān. The term "nāmūs," however, is not found in the Qur'ān, nor is it common in other Arabic literature outside of political philosophical works where the term, probably borrowed from Greek or Syriac, has the meaning of "law."² Possibly beginning with al-Ṭabarī [d. 310], the term "nāmūs" was

¹ This portion of the ḥadīth was taken from Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, *Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1412), 1:1. It is also found in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 60:22, 65 on Q 96:1; Muslim, *Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, ed. Muḥammad Fu'ad 'Abd al-Bāqī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1413), 1:252; and Aḥmad b. Hanbal, *Musnad*, 2:223, 233. Throughout, I have maintained the style of citation used for the authoritative collections of ḥadīth by Arent Jan Wensinck. For an overview of these conventions, see A.J. Wensinck, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960), xvii-xviii.

² For an overview of the use of the term "nāmūs" in Arabic literature, see M. Plessner, "Nāmūs," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1d ed. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1930), 3:844-846. Plessner, unfortunately, does not discuss the possibility of the term being borrowed from Syriac, but does suggest several possible influences from Greek.

understood as a reference to the angel Gabriel,³ although in connection with a different version of the nāmūs story than is found in al-Bukhārī.⁴ Later, the notion that the nāmūs referred to Gabriel was generalized, and the term was understood to be a generic noun indicating either angels or persons who keep secrets that are entrusted to them.⁵

Despite a long tradition of glossing nāmūs as a reference to Gabriel or a keeper of secrets, it is evident from the context of the different versions of the nāmūs stories, and from other contexts to which it was related in early Islamic exegesis, that the term nāmūs was understood as a reference to the Torah. This reference is either lost on al-Ṭabarī and later scholarship or is eschewed in favor of the “keeper of secrets” explanation. Certainly, al-Ṭabarī’s explanation preserves the connection between the revelation to Moses and to Muḥammad, both accomplished through the same intermediary, but it avoids the implications of the claim that the contents of Muḥammad’s revelations, contained in the Qur’ān, are to be identified with the contents of the Torah or books God had revealed to other prophets.

The following pages examine the evidence suggesting that the term nāmūs was, at one time, understood as a reference to the Torah, and that the statement of Warāqah was understood as authorizing Muḥammad on account of his receiving the same book that God had earlier revealed to Moses. An analysis of a number of different exegetical contexts in which is addressed the issue of the relation of the Qur’ān to earlier revealed books, indicates that it was only later, sometime in the late third or early fourth Islamic century, that sunnī scholarship recognized the problem inherent in identifying the Qur’ān and Torah, especially in the case that the contents of the two books were not only different but at odds with one another. It was this recognition that led to the development of what is considered the “classical” Islamic view about the Qur’ān and its relation to earlier revealed books.

3 For the version of the Warāqah story in which al-Ṭabarī explains that the term nāmūs refers to Gabriel, see al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1879-1901), 1151. See the English translation by W. Montgomery Watt and M.V. McDonald, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Muḥammad at Mecca* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985), 6:72.

In al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 60:22 there is a comment, following the ḥadīth, stating that the “nāmūs” is someone to whom has been revealed [by God] secrets which are concealed from everyone else. This sort of comment is unusual in al-Bukhārī and is thought to be a later addition to the text.

4 For the version on which al-Ṭabarī comments, see Ibn Ishāq, *Sīrah*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld (Göttingen, 1858-1860), 150-154. For an English translation, see A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muḥammad* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955; reprint, Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1967), 104-107. This version is also found in Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, 4:198. For the four different variants of the phrase attributed to Warāqah, mentioning the nāmūs, see *Concordance et Indices de la Tradition Musulmane*, ed. A.J. Wensinck and others (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1969), 7:2.

5 See, for example, the explanation given in Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Ṭurūth al-‘Arabī, 1413), s.v. E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1877; reprint, Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1984), s.v. defines the term as a “secret” and “revelation” from which the meaning “law of God” is derived by the *Kiṭāb al-Ta’arīfah*, s.v. rejecting the idea that it is derived from the Greek word for “law.”

Nāmūs

Previous scholarship has tried to identify the original significance of the term “nāmūs” as it is used in the ḥadīth about Warāqah. The earliest studies of the nāmūs stories attempted to argue that the term “nāmūs” was derived from the Greek “nomos,” and that its use in the story was evidence of Christian influence in the formation of Islam. In an early attempt to uncover the origins of the Arabic term, Anton Baumstark argued that the term nāmūs was borrowed from the Greek liturgy of St. James of Jerusalem which was supposed to be popular among the Bedouin of the Hijāz. Baumstark actually identifies a passage from the liturgy containing the term nomos, used in connection with the missions of prophets. Unfortunately, Baumstark’s theory does not explain why the Greek term nomos was borrowed and used but not translated into Arabic.

Other scholars have argued that the use of the Greek term in Arabic, rather than a simple Arabic translation of the Greek, is evidence that the term is to be understood not as the common Greek word nomos but as a technical term or proper name. According to Tor Andrae, the term nāmūs is derived from the Greek phrase “nomos aionios” in the Pseudo-Clementines.⁶ The “nomos aionios” is supposed to be a sort of eternal book which was revealed to Moses and Jesus, but also to all of the earlier prophets going back to Adam. In this case, the term nāmūs is an Arabic transliteration of what was understood as the proper name of this revealed book. Assuming that Muḥammad is the originator of the ḥadīth, Andrae argues that the use of the term nāmūs to support the claim of prophethood indicates that Muḥammad was aware of the “nomos aionios” found in the Pseudo-Clementines. Further, the transmission of the term from Greek into Arabic, from a Christian source, is taken to be proof that Muḥammad had been influenced by Christian ideas. There does not seem to be any other evidence, however, that the “nomos aionios” was understood as a proper name, nor is there evidence that knowledge of such a revealed book or of the Pseudo-Clementines was widely disseminated among Christians in the early Islamic period.

In 1859, A. Sprenger examined a number of different stories associated with Warāqah to suggest that the term nāmūs was derived from a more immediate Greek source, specifically from the Greek text of John 15:25-26 often quoted in early Islamic exegesis of Q 61:6.⁷ Sprenger recognized that in several different stories associated with Warāqah and the nāmūs, there is mentioned the claim of Warāqah that the coming of Muḥammad had been foretold by Jesus. This claim is found in Q 61:6.

6 For Andrae’s argument, see Tor Andrae, “Die Person Muhammads in Lehre und Glauben seiner Gemeinde,” *Archives d’études orientales* (1918). This idea is restated in his “Ursprung des Islams und das Christentum,” *Kyrkohistorisk Årsskrift* (1923-1925), 110 and in his *Mohammed, Sein Leben und Sein Glaube* (Göttingen, 1932), trans. Theophil Menzel, *Mohammed: the man and his faith* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1936; reprint, New York: Harper, 1960), 112.

7 See A. Sprenger, “Über den Ursprung und die Bedeutung des arabischen Wortes Nāmūs,” *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 13 (1859): 690-701. This article is supposed to be in response to a long footnote by Fleischer in Th. Nöldeke, “Hatte Muḥammad christliche Lehrer?” *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 12 (1858): 701-702, n. 3.

When Jesus son of Mary said: oh children of Israel, I am an apostle of God to you, fulfilling [muṣaddiq] that which I have before me of the Torah, and bringing the good news of an apostle who comes after me, his name being Aḥmad. When he came to them with these messages, they said: this is clear sorcery.

Sprenger illustrates that in another ḥadīth about Warāqah, the "Aḥmad" of this verse is taken by Warāqah to refer to Muḥammad.⁸

Warāqah said to him [Muḥammad]: I witness that you are the apostle about whom Jesus spoke, "there is an apostle who comes after me, and his name is Aḥmad." We bear witness that you are Aḥmad, and we bear witness that you are Muḥammad, and we bear witness that you are the apostle of God.⁹

This identification by Warāqah is usually thought to be based on "Aḥmad" in Q 6:61 being a reference to the "comforter" or "paraclete" mentioned in John 15:26. Other scholars have suggested that Q 61:6 itself could be understood as a paraphrase of John 15:25-26. Following this explanation, the term nāmūs, mentioned by Warāqah, is to be understood as a reference to the "law" mentioned in John 15:25, the law of the Jews that Jesus claims to fulfill.

Sprenger's explanation of the term nāmūs is the most intriguing. He identifies the Greek term nomos in one of the few passages from the Gospels quoted in early Islamic exegesis, a passage to which Warāqah is said to have referred when making the claim that Muḥammad was foretold by Jesus. This claim that Jesus foretold Muḥammad is also roughly equivalent to Warāqah's claim that Muḥammad received the same revelation that God had previously sent down to Moses. It still remains, however, to explain why the term nāmūs is retained from the Greek nomos in the statement of Warāqah. The "nomos" that Jesus is supposed to fulfill in John 15:25 is rendered as the "Torah" in Q 61:6. There would seem to be no reason to retain "nomos" as a technical term or proper name of the law of the Jews when other terms such as "Torah" were available.

Likewise, the Greek word "paraclete" for "comforter" in John 15:26 is translated from the Greek into "Aḥmad" both in Q 61:6 and in the statement attributed to Warāqah. It is also problematic, without additional information, to make the connection that Warāqah does between the "Aḥmad," presumably meaning one who is worthy of praise, and the Greek "paraklētos" meaning "comforter." It has been suggested, on the assumption that the traditions associating Q 61:6 with the Greek text of John 15:25-26, that "Aḥmad" could be an Arabic translation of the Greek "periklutos" meaning something praised or celebrated.¹⁰ This explanation is, in part, an attempt to show that Q 61:6 is dependent upon a mistaken understanding of an earlier Christian source. To accept the immediate Greek origins of relating Q 61:6 to John 15:25-26 and the use of

⁸ See Sprenger, "Über den Ursprung und die Bedeutung des arabischen Wortes Nāmūs," 692. The ḥadīth can be found in Ibn Ishāq, *Sīrah*, 149-150; Guillaume, 103-104.

⁹ This passage can be found in Ibn Abī Shaybah, *al-Muṣannaf fi al-aḥādīth wa al-āthār*, ed. 'Abd al-Khāliq al-Afghānī (Bombay, 1979-1983), 14, no. 18404. See Sprenger, 692.

¹⁰ For this suggestion and an overview of the scholarship on this issue, see Joseph Schacht, "Aḥmad," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960), 1:267; W. Montgomery Watt, "His name is Aḥmad," *Muslim World* 43 (1953): 110-117; A. Guthrie and E.F.F. Bishop, "The paraclete, almunhamanna and Aḥmad," *Muslim World* 41 (1951): 251-256.

the term nāmūs, it would be necessary to show that there was widespread access to the New Testament, or other sources of New Testament passages, in Greek, and the ability to read such texts.¹¹

It is more likely that, if Q 61:6 or the Warāqah statements are related to an Arabic translation or paraphrase of John 15:25-26, that the source of the New Testament passage is not a Greek but a Syriac text. This conclusion is made by Alfred Guillaume in a comment on an apparent Arabic translation of John 15:25-26 found in Ibn Ishāq in connection with the nāmūs statement made by Warāqah. In Ibn Ishāq, the citation of John 15:25-26 interpreted as a reference to Muḥammad, comes after an elegy attributed to Warāqah, and just before the story of Muḥammad's first revelation and his speaking with Warāqah about the nāmūs.¹² According to Guillaume, the passage in Ibn Ishāq is derived from the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary because it is the one Syriac version of John 15:25-26 known which has "munahḥemanā" as a translation of the Greek "paraklētos" instead of the usual Syriac transliteration of the Greek "paraqlētā."¹³ After quoting the verse, Ibn Ishāq adds that "munahḥemanā" is Syriac for Muḥammad, and that in Greek it is "baraqlītus," both of the terms being Jesus' references to the coming of Muḥammad.¹⁴

Also of interest in the passage quoted by Ibn Ishāq from John 15:25-26 is the use of the Syriac word "nāmūsā" for the Greek term "nomos." The Syriac term nāmūsā is commonly used to designate the Greek nomos in the New Testament, especially when it refers to the law of the Jews or the Torah. In the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary, which has the Syriac munahḥemana for the Greek paraklētos, the Greek nomos is translated by the Syriac nāmūsā. The Old Syriac versions of John use the Syriac term "orītā," an older

¹¹ Schacht, "Aḥmad," argues that the Greek word periklutos was not common in the Greek of the seventh and eighth centuries (267).

¹² See Ibn Ishāq, *Sīrah*, 149-154; Guillaume, 103-107. On the citation of John 15:25-26 in Ibn Ishāq and other Arabic sources, see R. Selheim, "Prophet, Caliph und Geschichte: Die Muhammed—Biographie des Ibn Ishāq," *Oriens* 18-19 (1965-1966): 57; S.H. Griffith, "The Gospel in Arabic: an inquiry into its appearance in the first 'Abbasid Century," *Oriens Christianus* 69 (1985): 137ff.

¹³ See Guillaume, *The life of Muḥammad*, 104, n. 1. The same point is made in Schacht, "Aḥmad," 267. The passage may be found in *The Palestinian Syriac Lectionary of the Gospels: re-edited from two Sinai Mss. and from P. de Lagarde's edition of the "evangelium Hierosolymitanum,"* ed. Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson (London, 1899), 23-24. John 14:16 (51) and 16:7 (54-55) which have mention of the "paraklētos" in the Greek text are also translated as "menahḥemana" or "menahḥeman" in the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary. This term could be a variant or corruption of the Syriac "nāmūs" which has the meaning of "comforter."

Note, that it is not necessary to assume that the Arabic passage was taken from a written copy of the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary, but only that a Syriac version of this verse, which coincides with the three extant manuscripts of the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary, was known by Ibn Ishāq or his sources. The three manuscripts, designated as codices A, B, and C are usually dated to the early eleventh and early twelfth centuries CE. For a discussion of the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary, esp. on its relation to the Greek lectionary, see Bruce Metzger, "A comparison of the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary and the Greek Gospel Lectionary," in *Neotestamentica et Semitica: Studies in honour of Matthew Black*, ed. E. Earle Ellis and Max Wilcox (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1969), 209-220.

¹⁴ See Ibn Ishāq, *Sīrah*, 150; Guillaume, *The life of Muḥammad*, 104.

technical term for the "law of Moses" based on a partial transliteration of the Hebrew "tōrah."¹⁵ In other Syriac contexts, the term nāmūsā is also used to refer specifically to the law of Moses, such as is expressed by the phrase "pulhānā nāmūsāyā" referring to the ritual worship prescribed by the law of Moses.¹⁶ That the Syriac term "nāmūsā" is not translated into Arabic but rather transliterated is an indication that the nāmūsā was understood to be a technical term or even proper name for the Torah in Syriac. Putting the Syriac term rather than its Arabic equivalent into the mouth of Waraqaḥ would be an indirect but clear reference to the nāmūs of John 15:25 which is the Torah which Jesus is supposed to fulfill.

Given what is known about Christianity in the Hijāz in the seventh and eighth centuries CE, it would be unusual to find Christians using a Greek instead of a Syriac version of the New Testament. That Syriac was the immediate source of the term nāmūs in Waraqaḥ's statement is also indicated by the description that is given of Waraqaḥ in the different stories associated with him. In the version of the story found in al-Bukhārī, Waraqaḥ is described as a convert to Christianity who used to "write the Hebrew Bible" and "write the Gospel in Hebrew," both of which would seem to be strange activities for a recent Arab convert to Christianity. It is possible, however, that the description of Waraqaḥ writing in Hebrew was intended to be a reference to him writing in Syriac, which would presumably be the language most commonly used by Christians for Biblical writing in the Hijāz during the seventh and eighth centuries CE. There are a number of versions of a story in which Abū Hurayrah is reported to have said that the "people of the book" used to read from the Torah in Hebrew and explain it in Arabic to the Muslims.¹⁷ It is even difficult to determine that the Jews of the Hijāz used Hebrew rather than Aramaic versions of the Bible.¹⁸

Other descriptions of Waraqaḥ, found in al-Bukhārī and Ibn Ishāq, among other places, do not attribute to Waraqaḥ a knowledge of Hebrew, but stress his Biblical

15 For the evidence of the two manuscripts attesting to the "Old Syriac" version of John, see William Petersen, *Tation's Dratesseron: Its creation, dissemination, significance, and history in scholarship* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994). These manuscripts are usually dated somewhere between the third and fifth centuries CE. The Peshittā, normally dated to the middle of the fifth century CE seems to use "nāmūsā" consistently to render the Greek "nomos," but also consistently uses "paraqlētā" for the Greek "paraklētos."

16 See the references in R. Payne Smith, *A compendious Syriac dictionary*, ed. J. Payne Smith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902; reprint, 1985), s.v., esp. 341.

17 This report can be found in al-Bukhārī, 65 on Q 2:136, 60:25, 98:51; Ibn Mājah, 36:26; and Ibn Ḥanbal, 4:160, 219.

18 For an overview of the scholarship on the Jews of the Hijāz at the time of Muḥammad, see Gordon Newby, *A history of the Jews of Arabia: from ancient times to their eclipse under Islam* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), esp. 49-77.

The existence of an Arabic translation of the Bible before the 10th century is a much debated issue. Most scholarship argues that there is no evidence to indicate an Arabic translation of either the Hebrew/Greek Bible or the New Testament. What evidence exists, suggests that Aramaic, and particularly Syriac versions of the Bible were in use as early as the fifth century in the Hijāz, southern Arabia, and in Ethiopia.

There is a minority position which holds that the Bible was translated into Arabic at an earlier date. See, for example, Irfan Shahid, who argues for an Arabic Bible as early as the fifth century.

learning.¹⁹ For example, in the account relating Waraqaḥ's statement to Muḥammad about the nāmūs in Ibn Ishāq, Waraqaḥ is described as having become a Christian, reading the Bible, and being one learned among the people of the Torah and Gospel [ahl al-Tawrāt wa al-Injīl].²⁰ In another description of Waraqaḥ, Ibn Ishāq states that he was committed to Christianity, he devoted himself to the "books" of the people of the book with the result that he acquired the knowledge of the Christians and Jews.²¹ A similar description is given of Waraqaḥ by Ibn Ishāq just before Muḥammad is to marry Khadijah. Waraqaḥ is described as being a Christian who had devoted himself to the "books" and was learned in the knowledge of the people.²² Both descriptions emphasize that Waraqaḥ had mastered the Bible, so that his knowledge was equal to that of other Christians and Jews. In light of this knowledge attributed to Waraqaḥ, it would seem that his use of the term "nāmūs," as a foreign word whether a technical term or proper name, is an intentional reference to his Christian learning. This is similar to how the "menahḥemanā" is understood to be a Christian reference to Muḥammad's prophethood in light of knowledge of John 15:25-26. The description of Waraqaḥ serves to provide the reader an interpretation of Waraqaḥ's unusual statement.

It is also worth noting the context of the description of Waraqaḥ that Ibn Ishāq gives just before the marriage of Muḥammad and Khadijah. In the story, Khadijah tells Waraqaḥ about a monk in Syria who saw Muḥammad under a tree, shaded by two angels, and declared him to be a prophet. Waraqaḥ confirms that Muḥammad is a prophet, and laments that he has had to wait so long for his coming. Following this, Ibn Ishāq cites some verse by Waraqaḥ in which he laments that he has waited so long for Muḥammad that he will not see the rejection of the Meccans and the final victory of the prophet.²³ This story presents a number of themes which parallel statements made by Waraqaḥ in the nāmūs stories. Waraqaḥ's lament over the long wait for Muḥammad is similar to his statement in the nāmūs stories in which he regrets that he shall not live long enough to see Muḥammad accomplish his mission. The mention of Muḥammad being driven out by his own people is found in both stories. Finally, there seems to be a parallel between Waraqaḥ's statement that Muḥammad has received the nāmūs, and his response to Khadijah's description of what had happened in Syria. In both cases, Waraqaḥ confirms the prophethood of Muḥammad by his knowledge of a "sign" that occurred in relation to Muḥammad.

These same parallels can be found in statements made by other pre-Islamic Meccans. There is a statement, found in al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Sa'd, in which Zayd b. 'Amr b. Nufayl

19 Later composite references to Waraqaḥ can be found in Ibn Hajar, *al-Isābah fi tamyiz al-ṣaḥābah*, ed. 'Ādil Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd and others (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1415), s.v. no. 9151, 6: 474-477; Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-ghābah*, no. 5465.

20 See Ibn Ishāq, *Sirah*, 153; Guillaume, 107.

21 See Ibn Ishāq, *Sirah*, 143-144; Guillaume, 99.

22 See Ibn Ishāq, *Sirah*, 121; Guillaume, 83. This description is also found in al-Ḥākim Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Saḥīḥayn* (Hyderabad, 1342), 2:609-610.

23 See Ibn Ishāq, *Sirah*, 120-122; Guillaume, 82-83.

predicts the coming of Muḥammad. In Ibn Ishāq, Zayd b. 'Amr is described as a "ḥanīf," grouped together with other Meccans, including Waraqah, who renounced polytheism in pre-Islamic times.²⁴

al-Ḥārith said, on the authority of Muḥammad b. Sa'd, on the authority of Muḥammad b. 'Umar, on the authority of 'Alī b. 'Isā al-Ḥakāmī, on the authority of his father, on the authority of 'Amir b. Rabī'ah: I heard Zayd b. 'Amr b. Nufayl say: I expect a prophet from among the descendants of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib. I do not think that I will live to see him, but I believe in him, proclaim the truth [ḥaq] of his message, and testify that he is a prophet. If you live long enough to see him, give him my greetings.

I will tell you of his description so that he will not be hidden from you. I said: tell me. He said: he is a man who is neither short or tall, whose hair is neither abundant nor sparse, whose eyes are always red, and who has the seal of prophethood between his shoulders. His name is Aḥmad, and this province [qur'a] is his birthplace and the place in which he will begin his mission. Then his people will drive him out and hate the message that he brings, and he will emigrate to Yathrib and triumph.²⁵

There are several parallels between the statement of Zayd b. 'Amr and those associated with Waraqah. First, the statements of both contain the idea that the speaker is too old or has waited too long to see Muḥammad accomplish his mission. Both Zayd b. 'Amr and Waraqah die after seeing Muḥammad but before seeing him leave from Mecca.²⁶ Second, the statements of both mention that Muḥammad will be driven out by his own people but will eventually be victorious. Third, both Zayd b. 'Amr and Waraqah mention specific "signs" indicating that Muḥammad is the prophet known from previous "Biblical" sources.

These different stories suggest that the "nāmūs" in the statement of Waraqah can be understood to parallel other mentions of the "signs" of Muḥammad's prophethood.²⁷ In the statement of Zayd b. 'Amr there is a whole series of signs describing Muḥammad, but the mention of his name as Aḥmad is a direct parallel to Waraqah's saying that Jesus predicted the coming of a prophet named Aḥmad. The mention of "Aḥmad" in these

24 The origins and the significance of the term "ḥanīf" in these early texts has been a topic of much research. For an idea of some of the current theories, see M.J. Kister, "Al-Taḥannuth": an inquiry into the meaning of a term," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 31 (1968): 223-236; Norman Calder, "Ḥinh, bīr...: an inquiry into the Arabic vocabulary of vows," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 51 (1988): 214-239.

25 This passage is taken from al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 1144; Watt and McDonald, 64. Also see the reference in Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aḥā (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1410), 1:105-106. This passage is also found in al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-nabūwah: ma'arifah aḥwāl shāhib al-sharī'iyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1405), 2:120-128.

26 It is possible that this theme is related to the incidents in the Gospels (Luke 2:25-38) in which old people, who have been waiting for Jesus' coming, see Jesus as a child before just before they die. There is a discussion of this idea and other stories related to Zayd b. 'Amr in Arthur Jeffery, "Was Muhammad a prophet from his infancy?" *Muslim World* 20 (1930): 226-234; Kister, "A bag of Meat," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 33 (1970): 267-275; Rubin, *Eye of the beholder*, 77-81.

27 The later, classical literature on the "signs of prophethood" systematically catalogues and discusses the different "sign" associated with Muḥammad in these and other stories. The discussion of the nāmūs can be found in al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-nabūwah*.

passages also suggests that stories associated with both Waraqah and Zayd b. 'Amr were used to interpret Q 61:6. Given the supposed religious background of Zayd b. 'Amr and Waraqah, their statements regarding the coming of a prophet named "Aḥmad" are indications that both were supposed to be knowledgeable about Christian writings, John 15:25-26 in particular. Waraqah's statement about Muḥammad receiving the nāmūs that God sent down to Moses would seem to be a similar indication. Both the Aḥmad and nāmūs statements confirm Muḥammad's prophethood by linking it to Biblical precedents.

The references work because they are recognized as shibboleths that reveal the credentials of the speaker, credentials that are cast in favor of Muḥammad as prophet. To claim that Waraqah's statement about the nāmūs, and parallel statements about Aḥmad, indicate Christian influence on the formation of Islam is too simplistic. It is evident from the stories about the prediction of Muḥammad's prophethood that some knowledge of Christianity, or at least of the Gospels, was current in this early period. Other stories referring to the "description" of Muḥammad in the Torah, or of Muḥammad and Jesus in the Torah, do not provide the same sort of specific references.²⁸ The mention of terms like nāmūs and Aḥmad do not seem, however, to be indications of "unconscious borrowing" but rather point to the purposeful appropriation of Biblical terms and themes. It is in this light that Waraqah's statement about the nāmūs is taken to be tantamount to his conversion to Islam, with him accepting Muḥammad as a "Biblical" prophet. His statement about the nāmūs serves to legitimize the prophethood of Muḥammad within the context of the Biblical criteria of prophethood.

New Torah

Related to these stories about Christians and ḥanīfs confirming the prophethood of Muḥammad, by reference to his description being foretold in the Torah and Gospel, is an unusual statement attributed to Ka'b al-Aḥbār.

To you has come the Qur'ān. It is the comprehension of reason and the illumination of wisdom [ḥukm]. Knowledge flows from it. The books bring forth a covenant ['ahd] with mercy.

He [God] said in the Torah: "oh Muḥammad, I am sending down to you the new Torah [tawrah ḥadīthah], so that with it you might open the eyes of the blind, the ears of the deaf, and the hearts of the uncircumcised [ghulf]."²⁹

28 These references are found in al-Bukhārī, 34:50; al-Dārimī, 1:2; and Ibn Ḥanbal, 2:174. In al-Tirmidhī, 50:1 it is stated that written in the Torah is a description of Muḥammad and a description of Jesus son of Mary who is buried with him.

29 This is taken from al-Dārimī, *al-Sunan*, ed. Fawāz Zimrīf and Khālid al-'Alamī (Beirut, 1987), *Fadā'il al-Qur'ān* 1. A similar statement is found in al-Suyūfī, *al-Itqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1415), 1:115 in section 17 on the "Names of the Qur'ān and the names of the surahs." This phrase is mentioned in Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined worlds: medieval Islam and Bible criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 25.

There are a number of issues raised by the information in this report, including the mention of the "new Torah" being issued to the "uncircumcised."³⁰ Of immediate interest are the mention of the "new Torah" and the citation of a verse from the Torah which is no longer part of the extant text of the Torah, nor does it seem that it was considered to still be a part of the text of the Torah at the time of Ka'b's statement. To understand the significance of Ka'b's statement, it is necessary to treat each of these issues separately.

One possible explanation of the term "new Torah" is that it is related to the notion of a "new law" or "New Testament" as a completion or renewal of the "old" revelation found in the "Old Testament." This would be roughly consistent with the idea of Jesus fulfilling the "Torah" mentioned in Q 61:6 and in some of the statements relating to the prediction of Muḥammad in John 15:25-26. It is also parallel with the notion of a "new" or "another" law being revealed to Moses, one that was not recorded in the "old" Torah but was preserved and later produced in book form by a group claiming to be its custodian.³¹ Such claims, often associated with the so-called pseudepigraphical texts, were common in late antiquity. In light of these earlier traditions, it seems that Ka'b's statement about the "new Torah" could be understood as a reference to the Qur'ān being a "new" version of the "old" Torah. There is also a report in Ibn Sa'd in which 'Ā'ishah cites a reference supposedly taken from the New Testament [injīl] that describes Muḥammad just as he is described in statements attributed to Ka'b about Muḥammad's description in the Torah.³² The attribution of the citation to the Gospel rather than the Torah could be an indication that the particular description given by 'Ā'ishah and Ka'b was thought to derive from Christian sources, possibly Christian exegesis of the Torah.

The description Ka'b gives of Muḥammad as receiving the "new Torah" is similar to other statements attributed to Ka'b about the prediction of Muḥammad in the Torah.

Ka'b said: we find his description in the Torah: Muḥammad, the apostle of God. His name is al-Mutawakkil. He is neither crude nor coarse. He does not raise his voice in the streets [aswāq]. He has been entrusted with the keys, so that by him God will make blind eyes see, deaf ears hear, and stuttering tongues speak clearly, that they might witness that there is no god but God.³³

³⁰ Related to the idea that Muḥammad is the prophet sent to the gentiles, are a number of reports associated with the so-called "ummi" prophet.

³¹ See, for example, the book of Jubilees which claims to be a revision of the Torah, or so-called "first law" (Jubilees 6:22). In part, this tradition of only part of the revelation to Moses being written in the Torah, is related to the rabbinic notion of the dual Torah: the oral Torah being that portion of the revelation to Moses which was not put into the text of the written Torah.

³² This can be found in Ibn Sa'd, 1:363. Similar statements can be found in al-Bayhaqī, 1:377-378 and Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa al-nihāyah*, 6:61. There is a brief discussion of the so-called "streets" ḥadīths in Rubin, 30-35.

³³ This is taken from al-Bayhaqī, 1:276-377. It can also be found in Ibn Bukayr, *Kitāb al-siyar wa al-maghāzī li Muḥammad Ibn Ishāq*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār (Damascus, 1978), 141-142; and Ibn Kathīr, 6:61. The passage is quoted and discussed in Rubin, 30-31.

Note, that in this version, the "new Torah" of Ka'b's statement in al-Dārimī has been replaced by the "keys." The "keys of paradise" are interpreted in some early reports as referring to ritual prayer and saying "there is no god but God," the testimony [shahādah] mentioned by Ka'b.³⁴ Ka'b's statement could also be a reference to the "keys of paradise" mentioned in Matthew 16:19 and in other Christian contexts, symbolizing the authority of Jesus, his disciples, and the church.³⁵ Both of the concepts used in the statements of Ka'b, the "keys of paradise" and the "new Torah," are unusual and emphasize the specialized knowledge of the Torah, or of Christian lore, attributed to Ka'b. Like the mention of the "nāmūs" in connection with John 15:25-26, these unusual "technical" terms are indications that the speaker, Ka'b in this case, is confirming the prophethood of Muḥammad from a Biblical context.

It has been noted that this and similar references to Muḥammad as the one who "does not raise his voice in the streets" are related to Isaiah 42:1-4 which discuss the servant of God who brings justice to the gentiles.³⁶

Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom my soul delights. I have put my spirit upon him. He will bring forth justice to the nations [goyyīm]. He will not cry out or raise his voice, nor make his voice heard in the street. A bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not extinguish. He will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not be disheartened or crushed until he has established justice in the earth. The coastlands will wait expectantly for his Torah.

First, note that the mention, in the statement of Ka'b, of making the "blind eyes see" and "deaf ears hear" seems to be a reference to other parts of Isaiah 42, probably 42:7 and 42:16-20 respectively. The imagery of "blindness" also appears in Isaiah 35:5. Second, note that the use of the term "Torah" in the last verse is consistent with the Hebrew text and the different Aramaic translations of the verse. The Septuagint interprets the Hebrew "Torah" to refer to the "instructions" or teachings of the servant. In the Isaiah Targum and in the Syriac translations of the passage, the technical terms used for the Torah [oritā, nāmūsā] are used to express the "law." Third, note that the description of the prophet being sent to the "nations" [goyyīm] is a reference to the non-Jewish or gentile peoples. This parallels the reference in the statement of Ka'b about the "new Torah" being what Muḥammad uses to open the hearts of the uncircumcised.

This link between the servant and the law was also made in the Jewish and Christian exegesis of Isaiah 42:1-4. The Christian exegesis of the passage identifies the "servant"

³⁴ The notion of the "keys" and the "miracle" [karāmah] being in the hands of Muḥammad on the last day is mentioned in a report recorded in al-Dārimī, muqaddimah 4. There is a brief discussion of the "keys of paradise" in relation to Christian/Jewish statements about Muḥammad in Patricia Crone and Michael Cook, *Hagarism: the making of the Islamic world* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 4, 206.

³⁵ Isaiah 22:22 mentions the "key of the house of David" which is mentioned again in Revelation 3:7 in connection with the political authority of Jesus.

³⁶ See Guillaume, "New light on the life of Muḥammad," *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Monograph series 1 (Manchester, n.d.), esp. 32-33. For a more in-depth discussion of the use of Isaiah in Muslim exegesis, see Lazarus-Yafeh, 78, 83-88.

with Jesus, and "his Torah" as a reference to Jesus "fulfilling" the law of Moses.³⁷ Isaiah 42:1, in particular, was applied to God's confirmation of Jesus' identity at his baptism in Matthew 3:16, Mark 1:11, and Luke 3:22. Isaiah 42:1-4, as a whole, along with the "suffering servant" passages of Isaiah 53, were used in Christian polemic to demonstrate that Jesus had been foretold in the Torah, and that he was bringing "his Torah," a "new law" to replace that of Moses. It is also significant that the Isaiah Targum adds to 42:3 "[the poor who are like] a bruised reed...and [the needy who are like] a dimly burning wick"³⁸ These groups of people also occur in the passage of Isaiah 61:1-2 which Jesus reads in Luke 4:16-22 just before proclaiming that the verses are being fulfilled as he speaks. Later Christian exegesis of this passage takes Jesus' claim as a reference to his own coming as a fulfillment of the servant passages in Isaiah. The references in Isaiah 42 were understood to represent God's intention to send a new justice or "new law" to the gentiles, abandoning the Jews who did not see nor listen to God and therefore broke his "old" law.

It is possible that the recognition and use of this passage is derived from earlier Christian-Jewish exegesis and polemic.³⁹ In both the Christian and the Muslim appropriation of Isaiah 42:1-4, it is the Jews who are replaced by the gentiles, and the Torah that is replaced by the "new law" or "new Torah." In the Septuagint of Isaiah 42:1, the "servant" is prefaced by the addition of the name "Jacob." Isaiah 49:3 identifies the servant with "Israel," the other name of Jacob, although later scholars have interpreted this as a late gloss based on the references in Isaiah 42:21-23. Other rabbinic versions of Isaiah 42:1 add "the messiah" as a gloss on "servant."⁴⁰ Some scholars have advanced the claim that the "servant" in Isaiah 42:1 refers to Moses.⁴¹ These various claims reflect the attempts and counter attempts of Jewish and Christian exegesis to appropriate the servant passages from Isaiah. This is the context in which to interpret the claim made by Ka'b, that Muhammad is the servant of Isaiah, countering the claims of both Jewish and Christian exegetical traditions.

Related to the significance of Ka'b's use of the term "new Torah" is his claim to cite a verse from the "old" Torah that mentions Muhammad by name, a verse which appears not to have been considered a part of the text of the Torah by the Jews at that time.

37 On the Jewish and Christian exegesis of the "servant" passages in Isaiah, see Christopher North, *The suffering servant in Deutero-Isaiah: an historical and critical study*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), esp. 6-22.

38 See *The Isaiah Targum*, trans. Bruce Chilton, The Aramaic Bible 11 (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1987), s.v. Chilton also notes that these three groups, the poor, the blind, and the prisoners are mentioned in Isaiah 61:1-2 which Jesus reads, stating that it has been fulfilled, apparently in reference to himself, found in Luke 4:18-19. See Chilton, *God in strength: Jesus' announcement of the kingdom*, Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt 1 (Freistadt: Plöchl, 1979), esp. 123-177.

39 For an overview of the rabbinic theories about the identification of the servant in Isaiah, see Ibn Ezra's commentary on Isaiah 42:1. There is an English translation by M. Friedländer, *The commentary of Ibn Ezra on Isaiah* (New York: Philipp Feldheim, 1873).

40 See the references in *Targum Isaiah*, s.v.

41 See, for example A.S. Peake, *The servant of Jahweh and other lectures* (Manchester, 1931).

Associated with Ka'b are a number of stories in which he cites references to Muhammad in the Torah in opposition to other Jews who deny the existence of such references. The various traditions associated with Ka'b or supposed to originate with him, are usually thought to be significant because of his conversion from Judaism to Islam, and the emphasis put on Ka'b's extensive knowledge of the Bible put into the service of Islam. In Ibn Sa'd, the conversion of Ka'b is linked to Ka'b's claim that there were a number of references to Muhammad in the Torah which the Jews either did not acknowledge or had removed from the text of the Torah.

Ka'b was from Yemen [Himyar], from the family of Ru'ayn. He had been an adherent to the religion of the Jews and then he converted to Islam. He came to Madinah and then left to Syria. He settled in Homs until he died in the year 32 during the caliphate of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān.

Yazīd b. Hārūn and 'Affān b. Muslim both reported, on the authority of Hammād b. Salamah, on the authority of 'Alī b. Zayd, on the authority of Sa'īd b. al-Musayyab that al-'Abbās said to Ka'b: "what does it benefit you to submit to the covenant of the apostle of God, and Abū Bakr, and now to the covenant of 'Umar?"

Ka'b said: "my father wrote for me a book from the Torah, and gave it to me. He said: 'do this.' He sealed the remainder of his books and took me in truth as a father would his son so that I would not open the seal. Now that I saw the coming of Islam I did not see the harm in it, so I said to myself: perhaps your father was hiding knowledge from you, keeping it from you, so that you might not read it. So I broke the seal and read it. I found in it a description of Muhammad, his community, and the present coming of the Muslims. Then I became the client of al-'Abbās."⁴²

The claim that the Jews had altered the Torah or that parts of it had been removed by God is reflected in Ka'b's claim to have found references to Muhammad in a copy of passages from the Torah sealed from the time of his youth. This suggests that the descriptions of Muhammad supposed to be in the Torah were thought to have been removed during the lifetime of the prophet. This and other similar stories associated with Ka'b seem to presume the existence of an "old Torah," one that had, during the lifetime of the prophet, been changed. Such a reference would provoke a dispute with the Jews of the time, similar to the claims of Waraqah and Zayd b. 'Amr that Muhammad had been predicted in the Gospel.

The accusation, common from the stories associated with Ka'b, that the Jews conspired to hide or remove the references to Muhammad in the Torah, is a topic discussed widely in relation to the exegesis of certain verses of the Qur'ān. In al-Ṭabarī's exegesis of Q 2:79, for example, there are several reports that attempt to explain the

42 This is taken from Ibn Sa'd, 7:309-310. Versions of this can be found in Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb*, s.v. A large number of the traditions relating to the life of Ka'b can be found listed in Sezgin, 1:304-305. There is a discussion of this and other versions of Ka'b's conversion in M. Pearlman, "Another Ka'b al-Ahbār story," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 45 (1954): 48-58. For a longer, but dated study of Ka'b, see Israel Wolfensohn, *Ka'b al-Ahbār und seine Stellung im Hadīth und in der islamischen Legendenliteratur*, Dissertation at Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University of Frankfurt (Gelnhausen: F.W. Kalbfleisch, 1933).

apparent lack of references to Muḥammad in the Torah, although such references are known by converts like Ka'b.

al-Muthannā said, on the authority of Adam, on the authority of Abū Ja'far, on the authority of al-Rabī', on the authority of Abū al-'Āliyah concerning the word of God "woe to those who write the Bible [kitāb] with their hands and then say this is from God in order to sell it for a small price."

He said: they were intending that which God revealed in their Bible about the description of Muḥammad. They altered it from its place. By this, they desired to seek what is of this world. God said: "woe to them on account of what is written with their hands, and woe to them on account of what they profit."⁴³

It is clear from this account that the passages describing Muḥammad found missing from the Torah are the result of the Jews changing the text of the Torah. In another report, attributed to the prophet himself, a similar statement is made.

al-Muthannā b. Ibrāhīm said, on the authority of Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd al-Salām, on the authority of 'Alī b. Jarīr, on the authority of Hammād b. Salamah, on the authority of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd b. Ja'far, on the authority of Kanānah al-'Adawī, on the authority of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, on the authority of the prophet concerning "woe [wayl] to them on account of what is written with their hands, and woe to them on account of what they profit."

"Wayl" is a mountain in hell. It is the place to which God causes the Jews to descend because they altered the Torah. They added to it what they desired and took away from it what they found reprehensible. They took out the name of Muḥammad from the Torah. For this reason God is angry with them. He recalled [rafa'a] part of the Torah.⁴⁴

The idea that "wayl" referred to a location in hell or the description of the punishment of the Jews for altering the Torah is expanded in other stories recorded by al-Ṭabarī. Many of the ḥadīth identify "wayl" as a valley in the lowest part of hell that flows with pus into which the Jews are cast by God for removing the name of Muḥammad from the Torah.⁴⁵ Also, note that the theme of God's anger with the Jews and his punishment of them is parallel to the understanding of Isaiah 42 in which the Jews are replaced by the gentiles on account of their not heeding the Torah.

Of particular interest is the statement that God "recalled part of the Torah" from the Jews, apparently as punishment for their altering of the text. It does seem strange to mention God revoking parts of the Torah, unless the parts revoked are supposed to be those in which Muḥammad is mentioned by name. If so, then God's recalling of certain parts of the Torah would serve as a further explanation for why the Torah, as extant, does not contain the alleged references to Muḥammad. There were other exegetes who argued that the "tahrīf" of the Torah could only be understood as "misinterpretation" but not as "altering" the text because, unless every copy of the Torah were altered, there would be evidence of the original, unaltered text. The same theory of transmission [taḥwīr] that guarantees the text of the Qur'ān guarantees the text of the Torah. Yet, it is

43 This is taken from al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, s.v. Q 2:79.

44 al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, s.v. Q 2:79.

45 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, s.v. Q 2:79.

possible that God removed parts of the Torah in a matter similar to how parts of the Qur'ān were supposed to have been abrogated.⁴⁶

Although the idea that God recalled parts of the Torah seems to be used, in the exegesis of Q 2:79, as an explanation for missing references to Muḥammad, the recall of the Torah also occurs in eschatological contexts. In his exegesis of Q 2:246, al-Ṭabarī lists two reports that mention the recalling of the Torah. Both statements are meant to explain why the Israelites asked their prophet for a king.

It was reported from al-Qāsim, on the authority of al-Ḥusain, on the authority of Ḥajjāj, on the authority of Ibn Jurayj, concerning the word of God "did you not see the leaders of the children of Israel after Moses when they said to their prophet: find us a king...]. He said, Ibn 'Abbās said: this is when the Torah was recalled, and the people of faith [ahl al-īmān] were removed. The oppressors removed them [Israelites] from their houses with their children.

It is reported from al-Ḥusayn b. al-Faraj who heard Abū Ma'ādh say, on the authority of 'Ubayd b. Sulaymān, that he heard al-Dahhāk say, concerning the word of God "when they said to their prophet: find us a king...]. He said: this was when the Torah was recalled and the people of faith were removed.⁴⁷

The "recall" of the Torah mentioned in these two reports parallels the story, attributed to Wahb b. Munabbih, of the Ark being taken in which were the original tablets of the Torah. In the story of Wahb, because the Israelites had abandoned the Torah, God sends down [nazala] an enemy to defeat the Israelites and take the Ark. It is only with God's establishment of a new king, and the re-establishment of the Torah, that the Ark is returned to the Israelites as a sign of the new king's authority and the new covenant, or new law, between the Israelites and God.⁴⁸

In Wahb's story and the two reports above, God's removal of the Torah is linked with the disappearance of the people of faith from Israel. The story of Wahb makes it clear that because the Israelites abandoned the Torah, God sent down an enemy in its place who effected the removal of the Torah. In the two reports, the "people of faith," presumably a minority among the Israelites who had abandoned the Torah, are removed along with the Torah. In both cases, the removal of the Torah itself signifies the abandoning of, or the disappearance of the knowledge of the Torah. A similar link, between abandoning the Torah and God's removal of part of the Torah, is made in a story supposed to have been used by Ibn Ishāq in the first part of his biography of the prophet. The story recounts what happened when Moses discovers that the Israelites had constructed a golden calf and started to worship it.

Ibn Ḥumayd related to us, on the authority of Salamah, on the authority of Ibn Ishāq, on the authority of Ṣadaqah b. Yasār, on the authority of Sa'īd b. Jubayr, on the authority

46 This sort of argument can be found in al-Jaṣṣāṣ, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* (Hyderabad: Dār al-Khulāfah, 1335), 2:398-399. There is a brief discussion of this point in John Wansbrough, *Quranic studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 190-192.

47 This is taken from al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, s.v. Q 2:246. Related parts of the background story can be found in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 536-563.

48 This story can be found in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, s.v. Q 2:246.

of Ibn 'Abbās: God had written on tablets for Moses encouragement and details of everything, as well as right guidance and mercy. When he [Moses] threw them down, God took up [rafa'a] six of the seven parts and left the seventh saying: "in their inscription there is guidance and mercy for all those who fear their lord."⁴⁹

God's recall of the Torah because the Israelites worshipped the golden calf is parallel to the recall of the Torah in the exegesis of Q 2:246, on account of the Israelites abandoning the Torah and worshipping idols. Both stories parallel the story of the Jews given in the exegesis of Q 2:79, who abandoned the text of the Torah by not acknowledging its mention of Muḥammad, with the result that God sends the Jews down to hell and takes back part of the Torah. The exegesis of both Q 2:79 and 2:246 also seems to parallel the reference to Muḥammad in Isaiah 42:1-4. Because the Israelites have abandoned the Torah, God abandons them and raises up a new prophet and a new law, just as God raised up a new king and returned the Ark with the Torah.

The concept of God removing the Torah when it is abandoned by the Israelites is also found in eschatological traditions associated with the disappearance of Islam at the end of time. There are a number of stories that associate the end of time with the abandonment of Islam and the disappearance of Islamic law. For example, a common theme in the reports about the end of time links the disappearance of the faithful and the appearance of an evil king or false prophet who destroys the religion of Islam. According to these reports, at the end of time, there will appear the "dajjāl" a false prophet or "antichrist" figure who is responsible, among other things for the destruction of the "temple" [bayt] or Ka'bah.⁵⁰ In other traditions, it is an evil king from Ethiopia, called "Dhu al-Suwayqatayn" who destroys the Ka'bah.⁵¹ These sorts of traditions parallel eschatological traditions associated with the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem by Babylonians and later by the Romans.⁵² It also parallels the taking of the Ark in the stories associated with the exegesis of Q 2:246. In each case, the presence and authority of God within the community, symbolized by his "house" or by the Ark in which his "sakīnah" is supposed to dwell, is removed by a foreign king as punishment for the people's rejection of his law.

The coming of the foreign king and the removal of God's presence is related in these traditions to the removal of the people of faith from the land. In a number of different reports, the people of faith are supposed to be "taken up" to God by a great wind.⁵³ This

49 This is taken from al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 495. The passage can also be found in Gordon Newby, *The making of the last prophet: a reconstruction of the earliest biography of Muḥammad* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), 134. The verse quoted at the end of the passage is Q 7:154, taken as a reference to the tablets of Moses.

50 For the tradition that links the coming of al-Dajjāj to the burning or general destruction of the Ka'bah, see Muslim, 52:117. For a number of other ḥadīths in which al-Dajjāj is mentioned, see Wensinck, s.v.

51 For this tradition, see Muslim 52:57-59.

52 Many early Christian sources make the connection, based in part on Jesus' statement in Matthew 24:1-3, between the "parousia," the coming of the new "law" of Jesus, and the destruction of the temple by God. See, for example, Eusebius, *The history of the church*, s.v.

53 This tradition can be found in Muslim, 52:110, 116; al-Tirmidhī, 31:59, 73; Ibn Mājah, 36:33; and Ibn Hanbal, 2:166, 3:420, and 4:182.

idea is perhaps influenced by traditions surrounding the so-called "parousia" in which the end of time is associated with the taking up of the believers and the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem.⁵⁴ It may also be related to the many traditions, especially within rabbinic Judaism, about the various numbers of the "righteous" [tzaddiqīm] without the existence of whom the world will come to an end.⁵⁵ Like these rabbinic traditions, the Islamic tradition holds that the people of faith are taken up or "taken out" in connection with the sending down or "sending in" of the enemy. The removal of the people of faith seems to parallel the removal of the Torah or the law. This same connection is apparent in the exegesis of Q 2:246, linking the removal of the people of faith and the Torah with the sending down of the enemy against the remaining Israelites.

The removal of the Torah, along with the people of faith, at the time of the sending of the enemy and the destruction of the temple, is also applied to the Qur'ān in eschatological contexts. In a tradition preserved by Ibn Mājah, it is said that, at the end of time, knowledge of the rituals [prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, and almsgiving] will disappear and, in the night, the Qur'ān [kitāb allāh] will disappear, not a single verse of it remaining on the earth.⁵⁶ In another report, the prophet is supposed to have said that in the last hour knowledge will be "taken up" [rafa'a] and ignorance will be "sent down" [nazala], paralleling the taking up of the Qur'ān and the sending down of the false prophet.⁵⁷ The imagery of "taking up" the book and religion and "sending down" the destroyer of the temple describes the replacement of the law with lawlessness. In another report, this taking up of the Qur'ān, and the loss of the knowledge of the law, is explicitly tied to the taking up of the Torah and Gospel, along with the loss of Judaism and Christianity at the end of time.⁵⁸

It is important to note that the eschatological context of the "taking up" of the revealed law is tied, in these traditions, to the reappearance of the law at a later time. In the case of the Qur'ān, for example, there are a number of traditions which describe how certain verses from the Qur'ān will reappear on the day of judgment as a witness [shafī'] for those who kept the laws in them.⁵⁹ This is similar to the reappearance of the rod of

54 On the large amount of scholarship devoted to this idea, whether linked to the Babylonian or Roman destruction of the temple, or both, see J. Héring, *Le Royaume de Dieu et sa Venue: étude sur l'espérance de Jésus de l'apôtre Paul*, *Études d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses* 35 (1937) and A.L. Moore, *The Parousia in the New Testament*, *Supplements to Novum Testamentum* 13 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1966).

55 There is a lot of discussion of this theme in connection with Abraham's bargaining with God over the number of righteous people necessary to be found in Sodom in order to keep God from destroying the city. For a list of the various references in rabbinic literature, see Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 5:239, n. 164. For the later traditions about the righteous, especially in Jewish mysticism, see Gershom Scholem, "The tradition of the 36 hidden just men," in his *The messianic idea in Judaism and other essays on Jewish spirituality* (New York: Schocken, 1971), 251-256.

56 See Ibn Mājah, 36:26. Similar traditions can be found in al-Dārimī, *muqaddimah* 15, 18, 25, 28, 31. Also see al-Dārimī, 23:4 for traditions about the Qur'ān itself being taken up at the end of time.

57 See Ibn Mājah, 36:26.

58 See Ibn Mājah, 36:26.

59 See, for example, Muslim 6:252 in which sūrat al-Baqarah and 'Al 'Imran (Q 2 and 3) appear as clouds on the day of the Resurrection over those who followed them. There are similar traditions about the

Moses and the seal of Solomon in the possession of the "beast of the earth" [dābbat al-ard] which uses these two relics to distinguish between the faithful and faithless.⁶⁰ The reappearance of these relics and of the Qur'ān is analogous to the return of the Ark in the exegesis of Q 2:246-251. The reappearance of the Ark in Q 2:247 is understood to signify the authority of the new king, Tālūt or Saul, appointed by the prophet of the Israelites. The Ark is a witness or advocate for the authority of the new king, an indication that his reign will impose the law of God which had previously been taken away when the people went astray. The "old" authority of Moses is passed along to authorize the first king of Israel. Given the various points of comparison between the story of the Ark in the exegesis of Q 2:246-251 and the taking up of the Torah in the exegesis of Q 2:79,⁶¹ it is possible to understand the return of the Ark as foreshadowing the return of the Torah. The Torah, parts of which had previously been taken up, is returned to earth in the time of Muḥammad. Like the Ark is a sign of the authority of the new king, the Qur'ān as a "new Torah" is a sign of the authority of Muḥammad. The prophethood of Muḥammad is signified by his reception of a "new Torah," making his prophethood a continuation or a "fulfillment" of the prophethood of Moses and his bringing of the Torah.

Torah as source for Islamic law

Related to the issue of the equation of the Torah and the Qur'ān in these different exegetical contexts, is the question of the authority of the Torah as a source for Islamic law. There are a few stories, recorded in the collections of reports, which suggest that there was some disagreement over the legal status of the Torah and other revealed books vis-à-vis the Qur'ān. The development of how these stories were understood in later scholarship also indicates that the apparent authority of the Torah, at times superseding that of the Qur'ān, became an issue of importance to legal theory. Like the earlier stories associated with the relationship of the Torah and the Qur'ān, these stories are set into the context of polemic against the Jews.

In two cases, it is reported that Muḥammad received revelations that either confirmed or reversed supposed practices of the Jews. From the reception of these stories in later exegetical and legal contexts, it is unclear what was posited as the relationship between the Qur'ān and the Torah. In a third case, that of the so-called "stoning verse," it appears that Muḥammad had legislated Islamic practice on the basis

Qur'ān reappearing in Abū Dā'ūd 23:1, al-Tirmidhī 42:5, 18; and Ibn Mājah 33:52; al-Dārimī, faḍā'il al-Qur'ān, 1.

⁶⁰ For examples of this tradition, see al-Tirmidhī, 44 on Q 27:1; and Ibn Mājah, 36:31.

⁶¹ There are a number of points of comparison made between the Ark, and the tablets of the Torah, and the Qur'ān in different ḥadīths. For example, like the Ark, the Qur'ān is supposed to have been written down on tablets. See al-Bukhārī, 93:37 and al-Tirmidhī, 44 on Q 4:17. Also, there is a prohibition against taking the Qur'ān into enemy territory, which could be seen as a reference to the taking of the Ark and the Torah by the enemies of the Israelites. See al-Bukhārī, 56:129; Muslim, 33:93-94; Abū Dā'ūd, 15:81; and Ibn Mājah, 24:45.

of the Torah in conflict with the contents of the Qur'ān. Later legal scholarship presents a number of different theories to explain that stoning as the penalty for adultery was not derived from the Torah, and that the Torah cannot be used as a source for Islamic law.

In the first case, it is reported that the prophet was questioned about the restrictions placed on men in relation to their wives during menstruation. The different versions of reports associated with this story suggest that it is similar to other stories in which the prophet is questioned or challenged by the Jews about a particular point of Biblical lore or practice. One version of this story is found in Muslim.

Zuhayr b. Ḥarb reported, on the authority of 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Mahdī, on the authority of Ḥammād b. Salamah, on the authority of Thābit, on the authority of Anas: the Jews, when the women among them were menstruating, used not to eat with them, nor cohabit with them in the houses.

The companions of the prophet asked the prophet. God sent down to him: "they will ask you about menstruation. Say: it is harmful [adhan]. Segregate the women in menstruation...[and do not go near them until they have become clean. When they have cleaned themselves, then go to them according to what God has commanded you]"

The apostle of God said: "do everything except marriage."

This reached the Jews who said: "this man does not intend to omit anything from our commands except that with which we disagree."⁶²

First, note that the story of the Jews provides the otherwise missing subject of "they will ask you" in Q 2:222. Second, without the explanation of Q 2:222 provided by the prophet, there does not seem to be any difference between the practice attributed to the Jews and what is commanded in the Qur'ān. Q 2:222, like the practice of the Jews, stipulates the segregation of menstruating women until they have become clean [yaṭhūrna], seeming to indicate when they have stopped menstruating. In this version of the ḥadīth, the brief statement by the prophet seems to contradict Q 2:222, indicating that when women are menstruating everything is still allowed except for marriage, probably meaning sexual intercourse.

The relationship of the prophet's statement to Q 2:222 is more evident from the version of the report preserved in al-Nasā'ī.

Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm reported, on the authority of Sulaymān b. Ḥarb, on the authority of Ḥammād b. Salamah, on the authority of Thābit, on the authority of Anas, that: the Jews, when the women among them were menstruating, used not to eat with them, drink with them, nor cohabit with them in the houses.

They asked the prophet and God sent down to him: "they will ask you about menstruation. Say: it is harmful..." So, the apostle of God commanded them to eat with them, drink with them, and cohabit with them in the houses, to do everything with them except have sex.⁶³

From this version, it is more clear that the prophet is interpreting Q 2:222 to be a reversal of the practice of the Jews, allowing the three things which the Jews did not

⁶² This is taken from Muslim, 3:16.

⁶³ This is taken from al-Nasā'ī, 3:8.

allow. The statement of the prophet restricts the general significance of the command in Q 2:222 to "segregate the women" and to "not go near them" as pertaining to sexual relations only. It is also unusual that the verb translated as "cohabit with them" [jāma'a], although understood by later exegesis on this report as referring to living under the same roof as the menstruating women, is often used to signify marital relations and sex in particular.⁶⁴

The relationship between the practice of the Jews, and possibly the contents of the Torah, and the contents of the Qur'ān is unclear from these two versions of the story. If, as seems to be the case from the second version of the ḥadīth, Q 2:222 was understood as allowing what the practice of the Jews forbade, then it would seem that the story describes a case where the practice of the Jews was abrogated by the revelation of the Qur'ān. Whether this practice of the Jews is supposed to have been derived from the "unaltered" Torah, or later adopted by the Jews, is still an open issue. Without the prophet's interpretation of Q 2:222, however, the Qur'ān seems to confirm the practice of the Jews. The verse itself is consonant with the idea that the practice of the Jews, presumably indicating the contents of the Torah, was being confirmed by the revelation contained in the Qur'ān. It is also important to note that there are other versions of the prophet's statement that omit the reference to Q 2:222 and to the practice of the Jews.⁶⁵ This might suggest that the statement attributed to the prophet was, at a later time, recognized as an interpretation of Q 2:222 that obviated the possible consistency between the Torah and the Qur'ān.

There is another case in which the legal significance of the Qur'ān is linked to the Torah, found in the exegesis of Q 9:108. The link between the two books is found in what is taken as a reference to a group of people at the mosque of Qubā' who used to wash themselves with water after defecation. In his exegesis of this passage, al-Ṭabarī lists several reports which link the practice of using water to the practice of the Jews and the Torah. There are four similar reports concerning this.

The apostle of God stood up over us and said: "it has not been reported to me, has God commended you a good thing concerning purity?" They said: "oh apostle of God, we find for us, written in the Torah, the washing of the anus with water."

When the prophet approached the people of Qubā' he said: "God has commended you a good thing concerning purity," meaning the word of God: "in it are men who love to purify themselves." They said: "we find it written for us in the Torah, the washing of the anus with water."

The prophet said to the people of Qubā': "has God commended you a good thing concerning purity?" They said: "we find it written for us in the Torah, the washing of the anus with water." Concerning this was revealed: "in it are men who love to purify themselves."

The apostle of God said to the people of Qubā': "I heard that God had commendation for you concerning purity. What is this purity?" They said: "oh apostle of God, we do

⁶⁴ See Ibn Manẓūr, s.v.

⁶⁵ See, for example, Ibn Mājah, 1:125.

not know anything except a good thing that we have from the Jews. We saw them washing the feces from their anuses, so we washed just as they washed."⁶⁶

Each of the reports, as listed in the exegesis of al-Ṭabarī, provides more information than the one before it. The first report does not mention the people of Qubā' nor does it mention the passage from Q 9:108. Without the information of the following reports, it might seem likely that the people who report the practice of using water, on the authority of the Torah, are a group of Jews. This would be consistent with other stories, including that concerning menstruation, in which practices of the Jews or from the Torah are mentioned.

The second, third, and fourth reports indicate that the prophet was speaking to the people of Qubā', and they link the statement of the people of Qubā' to the revelation of the last part of Q 9:108. Both the second and third reports, however, do not indicate the relationship between the people of Qubā' and the source of their practice, claimed as the Torah. It seems, in reports two and three, that the people of Qubā' were not only knowledgeable about the Torah, but considered the practices it stipulated to apply to them. In both reports, the people of Qubā' state that what they found written in the Torah was written "for them." The fourth report explains the connection between the people of Qubā' and the Torah. According to the fourth report, the people of Qubā' use water for washing because they saw the Jews following this practice. Note, that in the fourth report, there is no mention of the Torah. The statement of the people of Qubā' that they "know nothing" except for what they saw the Jews do, could be interpreted to be a further denial that the people of Qubā' knew the Torah first-hand, or followed other Jewish practices. The fourth report also does not link the practice of the people of Qubā' to the revelation of Q 9:108.

Both the second and third reports do relate the statement of the people of Qubā' to the revelation of Q 9:108. In the third report, the revelation of Q 9:108 is placed after the statement of the people of Qubā', suggesting that Muḥammad was unaware of the practice of washing until he asked the people of Qubā'.⁶⁷ The revelation of Q 9:108 seems to confirm the practice of the people of Qubā', identifying a practice prescribed in the Torah with one commended in the Qur'ān. In the second report, it seems that the prophet's knowledge of the practice of the people of Qubā' is derived from his receiving the earlier revelation of Q 9:108. The statement of the people of Qubā' seems, in the second report, to be an explanation of what was previously revealed to Muḥammad. This is particularly striking because, in the case of the second report, it is not the prophet who interprets the Qur'ān but rather the Torah, indirectly through the practice of the people of Qubā', that specifies the legal implications of Q 9:108. In both the second and third

⁶⁶ These four ḥadīth are taken from al-Ṭabarī, *al-Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 9:108. A variant of these reports is also found in Ibn Ḥanbal, 6:6.

⁶⁷ There is another report in al-Ṭabarī's exegesis of Q 9:108, which seems to be a variant of the first report. It has the same chain of transmission as the first report, but mentions that this occurred when Muḥammad entered Međinah. It is also added, on the authority of Mālik, that what was meant by the statement regarding the practice of washing, is Q 9:108.

reports, however Q 9:108 is related to the practice of the people of Qubā', the practice supposed to be prescribed in the Torah is consistent with what is mentioned in the Qur'ān.

It is possible that the different variants of this story are related to some of the other practices which Muḥammad is reported to have adopted then abandoned during his stay in Madīnah. For example, it is well-known that some 16 months after Muḥammad came to Medīnah, he changed the direction of prayer from Jerusalem to Madīnah. Later exegesis links this change with Q 2:136.⁶⁸ There is also mention, in a large number of reports, that the prophet used to walk or ride to conduct prayer at the mosque of Qubā' every Sabbath.⁶⁹ Related to the provenance of this story is the observation that in the later legal compendia of the four classical sunnī schools, water is not required for wiping the anus after defecation. This later development could represent an attempt to distance Islamic practice from the story that the prophet derived his sunnah indirectly from the Torah. It is also important to note that a number of other reports have been preserved, referring to washing the anus with water, most in connection with Q 9:108, that do not mention the Torah or the practice of the Jews as the source of the precedent.⁷⁰

In the reports concerning the segregation of menstruating women and the use of water for washing, there seems to be some confusion about the relationship of the Qur'ān, and of the practice of the prophet, to the Torah and the practice of the Jews. In the case of the segregation of menstruating women, the extant form of the reports suggests that the practice of the prophet was at odds with the practice of the Jews, although Q 2:222 taken by itself does not necessitate such a conclusion. The reports describing the practice of using water for washing seem to indicate that the practice of the prophet and Q 9:108 are consistent with a practice supposed to originate in the Torah or with the Jews. Without the reports linking Q 9:108 to the mosque at Qubā' or the practice of washing with water, it would be difficult to see a connection between the passage from the Qur'ān and the Torah. In the case of the so-called "stoning verse," it seems clear, from the later mention and discussion of the verses, that there was an unspoken claim that stoning as the penalty for adultery had been derived from the Torah in opposition to what was extant in the text of the Qur'ān.

The development of the theories about the punishment for adultery begins with a report, given on the authority of 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar.

The Jews came to the apostle of God and mentioned to him that a man and a woman from among them had fornicated. The apostle of God said to them: "what do you find in the Torah concerning the matter of stoning?" They said: "we banish them and flog them."

68 For further historical background on the change of the qiblah, see Wensinck, *Mohammed en de Joden te Medina* (Leiden, 1908), esp. 108-110, 133-135. Also see Tor Andrae, *Der Ursprung des Islams und das Christentum*, 1-5.

69 See, for example, al-Bukhārī, *faḍl al-ṣalat fī masjid Makka wa al-Madīnah*, 2, 4; Muslim, *ḥajj*, 94; al-Diyābakrī, 1:382; al-Balādhurī, 5; and al-Wāqidi, 161.

70 See, for example, al-Ṭabarī on Q 9:108.

'Abdallāh b. Salām said: "you are lying. In it [Torah] is stoning." So they brought the Torah and spread it out. One of them placed his hand over the stoning verse. Then he read what came before the verse and what came after it. 'Abdallāh b. Salām said to him: "raise your hand." So he raised his hand and the stoning verse was in it [Torah].

They said: you are right, oh Muḥammad, in it is the stoning verse. The apostle of God commanded it for them and they were stoned.⁷¹

That Muḥammad knew what the Torah stipulated as punishment for adultery, and that he stoned two Jews guilty of adultery, is not necessarily an issue pertinent to the Islamic penalty for adultery. This story seems to be of the type discussed earlier in which the Jews question or challenge Muḥammad. It also incorporates elements of the theme of the Jews hiding or altering something from the Torah that would prove Muḥammad's prophethood. From the outset of the story, it seems that Muḥammad already knows that the penalty for adultery in the Torah is stoning even before the Torah is brought out and read. The Jews challenge Muḥammad with a question about the Torah, and his immediate response is correct, although the Jews deny it in the next sentence. Using legal issues and questions about Biblical lore to stump the prophet is a common ploy attributed to Jews in the reports about the life of Muḥammad. The particular question of what to do about adultery is also a direct parallel with John 8:1-11 in which the Jews challenge Jesus by bringing to him a woman accused of adultery.⁷²

It is evident from another story concerning the punishment for adultery, that it was understood that Muḥammad had stipulated stoning as the punishment not just for the Jews but for the Muslims also.

Two men brought their litigation to the apostle of God. One of them said: oh apostle of God, decide between us according to the book of God [kitāb allāh]. The other, who was the more learned in law [afqah] than the other, said: yes, oh apostle of God, decide between us according to the book of God. Allow me to speak."

He [Muḥammad] said: "speak. So he [the second man] said: "my son was working for this other man. He fornicated with his wife. He [the employer] said to me that he [my son] should be stoned, so I ransomed him for a hundred sheep and a slave-girl of mine. Then I asked the learned and they told me that my son should be flogged a hundred times and banished for a year. They also told me that his wife should be stoned."

The apostle of God said: "by him in whose hand is my soul, I will make a decision between you according to the book of God. As for your sheep and your slave-girl, they should be returned to you."

71 This version of the report is taken from Mālik b. Anas, *al-Muwattā'*, ed. Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, n.d.), 41:1. This report is also given in al-Bukhārī, 86:37; and Muslim, 29:6. It is discussed in al-Shāfi'ī, *al-Risālah*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir (Cairo, 1358), 245-250.

72 There is a report that seems to be an even closer parallel to John 8:1-11 in which a man confesses adultery to Abū Bakr and 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭab who both state that God forgives him for the adultery. Then the man approaches Muḥammad who refuses to pass judgement three different times, and finally asks whether the man is insane. In the end, Muḥammad stones the man for adultery. See Mālik b. Anas, 41:2; al-Bukhārī, 86:22; and Muslim, 29:5.

He [Muḥammad] flogged his son a hundred times and banished him for a year. He commanded Unays al-Aslamī to go to the wife of the other man and stone her if she confessed. She confessed and he stoned her.⁷³

Note that, from the outset, the father is wrong about the penalty for his son's fornication being sheep and a slave-girl. The father's attempt to "ransom" his son with the exchange of property, along with the mention that he was learned in legal matters, could mean that the father saw his son's infraction against his employer's wife as analogous to his son damaging or destroying the employer's property. More interesting is the father's report that the learned [ahl al-'ilm] told him that his son should be flogged and banished, but that the wife should be stoned. That this is the correct punishment is confirmed by Muḥammad's action in meting out the punishments to the son and the wife, but not by his statement which seems to deal with the return of the possessions only.

The introduction of the flogging and banishment, and the fact that only the wife is stoned, needs to be understood in light of the phrase, repeated three times in the story, that Muḥammad is supposed to decide between the two litigants "according to the book of God." From the earlier story of the Jews who challenged Muḥammad's knowledge of the Torah, it is known that the punishment of stoning is carried out because it is prescribed in the Torah. From this story, it seems that both flogging/banishment and stoning are attributed to the "book of God" although no reference to nor verse from the Qur'ān is given. It is possible, given the identity of some of the terms used for the different revealed books, that the term "book of God" refers to the "Bible" although there is no evidence that Muslim scholarship understood it this way. Later exegetical scholarship identified the "book of God" mentioned here with the Qur'ān, and commented on two references in the Qur'ān to the punishment for adultery.

Both Q 24:2 and 4:15 mention punishments for fornication. Q 4:15 states that if a woman is found guilty of obscenity [fāḥishah], usually understood to refer to prostitution or fornication in general, she is to be confined to the house until she dies or "until God makes [some other] way" for her. Q 24:2 states that both the man and woman who fornicate should be flogged a hundred times. The punishment given to the son in the above story seems to be based, in part, on the stipulation of flogging a hundred times provided in Q 24:2. The fact that he is banished and flogged parallels not Q 24:2, but the statement made by the Jews in the first story when asked what punishment the Torah prescribed for adultery. Neither of the verses mention banishment or stoning as punishments, nor do they provide grounds for giving the woman a different punishment than the man. Since there is no evidence that women guilty of fornication were ever confined to their houses by the prophet or his companions, it is usually assumed that the punishment prescribed for women in Q 24:2 abrogates that mentioned in Q 4:15. If the learned and Muḥammad determined that the wife in the story should be stoned

⁷³ This version is taken from Mālik, 41:6. It can also be found in al-Bukhārī, 83:3; and Muslim 29:5. It is discussed in al-Shāfi'ī, *Risālah*, 245-250.

according to the "book of God" and the "book of God" is the Qur'ān, it is difficult to determine the precedent to which the learned and Muḥammad are referring.

According to Ibn Ḥajar, there are two explanations for the phrase "according to the book of God" being used as a reference to the Qur'ān in the case of the son and the wife guilty of fornication.⁷⁴ One possibility is that the phrase "according to the book of God" does not refer directly to a verse in the Qur'ān that mentions stoning as a penalty, but to the many verses in the Qur'ān that are interpreted to enjoin obedience to the stipulations laid down by the practice of Muḥammad.⁷⁵ Ibn Ḥajar also reports that the phrase might be a specific reference to the last part of Q 4:15 which seems to state that the punishment given in the verse is only in effect until God appoints another one, namely the punishment of stoning stipulated by Muḥammad.⁷⁶ This is tantamount to claiming that the stoning penalty had been derived from the sunnah, the authority of which is based on the Qur'ān. Another possibility is that Muḥammad's decision according to the book of God does not concern the punishment of stoning meted out to the wife, but his statement that the hundred sheep and the slave-girl are to be returned to the father whose son had fornicated.⁷⁷ Since the payment of a hundred sheep and a slave-girl is not the proper punishment for the son's fornication, the employer does not have legal right to the property. It could be that Muḥammad is referring to the Qur'ānic injunction against wasting or profiting from the property of another person. It could also be the case that only the punishment assigned to the son, both flogging and banishment, is meant to have been determined according to the Qur'ān.

Although there is no verse extant in the Qur'ān which explicitly prescribes stoning as a punishment for adultery, there are accounts of a speech given by 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb in which he states that there used to be a verse in the text of the Qur'ān that stated that adulterers were to be stoned. In the version of the speech, attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, reported in al-Ṭabarī, 'Umar makes the statement at the outset of his delivery of the Friday sermon [khuṭbah].

As 'Umar sat at the pulpit, the muezzin made the call to prayer. After the muezzin had finished his call to prayer, 'Umar stood up. He praised God, extolled him and said: "I want to say something which has been decreed that I should say. He who takes heed of it, understands it and will remember it. Let him relate it wherever he goes. He who does not take heed of it, I will not permit him to lie. God brought Muḥammad the truth and sent down the book to him. The verse concerning the stoning was among those which were sent down to him. The apostle of God stoned and we stoned after him. I am afraid that as time passes some people might say that they do not find stoning in the book of God. They might then go astray by not following an obligatory act sent down by God."⁷⁸

⁷⁴ For a recent and thoughtful interpretation of the stoning verse, especially in light of the theories preserved in Ibn Ḥajar, see John Burton, *The collection of the Qur'ān* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), esp. 70-86.

⁷⁵ See Ibn Ḥajar, *Faḥ al-Bārī* (Cairo, 1348), 12:115. Also see Burton, 77.

⁷⁶ See Ibn Ḥajar, 12:115; Burton, 77.

⁷⁷ See Ibn Ḥajar, 12:115; Burton, 77.

⁷⁸ This account is taken from al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 1821. See the English translation by Ismail Poonawala, *The history of al-Ṭabarī: the last years of the prophet*, 190-191. Another version of this speech can be found in Ibn Ishāq, 4:307-311 also on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās.

There is another version of 'Umar's speech about the stoning verse preserved by Mālik, on the authority of Sa'īd b. al-Musayyab, which repeats the crucial details of the accounts in al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Ishāq.

Then he ['Umar] went to Madīnah and gave the sermon [khaṭaba] to the people. He said: oh people customary practices [sunan] have been established for you. Obligatory practices have been made obligatory for you. You are left with a clear path unless you lead the people astray, to the right or to the left."

He hit one of his hands on the other. Then he said: "do not obliterate the stoning verse, so that somewhat might say: 'we do not find two punishments in the book of God.' The apostle of God stoned, so we stone. By him in whose hand is my soul, had it not been that people would say: "'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb has added to the book of God, I would have written it down: 'the mature man and mature woman [al-shaykh wa al-shaykhah], stone them for sure.' We have already recited this."⁷⁹

By his statement about the customary and obligatory practices, in this second version, 'Umar indicates that he is making a statement relating to legal precedents. He also alludes to the problem of there being a punishment in the Qur'ān for adultery, presumably 24:2, but not another that mentions stoning. Finally, he actually gives the short verse that was supposed to have been revealed to Muḥammad and written down in the Qur'ān at one time.

In both versions of the speech, 'Umar repeats two statements of importance as legal precedent. The first is his statement that Muslims are to stone adulterers now because Muḥammad had stoned adulterers. This, in itself, would be enough to establish stoning as a punishment for adultery, assuming that one could explain the apparent discrepancy between the practice of the prophet and the evidence of Q 24:2 and 4:15 for punishing adulterers. This statement would correspond to the explanations given by Ibn Ḥajar, that stoning was established as a punishment by the practice of Muḥammad, the punishment being only indirectly based on the Qur'ān, derived from the authorization of Muḥammad's practice. In his speech, however, 'Umar makes it explicit that Muḥammad's practice of stoning is based on a revelation which was in the Qur'ān. This insistence could reflect the recognition that not to base Muḥammad's practice in the Qur'ān would be to leave open the possibility that Muḥammad had derived the punishment of stoning from the Torah.

The statements attributed to 'Umar were taken by some later scholarship to indicate that the "stoning verse" had, at one time, been a part of the text of the Qur'ān. It has been noted that this explanation would be an instance of *naskh al-tilāwah dūna al-ḥukm*, a case in which a verse had been revealed to Muḥammad and included in the text of the Qur'ān, but was later removed from the Qur'ān. Although the actual "words" of the verse were removed from the text, the legal precedent [ḥukm] the verse is supposed to have established remains in force. There have also been a number of attempts to show that the stoning verse was originally part of sūrat al-Aḥzāb.⁸⁰ Ibn Ḥajar mentions that,

⁷⁹ Mālik, 41:10.

⁸⁰ See al-Bayhaqī, 8:210-211 and Nöldeke, *Geschichte des Qorans*, ed. Schwally (Leipzig, 1909-1919), 1:251.

although such an explanation is legitimate, it still does not explain why Muḥammad stoned only the wife and not the son, when the so-called stoning verse stipulates stoning for the man and woman.⁸¹ Other scholars, based on the interpretation provided by Mālik, on the authority of Yahyā b. Sa'īd, concluded that the man [shaykh] and woman [shaykhah] mentioned in the stoning verse was to be understood as "married" men and women.⁸² The punishment of flogging, mentioned in Q 24:2 was intended for non-married fornicators.

It is important to note the similarities between the explanations used for the disappearance of the stoning verse from both the Qur'ān and the Torah. In the first story about the Jews who questioned Muḥammad about the penalty for adultery in the Torah, the stoning verse is missing because one of the Jews is hiding it with his hand. In the explanations given for the absence of the stoning verse in the Qur'ān, it is argued that the stoning verse was removed, presumably by God, from the text of the Qur'ān. This second explanation is intended to head off the claim that the penalty of stoning had been taken by Muḥammad from the stoning verse in the Torah. Although the issue is not discussed in the sources, the relationship between the two explanations suggests that the "stoning verse" discovered in the Torah was the same as that which was at one time in the Qur'ān. The identity of the two verses, or at least the acknowledged identity of the punishment for adultery, would also explain how it was that Muḥammad was supposed to have already known what the Torah prescribed as punishment for adultery when approached by the Jews.

Both explanations for the missing verse, its removal by God and its being hidden by the Jews, are explanations also used to account for the absence of references to Muḥammad in the Torah. In the exegesis of Q 2:79 and in the stories associated with Ka'b al-Aḥbār about the references to Muḥammad in the Torah, it is stated that the missing verses were the result either of God recalling part of the Torah, or of the Jews altering the text. That a connection was perceived between the circumstances of the stoning verse and the missing references to Muḥammad in the Torah is further suggested by an explanation Ibn al-Jawzī gives for the story of the Jews hiding the stoning verse in the Qur'ān. According to Ibn al-Jawzī, the "stoning verse" that one of the Jews covered with his hand was not the statement of the punishment itself, but the fact that the Torah stipulated that four witnesses to the act of adultery are required before the person is punished.⁸³ The Jews were not hiding the punishment of stoning in an attempt to trip up Muḥammad who had already stated that stoning was the punishment in the Torah, but they were hiding the fact that the Torah had the same verses in it as did the Qur'ān. The coincidence of the verses in the Torah and the Qur'ān would validate that the revelation received by Muḥammad was the same revelation received by Moses. It is also interesting to note that Ibn al-Jawzī's explanation makes sense of the description of the

⁸¹ See Ibn Ḥajar, 12:115; Burton, 77.

⁸² See Mālik, 41:10.

⁸³ This is discussed in Wansbrough, 195.

Jews reading the flogging penalty in the passages before and after the "stoning verse." The flogging penalty occurs in Q 24:2, followed by the stipulation of four witnesses in Q 24:4.

Torah and other revealed books

Throughout the Qur'ān, there are passages which seem to identify the Qur'ān with the Torah and other revealed books. Later scholarship attempted to account for these passages in conjunction with the development of theories to explain the apparent equation of the Qur'ān and the Torah in statements attributed to Muḥammad or his contemporaries. The exegesis of certain passages in the Qur'ān shows how later scholarship acknowledged the existence of other revealed books but denied both that these books' contents were identical to the Qur'ān, and that these books maintained a canonical status after the revelation of the Qur'ān.

In his exegesis of Q 28:48, Ibn Kathīr recognized a parallel between the "nāmūs" statement attributed to Warāqah and the statement, attributed to an anonymous group of people, in which is denied the identity of what came to Moses and what came to Muḥammad. In Ibn Kathīr and most earlier exegesis of this verse, the group of people who make the denial is thought to be a group of Jews in the time of Muḥammad. The translation of the verse itself requires some comment.

When the *ḥaqq* comes to them from us, they say: "that which comes is not like that which had come to Moses." Did they not disbelieve in what came to Moses before? They said: "two acts of sorcery, supporting one another." They said: "we are unbelievers in all of it."

It is assumed that the speaker of the verse, and the "us" in the first line is God. Note that the "ḥaqq" mentioned in the first line spoken by God is replaced by the pronominal locution "that which comes" in the second line. The "ḥaqq" comes from God to the Jews who then state that it is not like that which came to Moses. The term "ḥaqq" is normally understood as "truth," but it is important to recognize that "ḥaqq" is also the Arabic word for "law" which would correspond to the earlier use, from the Syriac, of "nāmūs." Whether the subject of the first two lines is understood as "law" or "truth," it seems that the statement attributed to the Jews is to be taken as the claim that the Qur'ān received by Muḥammad is not the same as the Torah received by Moses. The statement from Q 28:48 attributed to the Jews is the direct inverse, minus the use of the word "nāmūs," of the statement attributed to Warāqah.⁸⁴

The implication of Q 28:48 and verses 49-52 following is that the Jews who challenge the identity of the Qur'ān and the Torah are wrong. This seems to be

⁸⁴ The use of the verb *atā*, used in the passive in Q 28:48, is also used in the version of Warāqah's statement found in Ibn Ishāq, 153-154; Ibn Hanbal, 4:198; and al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḫ al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 1148-1152. Despite the suggestion of Watt and McDonald, that the use of the verb *atā* makes the meaning of Gabriel more appropriate for nāmūs (72), it is important to note that it is common to find the verb *atā* used of God sending the Qur'ān or other books to prophets.

confirmed by Q 28:49 in which Muḥammad is told to challenge the Jews to produce a "book from God which is a better guide than these two." Concerning the interpretation of the phrase "two acts of sorcery, supporting one another," there is some disagreement among the explanations given in the commentaries. The "two acts of sorcery" is said to refer either to two people (Moses and Aaron, Moses and Muḥammad, or Jesus and Muḥammad) or two books (Torah and Qur'ān, Torah and Gospel, or Gospel and Qur'ān).⁸⁵ Note that the phrase is also parallel to the accusation made by the Jews against Jesus in Q 61:6. In either case, however, it is clear from Q 28:49 that the subject of dispute in Q 28:48 is the identity of two books. Between Q 28:48 and 49, the Qur'ān and the Torah are identified, but also they seem to hold the same canonical authority. In Q 28:49, both the Qur'ān and the Torah are held up together as the best guide, the best sources for how to live one's life.

Although Q 28:48-49 seems to equate the Qur'ān and Torah, Ibn Kathīr explains that the two books, although both revealed by God to his prophets, are not identical nor equal in status.

Warāqah b. Nawfal said: "this is the nāmūs that he [God] revealed to Moses." It is known by the necessity of it clinging to hearts that God did not reveal a book from the heavens, among those books he revealed to his prophets, more perfect, more complete, clearer, stronger, or more honorable than the book which he revealed to Muḥammad, the Qur'ān.

After it [Qur'ān] in honor and strength is the book which he revealed to Moses b. 'Imrān. It is the book about which God said: "we revealed the Torah in which is guidance and illumination, by which the prophets who submitted themselves judged for the Jews, the monks, and the rabbis, because they were supposed to preserve the book of God. They were witnesses of it" [Q 5:44].

The Gospel God only revealed to complete the Torah. It is an addition to the part of what is sacred to the children of Israel. Of this God said: "say: 'they received a book from God. It is the best guidance of the two. Follow it if you are truthful people.'"

Using key passages from other parts of the Qur'ān, Ibn Kathīr acknowledges that the Torah and the Gospel are revealed books just as the Qur'ān. Q 5:44, which is cited, and verses 45-48 following seem to support Ibn Kathīr's claim that the Torah and Gospel were different books, revealed at different times to different people. Ibn Kathīr's statement that the Gospel was intended to complete the Torah is also a reference to Q 5:46 in which it is stated that the Gospel "fulfills" the Torah. The Qur'ān, however, is better than these previously revealed books according to Ibn Kathīr. Such a ranking is not only predicated on the claim that the three books are different in content, but it also ignores the related issue of whether the Jews and Christians actually followed their books, or whether they altered the contents of those books.

The ranking of the revealed books is ironic because it results in a confirmation of the accusation made by the Jews in Q 28:48, that the Qur'ān is not the same as the Torah that God sent down to Moses. In the exegesis of Q 28:48, both the Jews and Ibn Kathīr seem

⁸⁵ See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, s.v. and Ibn Kathīr, s.v.

to deny the identity of the two books. Presumably, the Jews deny the identity in order to deny the legitimacy of Muḥammad's prophethood. This would be consistent with the other stories in which the Jews challenge the prophethood of Muḥammad by altering or hiding parts of the Torah. Ibn Kathīr apparently denies the identity of the Qur'ān and the Torah in order to deny the canonical status of the Torah or other revealed books. Given the information provided in the Qur'ān, especially Q 5:44-48, it would be possible to maintain that the difference between Muslims, Christians, and Jews is not the content of their books but the propensity of the different groups to follow that content. By emphasizing the distinctions between the books from Q 5:44-48, Ibn Kathīr distances himself from the notion suggested in Q 28:48-49 that the Qur'ān and the Torah were on equal footing. In this sense, Ibn Kathīr's explanation accomplishes the same ends as the other theories about the altering of the texts or the recall of parts of the Torah.

A close relationship between the Torah and the Qur'ān is also suggested in Q 2:53 in which it is stated that, along with the "book," God gave Moses the "furqān," a term that is, in some contexts taken as another name for the Qur'ān. The classical exegesis of Q 2:53 does not agree on the significance of the term "furqān" in the context of this verse. In the introduction to his commentary on the Qur'ān, al-Ṭabarī records the opinion, on the authority of 'Ikrimah and al-Suddī, that "furqān" refers to "salvation."⁸⁶ This seems to be a reference to the possible Syriac origins of the word [purqānā] meaning salvation.⁸⁷ Based on the Arabic etymology of the word, a number of reports understand the term as referring to "discrimination" or the "separation" of truth and falsehood or good and evil. The Torah is said to be the "furqān," that which distinguishes truth from falsehood.⁸⁸ Others claim it refers to a sign sent to Moses as proof of his prophethood like the "parting" of the Red Sea, or as a reference to his rod.⁸⁹ In all of these cases, "furqān" is either to be another word for the Torah, an attribute of Moses' prophethood, or both.

There is a report, given on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, that identifies the "furqān" of Q 2:53 with the Qur'ān.⁹⁰

Furqān" is a composite name for the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms, and the Furqān.⁹⁰

Presumably, the second mention of "furqān" in the statement of Ibn 'Abbās refers to something other than the first mention. The word "furqān" occurs six other times in the Qur'ān, another time in reference to Moses and Aaron receiving a revelation (Q 21:48), and three times in connection with the Qur'ān (Q 2:185, 3:4, 25:1).⁹¹ The statement

86 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 1:169, no. 121.

87 This point, along with a general discussion of the meaning of the term, can be found in Richard Bell, "Note on al-furqān," in his *Introduction to the Qur'ān* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1953), 136-138.

88 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:53. Also see the comments summarized in Mahmūd Ayoub, *The Qur'ān and its interpreters* (Albany: SUNY, 1984), s.v.

89 See Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, s.v.

90 al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:53.

91 See the useful overview of the term and the scholarship on it in R. Paret, "Furqān," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed., 2:949-950.

attributed to Ibn 'Abbās is strikingly similar to another recorded by al-Suyūfī in his discussion of the different names given to the Qur'ān.

The Qur'ān is divided into four parts. Each of the parts has a name. Aḥmad and someone else made known a report attributed to Wāthalah b. al-Asqa' that the apostle of God said: "I was given the "seven long [surahs]" in place of the Torah, I was given the "hundred" in place of the Psalms, I was given the "two" in place of the Gospel, and the excess is in the detail."⁹²

There is another tradition mentioned by al-Suyūfī, also in his section on the names used for the Qur'ān, in which Muḥammad is reported to have said that the Psalms of David were the "furqān." According to al-Suyūfī, calling the Qur'ān "zubūr" is like using the term "new Torah" as another name for the Qur'ān, neither of which are allowed to be used.⁹³

The relationship between the "furqān" and other revealed books is also found in the exegesis of Q 53:36-37 and Q 87:18-19 which mention the "books" [ṣuḥūf] of Abraham and Moses. To explain what is meant by this phrase, most of the commentaries record the story of the 104 books.

Abū Dharr reported that he asked the apostle of God: "how many books did God reveal?"

He [Muḥammad] replied: "a hundred and four books. From this number, to Adam 10 books [ṣuḥūf], to Seth 50 books, to Idrīs 30 books, to Abraham 10 books, and the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms, and the Furqān."⁹⁴

The mention of "furqān" here would seem to be a reference to the Qur'ān, otherwise the Qur'ān would be excluded from the list of revealed books. It is also important to note that, although Q 53:36-37 and Q 87:18-19 mention the "ṣuḥūf" of Moses, it is presumably the Torah which is mentioned in the list of 104 books as belonging to Moses. Another report, found in the exegesis of al-Ṭabarī on Q 87:18-19, states that the books of Abraham, the Torah, the Psalms, the Gospel, and the Furqān were all revealed during the month of Ramaḍān.⁹⁵

The tradition of the 104 books is significant because it points to another attempt to explain the relationship of the various revealed books mentioned in the Qur'ān, an explanation apparently at odds with several of the other explanations. It is an explanation, like the ranking of Ibn Kathīr, which stresses the variety of the books revealed to the different prophets. The length and number of the books mentioned, as well as the different traditions which claim to cite excerpts from these earlier books, emphasize that the books were different in content. There is no suggestion, however, that the differing contents of the books is due to their being altered by the people who

92 This is taken from al-Suyūfī, 1:125, end of section 17 on names of the Qur'ān and the surahs.

93 See al-Suyūfī, 1:115, section 17, just before division on the names of the surahs.

94 This can be found in al-Rāzī and al-Zamakhsharī on Q 87:18-19, and al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 350-351.

95 This seems to be at odds with the statement recorded in Ibn Kathīr on Q 12:2 that only the Qur'ān, the best of books, was revealed during Ramaḍān, the best of months.

followed them. The use of the term "furqān" in the list of 104 books to designate the Qur'ān also implies that Q 2:53 associates Moses with the reception of both the Torah and the Qur'ān. Perhaps it is pertinent that Q 2:53 occurs in the context of the golden calf episode in relation to which Ibn Ishāq had reported that God had recalled part of the tablets that he had just given to Moses. Whether or not the linking of the Qur'ān and Torah in Q 2:53 is related to the recall of the Torah traditions, the disagreement among the various explanations of Q 2:53 and other references reflects different attempts to eschew the implications of equating the Qur'ān with other revealed books.

Conclusions

Given the evidence from the various contexts examined above, it is likely that Warāqah's use of the term "nāmūs" is another example of an early tradition identifying the Torah and the Qur'ān. His statement is an acknowledgment of Muḥammad's prophethood according to a Biblical paradigm, one of many that appear to have been current. That Muḥammad's reception of the Torah was intended to be recognized as a "sign" of his prophethood, and could have been recognized as such among the groups in which the story circulated, is indicated by the numerous other references in the Qur'ān and ḥadīth literature to Muḥammad as "fulfilling" the rôle of prophet expected from the Torah and Gospel. The imagery applied to Muḥammad from Isaiah and other exegetical contexts, paralleling that used in Christian exegetical polemic against the Jews, portrays Muḥammad as one who renews the mission and law of Moses, as did Jesus, bringing a "new Torah" to the nations. The notion of the "old" Torah being recalled from the Jews and a "new" Torah sent down to Muḥammad also shows evidence of a tradition placing Muḥammad in the rôle of the expected prophet of Deuteronomy 18:15-18 and the "paraclete" of John 15:24-25. The linking of this notion with both Islamic and non-Islamic eschatological contexts suggests that Muḥammad's prophethood was seen in terms of inaugurating a new order on earth, equivalent to that associated with the "parousia." Such descriptions authorized Muḥammad not only in "Biblical" terms but were also shown, through elaborate exegetical work, to be consistent with the description of prophethood and authority found in the Qur'ān.

Given the strong support Warāqah's statement gives to the prophethood of Muḥammad, it seems strange that later Islamic scholarship would explain "nāmūs" as a reference to Gabriel. As a reference to the Torah, Warāqah's statement about the nāmūs authorizes both the Qur'ān as the "new Torah" and the prophethood of Muḥammad as the receiver of the same book that was previously revealed to Moses. It links the Qur'ān and the prophethood of Muḥammad to the Torah and the prophethood of Moses, both recognized by Jews and Christians, and held up as models of revealed books and prophethood in the Bible and its exegesis. Similarly, there is no reason to expect, from the text of the Qur'ān, that portraying Muḥammad as a "Moses redevivus" would run counter to the aims of early exegetical scholarship. The passages devoted to Moses and

his prophethood in the Qur'ān are more numerous than those mentioning any other prophet or character of any type.

The identification of the nāmūs with Gabriel does not resonate in the same way as would a statement about the Torah or the "law of Moses" resonate with the Christian or Jewish traditions of the time about prophethood. Nor does al-Ṭabarī's interpretation coincide to a great extent with the associations made in the Qur'ān about prophethood. Although some later exegesis identifies Gabriel with the rūḥ al-amīn of Q 26:193 or the rasūl karīm of Q 81:19-21 and associates Gabriel in general with the revelation of books,⁹⁶ Gabriel is only mentioned twice in the Qur'ān (2:97-98, 66:4) and only in the first case possibly related to the revelation of books and an argument with the Jews over Muḥammad's claim to prophethood.⁹⁷ More common are the references which, although not necessarily understood in later exegesis as having this meaning, seem to indicate that the "book" revealed to Muḥammad is the same book which was revealed to earlier prophets like Moses. The emphasis of the Gabriel verses and the development of traditions which associate him with Muḥammad and previous prophets indicates a concern of early exegetical scholarship.

The interpretation of al-Ṭabarī and later scholarship saw the identification of the nāmūs with Gabriel as an obvious solution to the otherwise unusual phrase attributed to Warāqah. By the end of the third century, there existed a large and growing number of traditions associating Gabriel with earlier prophets and with the revelation of books in particular. In Ibn Sa'd, for example, there is a report in which Gabriel is said to be the "walī" of all the prophets. Later references to Gabriel in the Qīṣṣa literature also reflect a trend toward the development of Gabriel as the associate of all prophets. In al-Kisā'ī and al-Tha'alabī, for example, Gabriel is described as the messenger of God and guide to all the prophets from Adam to Muḥammad. Related to this development is the elaboration of Q 2:97-98 in which the Jews were supposed to have denied Gabriel as their protector but instead claimed the angel Michael. In his exegesis of Q 2:97-98, al-Ṭabarī states that the reason the Jews abandoned Gabriel is because they accused him of giving up their secrets to Muḥammad. The attribution of Q 2:97-98 to the Jews makes the Jews out to recognize implicitly the validity of Muḥammad, on the grounds that he had knowledge of the secrets of the Jews found in the Torah.

The benefit derived by al-Ṭabarī and later scholarship from identifying the nāmūs with Gabriel is that it allowed Warāqah's statement to retain its import as a link between Muḥammad and early prophets, but also removed the implications of equating the contents of the Qur'ān with the Torah. This is, perhaps, the most interesting aspect of the tradition of interpreting the nāmūs statement, and others like it, not to be equations of the Qur'ān and Torah. It shows that such statements were understood, sometime during the

⁹⁶ The idea of Gabriel being associated with the revelation of books see, for example, the ḥadīth, found in Ibn Sa'd, 1:116, that Gabriel is the "walī" of all the prophets

⁹⁷ For some of the traditions about the identification of these references with Gabriel, see al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, s.v. Also see the brief overview in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*.

course of the third century or the early fourth century, to have important implications for the status of the Qur'ān as a source of legislation. As the Qur'ān, and its interpretation through the medium of the sunnah, increasingly became to be regarded as a "source" for the legal opinions of the incipient schools of Islamic law, it became necessary to distinguish the contents of the Qur'ān from those of other books with which it was apparently linked in certain exegetical and polemical contexts. It is not unrelated that the first attempts to systematically account for the legal opinions of the schools in the text of the Qur'ān occurred in the course of the fourth century.⁹⁸ Given the "text-based" epistemological basis of fiqh scholarship, the authority of the emerging legal schools was predicated on controlling both the text of the revelation and the interpretation of that text, through the medium of the sunnah.

To allow the Qur'ān to be identified with the Torah would have several consequences for the authority of the emerging classical law schools. If the Torah contained the same information as did the Qur'ān, then it would be unnecessary to limit exegesis to the Qur'ān alone. The understanding of the sunnah as an interpretation of the revelation contained in the Qur'ān would be challenged by the existence of another record of the revelation, a record which had been studied for centuries before the coming of Muḥammad and the development of techniques of interpretation on the basis of the sunnah. By developing reasons to doubt the soundness of the extant text of the Torah and the methods or motives of the Jews in their interpretation of it, third and fourth century scholarship was able to maintain the privileged position of the Qur'ān. Provided such reasons, it would be possible to retain and explain the passages in the Qur'ān and the sunnah which seem to link Muḥammad and Moses or the Qur'ān and the Torah. The sunnah had been defined as the necessary and most authoritative interpretation of the text of the revelation. The Qur'ān, whatever its precise relationship to earlier revealed books, was defined as the most clear revelation of God's principles, relatively unaffected by faulty textual transmission, and guaranteed by the evidence of the sunnah as interpreted by the classical schools of law. It was the recognition of the theoretical implications of equating the text of the Qur'ān, as the source of Islamic law, with the Torah, that colored how later scholarship was to understand statements such as that of Waraḡah. Defined in this way as a source of Islamic law and the legal authority of the schools, the Qur'ān and its status as "canon" had to be distinguished from other revealed but no longer canonical books.

⁹⁸ The work of al-Jaṣṣāṣ [d. 370] is usually held up as the first work of its kind, although it seems that it is building on a long and growing tradition of attempts to define certain legal opinions as interpretations of passages from the Qur'ān.

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LA NAVIGATION MARITIME CHEZ LES ARABES À TRAVERS LES TEXTES DU CORAN ET LA POÉSIE ARABE

Résumé

UNE INTRODUCTION

Au Moyen-Age, la navigation maritime chez les Arabes n'était pas uniquement un moyen facilitant les échanges commerciaux mais aussi un instrument de transmission d'idées entre différentes civilisations. Cette tradition maritime n'est pas née avec la civilisation Arabo-musulmane mais ses traces anciennes se trouvent dans l'héritage des peuples de la presqu'île arabique. Ce sujet mérite une longue étude afin de couvrir ses différents aspects. La présente introduction se veut un aperçu modeste sur cette question au début de sa naissance, plus exactement tel que cela été décrit dans le Coran et par les poètes arabes.

Après une brève introduction, une liste non exhaustive de la terminologie des activités maritimes chez les Arabes est donnée.

La méthode utilisée pour extraire les citations du Coran consiste à sélectionner des mots-clés tels que mer, fleuve, bateau, barque, canot, navigation, pêche, noyade et sauvetage. Une recherche thématique autour de ces mots-clés est alors opérée grâce au logiciel « The Holy Quran Program » d'Al-Alamiah (Koweït). La souplesse de ce programme a permis de présenter une traduction des versets coraniques dans les deux langues française et anglaise.

La deuxième source où nous avons puisé l'information est la poésie pré-islamique (*les Mouallakat*) ainsi que dans certains poèmes du début de la civilisation arabe.

1. Introduction

Dans l'antiquité, la presqu'île arabique était en contact avec trois civilisations : l'Égyptienne au Nord-Ouest, la Mésopotamienne au Nord-Est et la Persane à l'Est. A cette époque, le Yémen et Oman étaient les régions les plus fertiles de la presqu'île et étaient en contact avec ces foyers de civilisation surtout par voie maritime. L'Égypte était connue par la construction de navires et ses bateaux sillonnaient la Méditerranée et la Mer Rouge. Au cours du règne de la 18^{ème} dynastie (1495 av. J.-C.) des bateaux égyptiens étaient parti pour une mission maritime scientifique vers le pays de Bont (la Somalie). Au retour en Égypte, ces bateaux étaient chargés de marchandises telles

¹ The Arab Fund for Economic & Social Development, P O Box 21923, Safat 13080, Kuwait