Moses in the Quran and Islamic Exegesis

Brannon M. Wheeler

MOSES IN THE QURAN AND ISLAMIC EXEGESIS

RoutledgeCurzon studies in the Quran

This work draws upon a host of late antique and medieval sources to examine selected Muslim exegeses of Moses in the Quran. The Muslim exegetical image of Moses in the Quran is linked with ancient Sumerian stories of Gilgamesh, various versions of the Alexander Romance (Ethiopic, Syriac, Persian), Aramaic translations of the Abraham story in Genesis, and rabbinic accounts of the Ten Lost Tribes in the Talmud and the Midrash. Muslim exegetes associate Moses with the Jacob story in Genesis, Dhu al-Qarnayn's visit to the cities at the ends of the Earth, and the Prophet Muhammad as caretaker in the garden of Eden. In doing so, the Muslim exegetes do not confuse and mistake earlier sources, but they intentionally use non-Quranic elements thick in Biblical allusions to delineate a particular image of Moses, the Torah, and the Israelites. It is an image of Moses, drawn in contrast to the Biblical and Jewish image of Moses, which the Muslim exegetes use to identify and authorize themselves as linked to the different image of the Prophet Muhammad. Using approaches from Biblical Studies, History of Religions, Folklore Studies, and Judeo-Arabic Studies, this book suggests how Muslim exegesis of the Quran is purposeful in its appropriation and adaptation of elements consonant with Jewish and Christian interpretation and theology of the Bible.

Brannon M. Wheeler is Associate Professor of Islamic Studies and Chair of Comparative Religion at the University of Washington, Seattle, where he is also Head of Comparative Islamic Studies. His research and teaching focus on Islamic Law, Quranic Studies and the History of Religions.

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This book grows out of a number of contexts which I look back upon now as a series of learning experiences that, with the completion of this book, have only reached a temporary resting point. It is my expectation that readers will respond to my arguments, and my hope that these will allow me to understand better the rich variety and constant wonders of Muslim exegesis.

My first venture into Moses and the Quran was in a graduate seminar at Vanderbilt University in 1994, reading Ibn Kathīr's commentary on Q 28:21–28. A student asked me about the rock on the well and how it might possibly be related to the story of Jacob and the well in Genesis. This question eventually led me to what is now Chapter 2 of this book. An earlier version of this chapter was presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in 1995 where I benefited from the comments of fellow panelists and the audience, especially from those of Khalid Blankenship and Mahmoud Ayoub.

Also in 1995, in my World Religions course at Pennsylvania State University, a student asked why Dhu al-Qarnayn and Abraham appeared together in the story of al-Khiḍr, which we were reading in English translation from al-Ṭabarī's history. At the same time I had been browsing through Ginzberg's *Legends of the Jews* when I came upon the stories of the three men and the purse, and the story of Elijah and Joshua b. Levi which seemed related to the Muslim exegesis on Q 18:60–82. Working through these interrelated issues also allowed me to spend time learning about the many recensions of the Alexander Romance, something I had wanted to do since reading short passages in Syriac and Ethiopic. The result of this research is Chapter 1 of this book. An earlier version of this was presented at the Middle East Center of the University of Pennsylvania in 1995 where I gained new perspectives from the comments of Barbara von Schlegell, Margaret Mills, and Everett Rowson. Earlier and different versions of parts of Chapter 1 were published in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 57 (1998): 191–215 and *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 118 (1998): 153–71.

Chapter 3 originated with my continued puzzlement over the relationship of Dhu al-Qarnayn and Abraham, and with my growing interest in how Muslim exegetes explain the revealed but non-canonical nature of the Bible. A seminar with a brilliant group of Comparative Religion graduate students in 1996 at the University of Washington allowed me to think through these issues in comparison with the Christian use of the Greek classics, and the complex layers of the Mahayana Buddhist canon. Research at the College of Shariah and Islamic Studies of Kuwait University in 1997 provided me additional insights, especially from my Kuwaiti colleagues. I was also fortunate to be invited to contribute to a lecture series on Jerusalem in the western religious traditions at the University of Washington in 1999, compelling me to think in a more focused and organized fashion about the interaction of Jewish and Muslim views of Abraham's sanctuaries and their relation to the history of the Israelites.

Researching Chapter 4 was the most fun of all, enabling me to return to some of the fantastic and often ignored traditions which first sparked my interest in the study of Islam. The Prophet Muhammad as Dhu al-Qarnayn was suggested to me by the work of Basil Lourie on the redemptive aspects of Alexander the Great in Ethiopic and Syriac legends, a concept that led to an article in a special edition of *Byzantino-rossica* devoted to Alexander the Great. The issue of the Lost Tribes, Eldad ha-Dani, and the Children of Moses came up in a graduate seminar on Hebrew and Arabic stories of Moses at the University of Washington in 1999. Tying these accounts with the stories of Hud and Salih was inspired by an earlier graduate seminar in 1998 on pre-Islamic Arab prophets and North Arabic inscriptions. My thoughts on the meaning of Alexander's quest for immortality were refined while teaching, wih Eugene Vance, the Medieval Colloquium for 2000 on Legends of Alexander the Great, a course which included students from a dozen disciplines and reading knowledge of 26 languages.

Time and support to finish the writing of this book were in part provided by a Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities through the American Research Center in Egypt during 2000. This was supplemented by generous support from the University of Washington, both from the College of Arts and Sciences, and from the Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities.

In addition to the many useful insights I have gained from students and colleagues over the course of my thinking, several colleagues read the completed manuscript of this book and have offered useful advice. Thanks to Miller Sherling for her careful reading, and the much appreciated expertise of Baruch Halpern, Gordon Newby, Fred Astren, and Andrew Rippin. Not all of their comments have been incorporated here, but any omissions merely leave the door open for future attempts to further my understanding of sometimes difficult texts and disciplines. I also thank my loving wife Deborah Wheeler who not only has thought through my work with me each step of the way, but has also inspired me with her own innovative work.

It should be noted that transliteration of Arabic words is according to the standard usage in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, except that the tā marbūṭa is indicated with "ah" in the final, nonconstruct position. Foreign words in square brackets are not italicized but are intended to indicate for specialists in certain cases the word being translated. Certain foreign words commonly used in English, such as "Quran" and "Torah," are used without transliteration throughout except when cited in titles. All citations in Quran commentaries are to sūrah and verse of Quran, and Quran citations are given according to the standard Egyptian edition. All citations in Biblical exegesis is to chapter and verse of the the Biblical book indicated. References to the original text of the Biblical exegesis of Ibn Ezra Rashi, Rashbam, and Ramban are to the texts as printed in the edition of the Miqra'ōt Gedōlōt cited below. Citations from Bukhārī, Muslim, Tirmidhī, Nasā'ī, Ibn Mājah, Abū Dāwūd, and Dārimī are made according to the system established by A.J. Wensinck.

INTRODUCTION

In his 1941 article "Koran and Agada: The Events at Mount Sinai," Julian Obermann makes the astute observation that many of the Quranic references to Moses parallel the Bible as they are intended to be direct criticisms of the Jews who rejected the Prophet Muhammad.

> In rebuking the Jews of his day for their failure to recognize him as the prophet of God, Mohammed often reminds them of their similar attitude of unbelief and rebellion against the prophets of former days, especially against Moses. These homilies of rebuke, addressed to the Jews and based on evidence from their own Scripture, form a literary feature of the Koran, particularly characteristic of the Medina suras. To be sure, Mohammed considers himself not the founder of a new religion but rather a protagonist of the age-old religion of the Book, the religion of Abraham and Moses.[1]

Obermann makes a number of assumptions and claims here which require further discussion, but most remarkable is his tying of Biblical parallels in the Quran to the objections of the Medinan Jews and the Prophet Muhammad's claim to revive the religion of Abraham and Moses.

Obermann goes further in contending that the Quranic passages addressed to the Jews of Medina are not only references to the Bible, but are redolent of specific interpretations of the Bible as found in Jewish exegesis.[2] As an example of this, Obermann cites a phrase attributed to the Israelites in Q 2:93 and to the Jews in Q 4:46.[3]

> **Q 2:93** When we took your covenant and raised the mountain above you: "Take firmly what you are given. Listen!" They said: "We hear and disobey." Their hearts had drunk of the calf in their disbelief...
>
> **Q 4:46** Of those who follow the Jews are those who alter words from their places, saying: "We hear and disobey," and "Hear without being heard," and "Our evil one!" twisting their tongues and slandering religion.

> If only they had said: "We hear and obey," and "Listen!" and "Look after us," it would have been better for them and more upright. But God cursed them because of their disbelief and only a few of them believed.

The phrase "we hear and we believe" is also found as a statement of Muslim belief in Q 2:285, 5:7, and 24:51, underlining the interpretation that the Israelites and Jews said the opposite of what they were supposed to have said. Obermann points out that this correct phrase closely parallels what is said by the Israelites in Deuteronomy 5:27 and Exodus 24:7, but there does not appear to be a obvious Biblical precedent for the Israelites responding with the opposite as in Q 2:93 and 4:46.

Earlier attempts to explain these parallels had argued that the "hear and disobey" in Q 2:93 and 4:46 originated as a misunderstanding of the Hebrew words in Deuteronomy 5:27 and Exodus 24:7. In his study of the Quran, H. Hirschfeld proposes that the Prophet Muhammad mistook the Hebrew "do/obey" [ʿasā] for the Arabic "disobey" [ʿaṣā], the difference being the substitution of the "ṣād" in Arabic for the "sīn" of the Hebrew word, thus understanding the Biblical word as "we disobey."[4] Obermann objects to this explanation, in part, on the grounds that it ignores the context of Q 4:46 where the phrase is said to be altered, and Q 5:13 where the Israelites are accused of changing words from their places, indicating that the change from "obey" to "disobey" is to be considered intentional.[5] Instead, Obermann refers to some of the rabbinic exegesis of Deuteronomy 5:27, Exodus 24:7, Psalm 78:36–37, and Proverb 24:28 where the Israelites are faulted for saying "we hear and we obey" one day and worshipping the golden calf the next.[6] Commenting on the fact that Exodus 24:7 has "we do and we hear" rather than "we hear and we do", other rabbinic exegesis preserves a comment that the Israelites were an impetuous people who put their tongues before their ears, who should have "heard" before being in a position to "do."[7]

Obermann makes a strong case for seeing the "we hear and we disobey" phrase of Q 2:93 and 4:46 not as based directly upon the Bible, but as an allusion to the Jewish exegesis of the "hear and obey" phrase and its permutations in Deuteronomy 5:27, Exodus 24:7 and other contexts. But, in his focus on the attempt to identify these allusions as evidence of the Quran's derivation from Jewish exegesis, Obermann produces a problematic and not entirely coherent image of the Prophet Muhammad and his relationship to the Quran. Obermann maintains that the Prophet Muhammad was illiterate and could only speak Arabic.[8] The Quran is a result of the Prophet Muhammad's accumulation and application of "agadic" materials, apparently without a full understanding of their meaning or significance. That certain passages in the Quran contain technical terminology from Aramaic and a detailed awareness of Bible exegesis is explained by a combination of the Prophet Muhammad's "oriental memory" and ingenuity.[9] That the Prophet Muhammad was able to understand, employ, and make puns with Hebrew words is explained by the "wishful mishearing" of the Prophet Muhammad.[10] Obermann takes this identification of origins to the extent that he postulates non-extant

Jewish sources in the case of Quran passages which have no clearly identifiable Biblical or Jewish exegetical precedent.[11]

Unfortunately, Obermann misses entirely the significance of Muslim exegesis in the explanation of these Quran verses and their identification as allusions to Biblical and rabbinic exegesis. Although the text of Q 4:46 indicates that it is the Jews to whom the passage refers, the supposed context of the passage, and to whom which words were addressed is only evident from Muslim exegesis of the passage.[12] Taken by itself, Q 4:46 could be interpreted as it has been by Obermann, understanding the "altering of words" as a reference to the three phrases in the verse. Ibn Kathīr, however, remarks that the Jews were addressing the three phrases of Q 4:46 to the Prophet Muhammad because they would not acknowledge what they had received from earlier prophets concerning the coming of the Prophet Muhammad.[13] On the authority of Mujāhid, it is reported that the "words" which the Jews altered from their places refers not to the three phrases in Q 4:46, but to the references in the Torah which described the Prophet Muhammad.[14] In his exegesis of Q 4:46, al-Ṭabarsī notes that the phrase "Our evil one! [rā'i-nā]" and its juxtaposition to "Look after us! [unẓur-nā]" also occurs in Q 2:104 where it is also supposed to be addressed to the Prophet Muhammad.[15]

Also unfortunate is Obermann's assignment of all Biblical allusions in the Quran to be "borrowings" from Jewish interpretation of the Bible. The recognition by Muslim exegetes of many parallels between the Quran and the Bible shows an expectation that such parallels would or should be perceived by certain Jews as allusions to their own tradition of Bible interpretation. Muslim exegesis does link Q 4:46 with Q 2:93, making a parallel between the Israelites' refusal to follow the Torah and the altering of the Torah by the Jews of Medina to delete references acknowledging the Prophet Muhammad. This parallel is furthered, according to some exegetes, by the fact that the Prophet Muhammad knew through revelation, as he knew of Biblical references, that the phrase "Our evil one!" was to be understood as a bi-lingual pun, with the Arabic meaning "Shepherd us!" as opposed to the "Our evil one!" of the Hebrew.[16] With his insistence on the Jewish origins of the Quran, Obermann misses that some of the sharpest criticism of the Jews' rejection of the Prophet Muhammad comes from Muslim exegesis that draws upon but deviates significantly from Jewish interpretation of the Bible. Often, Muslim exegesis parallels polemical Christian interpretation of the Old Testament, makes reference to wide-spread ancient and late antique myths, and incorporates local and autochthonous elements in its explication of the Quran. To understand Biblical allusions in the Quran is not only to identify to what these things were supposed to allude and to whom they were addressed, but it is to see how Muslims understood these allusions to function in polemic and their own self-definition.

Quran and Bible

Obermann's claim that the Biblical allusions in the Quran are derived from Jewish sources is consonant with the bulk of other theories regarding the relationship of

the Quran and the Bible, many of which involve perspectives and assumptions not always made explicit.[17] With few exceptions, much of this scholarship has sought to show that the Quran is derivative, countering the Muslim claim that the Quran is revealed. Muslim exegesis of the Quran, and especially its relation to the Bible, is analogous to what occurred, and continues to occur to some degree, in so-called "Old Testament Theology" in its attempts to identify the kerygmatic or non-abrogated portions of the Jewish Bible and justify its inclusion in the Christian canon.[18] The Quran is outside of the Jewish and Christian canons, though it overlaps both considerably. Whether it is openly acknowledged or not, this overlap presents a challenge to the exclusivity of the Biblical text just as Old Testament Theology challenges the notion of a Jewish Bible exclusive of the Gospel. To label certain elements of the Quran as having been "borrowed" is to invoke the notion that these elements "belong" to an earlier text or tradition, and are thus "stolen" by a later tradition that refused to acknowledge the rightful owners of these elements.

More recent scholarship has attempted to eschew some of these associations and implications, but has not always been disengaged entirely from the search for the Jewish and Christian origins of the Quran. Indeed, this sort of genealogical approach has not been uncommon in the more general study of religion, nor is the connection between the study of the Bible and the study of religion incidental.[19] One of these more recent approaches is the work of Reuven Firestone on the evolution of the Abraham–Ishmael legends in Islamic exegesis.[20] Moving away from earlier attempts to locate the "Urtext" of the Quran and Muslim exegesis, Firestone relies on the findings of anthropologists and folklorists concerning orality and the character of oral transmission in certain societies.[21] Similar to Obermann, Firestone suggests that many of the Biblical stories and their interpretations by Jews and Christians may have been known to early Muslims in oral form. But unlike Obermann, Firestone is careful to qualify this reconstruction by stating that it was the Muslim exegetes and not the Quran itself which drew upon these oral sources in their treatment of Quranic materials parallel to the Bible.[22] In addition, Firestone asserts that these stories probably entered the Arabian peninsula long before the revelation of the Quran and its early interpretation, and were adapted to this environment in the process of their oral transmission.[23]

In putting forward a more complex theory for the origins of the Quran and its exegesis, Firestone also avoids the issue of agency, and tends to discount the significance of differences separating Muslim exegesis and accounts found in Jewish sources.

> When the Jews of Medina criticize Muḥammad for reciting legends which they consider inaccurate, they call our attention to the probability that by virtue of their oral nature, the legends Muḥammad faithfully retold had evolved to the point that they no longer corresponded well to the written versions known to educated Rabbinite Jews in the Bible and the Midrash.[24]

Any differences between the Quran and the Bible are to be explained as the natural consequence of a protracted period of oral transmission and acculturation or "Arabization" of the Biblical materials.[25] Firestone's view is, in part, due to his reliance on the literary critical theory of "intertextuality" which favors the anonymity of the presupposition of intertextual dependence.[26] It seems also that such a view has not entirely abandoned the notion of the Prophet Muhammad as simply repeating, however indirectly, Jewish interpretations of the Bible.

Another recent attempt to address the issue of the relationship between Jewish interpretations of the Bible and Muslim exegesis of the Quran is the penetrating work of Jacob Lassner on the accounts of the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon.[27] Lassner employs the term "Islamizing" to refer to what he characterizes as the transfer and absorption of Jewish cultural artefacts by Muslim exegetes.[28] More so than Firestone, Lassner focuses on the differences separating the Jewish and Muslim accounts of the same stories, and attributes a consciousness and purpose to the Muslim manipulation of artefacts supposed to be of Jewish origins. For example, Lassner argues that the Muslim exegetes conflate the Biblical advisor to Solomon, Benaiah b. Jehoiada, with Asaph, one of the Levite singers who in 1 Chronicles 15–16 is responsible for bringing the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem in the time of David.[29] Asaph is also closely associated with the Psalms, being the only person beside David, identified in Psalms 50 and 73–83, as a composer of Psalms. The Muslim Āṣaf b. Barkhiyā is identified as the one who has "knowledge of the book" mentioned in Q 27:40, and it is from the Psalms that Solomon is supposed to have prophesied the future coming of the Prophet Muhammad during his visit to Mecca. Lassner thus suggests that the Muslim exegetes highlighted certain Biblical and Jewish exegetical allusions in their conflation of Asaph and Benaiah, and the link of this character with Q 27:40.[30]

This sharper focus on the intention of the Muslim exegetes in their use and adaptation of Biblical and Jewish materials is linked to Lassner's attention to the identification of the audience to which Muslim exegetes saw their interpretations directed. As does Obermann, Lassner contends that the Muslim allusion to the Bible is to be seen in the polemical context of the rejection of the Prophet Muhammad by the Jews of Medina. By making the Prophet Muhammad's claims to be consistent with the Bible, Muslim exegetes make the Jews' rejection of the Prophet Muhammad to be a rejection of their own scripture. According to Lassner, though, this polemic, as recounted by the Muslim exegetes, was not necessarily intended for the conversion of Jews but rather was used by Muslims to legitimize their own self-definition.[31] Lassner is careful to include in his analysis of shared cultural materials the "re-entering" of Islamized artefacts into Jewish tradition.[32] The Muslim exegetical use of Biblical elements against the Jewish denial of the Prophet Muhammad also incited Jewish attempts at self-definition, drawing upon the same, shared set of cultural traditions as the Muslim exegetes.[33]

Although the works of Firestone and Lassner are still interested in tracing the processes by which Jewish and Christian materials are incorporated into Muslim exegesis, these studies demonstrate some of the significant shifts which have

occurred in recent studies on the relationship of the Quran and Bible. Helpful is the shift of focus from the Quran to its exegesis, the shift from a model of borrowing to intertextuality, and the shift toward attributing purpose and intention to the Muslim exegetical use of and allusion to Biblical passages and Jewish interpretation. The theory that Muslim appropriation of Biblical tradition was part of a mutual process of self-definition, for both Muslims and Jews, is further refined in the model of "symbiosis" as employed in the work of Steven Wasserstrom.[34] According to Wasserstrom, Muslims and Jews drew upon a shared set of cultural symbols to imagine themselves and the other. The attempts both of Muslims to challenge the Jews with what they perceived to be the Jews' own traditions, and of Jews to assert the legitimacy of their own interpretations of those traditions represent native strategies for self-authorization.[35] This mutual self-definition is not about assigning origins to the shared symbols, but about how they are used differently to establish distinct but overlapping identities, and how this use leads in turn to a larger cache of shared symbols.[36]

The notion that Muslim exegetes authorized their own position in contest with Jews over the interpretation of certain shared or parallel texts underlines the link between interpretation and authority. Recent studies on the rôle of "reading" in religion have argued for a more instrumental definition of commentary, one that eschews the dichotomy between an "original" text and a secondary explanation tied to the inherent language of the text.[37] To interpret is to remember a text, to establish one's connection to and mastery of a precedent, and to modify the precedent in ways that, by the very nature of its novelty, exclude earlier memory of it.[38] By drawing upon and highlighting Biblical parallels and allusions in the Quran, Muslim exegetes demonstrate how the Prophet Muhammad fulfills and supersedes what came before, and establish their own status as the representatives of this supersession. The Muslim exegetes capitalize on the question of how the authority of the Prophet Muhammad is predicated on the Bible, and as such the study of Quran interpretation involves how the Muslim exegetes read the Quran vis-à-vis the Bible, and the Bible vis-à-vis the Quran.

Moses in the Quran

Although it has been recognized, at least since Obermann, that many of the most obvious and pointed of the Biblical parallels in the Quran occur in the stories of Moses, there have been few attempts to study these passages and their interpretation in Muslim exegesis.[39] This is particularly striking given the large portion of the Quran which the Moses stories occupy, and the importance of Moses as a prophetic figure in Muslim exegesis. Unlike the stories associated with many other figures in the Quran, relatively long stories associated with Moses are to be found throughout the Quran. By piecing together discrete segments from different sūrahs, Muslim exegetes are able to reconstruct the Moses story familiar from the Bible: the birth of Moses, Midian, his call, dealings with Pharaoh, the revelation of the Torah, the episode of the Golden Calf, and the story of Korah. These close parallels

have prompted many scholars to see the Quran as dependent upon Jewish and Christian sources, but there has been scant attention paid to how the image of Moses in the Quran figures in Muslim self-definition and polemic against Jews or Christians.

Of all the Moses stories in the Quran, Q 18:60–82 stands out with a number of unusual features. Puzzling are the references to the lost fish in verses 61 and 63, the "meeting place of the two waters" in verses 60–61, the unidentified servant of Moses who disappears after verse 65, and the mysterious "servant of God" in verses 65–82.

> **Q 18:60** When Moses said to his servant: "I will not stop until I reach the meeting place of the two waters, or I will continue forever." **61** When they reached the meeting place of the two waters, they forgot their fish. It took its way into the water by a passage. **62** When they passed onward, he [Moses] said to his servant: "Bring our lunch, for we have reached a stage in this journey of ours." **63** He [the servant] said: "Did you see, when we took refuge at the rock? I forgot the fish. I would not have forgotten to mention it except for Satan. It took its way into the water by a wonder." **64** He [Moses] said: "This is what we were seeking." So they retraced their steps. **65** They found one of our [God's] servants to whom we had given mercy from us, and to whom we had taught knowledge from us.
>
> **66** Moses said to him: "May I follow you, on the condition that you teach me that right-guidance you have been taught?" **67** He [the servant of God] said: "You will not be able to be patient with me. **68** "How can you be patient concerning that which your experience does not encompass?" **69** He [Moses] said: "You will find me patient, God willing. I will not disobey you in anything." **70** He [the servant of God] said: "If you follow me, then do not ask about anything until I speak something of it to you."
>
> **71** They set out and were riding on a boat when he [the servant of God] scuttled it. He [Moses] said: "Did you scuttle it in order to drown those on it? You have done something stupid." **72** He [the servant of God] said: "Did I not say that you would not be patient with me?" **73** He [Moses] said: "Do not blame me for what I forgot, nor oppress me with difficulty because of my word." **74** They set out and met a boy when he [the servant of God] killed him. He [Moses] said: "Did you kill an innocent who has not killed anyone else? You have done something vile." **75** He [the servant of God] said: "Did I not say that you would not be patient with me?" **76** He [Moses] said: "If I ask you about anything after this, do not allow me to accompany you. You will have a good excuse from me." **77** They set out and came to the people of a city and asked this people for some food, but they [the people] refused them hospitality. They found in the city a wall which was about to fall down. He [the

> servant of God] set it up straight. He [Moses] said: "If you had wanted, you could have taken pay for that." **78** He [the servant of God] said: "This is the parting between you and me. I will tell you the interpretation of that about which you were not able to be patient. **79** "As for the boat, it belonged to poor people who worked the water, and I intended to damage it for behind them was a king who was taking every boat by force. **80** "As for the boy, his parents were believers and feared that he would cause them difficulty through rebellion and disbelief. **81** "I intended that their Lord would give them a substitute, better than he [the first son] in purity and closer in mercy. **82** "As for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city. Under it was a treasure which belonged to them. Their father had been upright. Your Lord intended that they should reach maturity and then remove their treasure, a mercy from your Lord. I did not do it of my own accord. This is the interpretation of that about which you were not able to be patient."

Western scholars have remarked that these verses do not seem to have a Biblical parallel as do most of the other Moses stories in the Quran. Muslim exegetes, however, interpret these verses as linked to a number of specific Biblical contexts and integral to developing a Quran-based critique of certain Jewish and Christian conceptions of Moses.

The following is a study of selected Muslim exegesis of Q 18:60–82 and related passages, emphasizing how Muslim exegetes link Q 18:60–82 with the stories of Gilgamesh, Alexander the Great and the water of life, the account of Moses at Midian in Q 28:21–28, Abraham's establishment of the sanctuary at Mecca, Dhu al-Qarnayn's visit to the cities at the ends of the Earth, and the Prophet Muhammad as caretaker in the garden of Eden. Each of the chapters focuses on a different aspect of how Muslim exegesis drew an image of Moses from the Quran related to these verses, one that stressed both the connection and the distinction between Moses and the Prophet Muhammad. Chapter 1 begins with Q 18:60–82, focusing on the Muslim exegetical use of the "lost fish," the "servant of God," and the identification of Dhu al-Qarnayn in verses 83–101. Chapter 2 shows how the exegesis of Moses at Midian in Q 28:21–28 identifies Moses with the Israelites through his conflation with Jacob, and uses the identification of Jethro and Shu'ayb to highlight a split in the prophetic line issuing through the sons of Abraham. Chapter 3 examines how Muslim exegetes used the story of Abraham's establishment of the Meccan sanctuary, and the location of this story in the Bible, to further distinguish Moses and Jerusalem from the Prophet Muhammad and Mecca. Chapter 4 follows the Muslim claim to the lost chosen status of the Israelites in the exegesis of Q 7:159, and the visit of the Prophet Muhammad to the lost Children of Moses during his Night Journey and Ascension.

These chapters demonstrate that Muslim exegesis draws upon and makes allusions to motifs, characters and stories found in a wide variety of late antique

and medieval sources. In doing so, the exegetes do not confuse and mistake earlier sources, but they intentionally use non-Quranic elements thick in Biblical allusions to delineate a particular image of Moses, the Torah, and the Israelites. It is an image of Moses, drawn in contrast to the Biblical and Jewish image of Moses, that the Muslim exegetes use to identify and authorize themselves as linked to the different image of the Prophet Muhammad. This study suggests, for a limited case, how Muslim exegesis of the Quran is purposeful in its appropriation and adaptation of elements consonant with Jewish and Christian interpretation of the Bible.

1

Q 18:60–82

Q 18:60–82 stands out among all the Moses stories in the Quran. Commenting on these verses, Muslim exegetes generally follow the story attributed to Ubayy b. Ka'b, transmitted by Ibn 'Abbās or Wahb b. Munabbih,[1] which identifies the unnamed "servant of God" as "al-Khiḍr" from whom Moses attempts to learn about God's justice.[2] This account describes how God chides Moses for his claim to be the most knowledgeable of people, and how God tells him it is al-Khiḍr who has greater and more esoteric knowledge than anyone else. Moses sets out with Joshua to find al-Khiḍr, following the sign of the fish, and then accompanies al-Khiḍr on the events laid out in Q 18:66–82.

Arent Jan Wensinck has argued that verses 66–82 are borrowed from the "Jewish legend" of Rabbi Joshua b. Levi and Elijah.[3] Wensinck, followed by others, also asserts that verses 60–65 are dependent upon stories from the Alexander Romance and the Epic of Gilgamesh. A closer analysis of the sources called upon by Wensinck and others demonstrates, however, that there is no evidence to make Q 18:60–82 dependent on a particular Jewish or Christian source. This type of earlier scholarship does not make an adequate distinction between the information contained in the Quran and what is said by the Muslim exegetes about these verses. Such an approach understands the Quran and its exegesis to be confused versions of stories borrowed from earlier Jewish and Christian sources. It ignores the possibility that the Muslim exegetes might, for their own purposes, appropriate motifs and conflate characters from extra-Quranic sources.

The following pages examine selected exegesis on Q 18:60–82 with special attention to the purposeful interpretive strategies of the Muslim exegetes in appropriating extra-Quranic motifs and characters to their own agenda. Each of the three sections focuses on particular details from Q 18:60–82 as treated by the Muslim exegetes, and as interpreted by earlier Western scholarship. This analysis shows how previous scholarship, in its assumptions about the derivation of the Quran and lack of distinction between the Quran and its exegesis, misses the opportunity to discern the intent of Muslim exegetes in their use of extra-Quranic materials. A more discerning look at the exegesis of such details as the "lost fish" and the journey to the ends of the Earth, shows how Muslim exegesis can be seen to be incorporating these extra-Quranic materials purposefully. The Muslim

exegetes seem to have used these details to conflate the Moses of Q 18:60–82 with the character of Dhu al-Qarnayn taken from both Q 18:83–101 and from stories associated with Alexander the Great and Gilgamesh. This conflation allows the Muslim exegesis of Q 18:60–101 to identify Moses with a number of other contexts and figures in the Quran, including Jacob and the Israelites, Abraham, and the Prophet Muhammad.

The lost fish

Probably the most influential theory regarding the lost fish and journey to the ends of the Earth in Q 18:60–65 is that put forward by A.J. Wensinck, linking these verses to the Alexander Romance and the Epic of Gilgamesh.[4] Both of these stories, according to Wensinck, feature a hero, whether Alexander or Gilgamesh, who is supposed to go on a quest to find immortality or alternately a being who is immortal. In the Alexander stories, Alexander's cook accidentally stumbles across the spring of life when a dried fish he is washing comes to life and swims away. This is taken to be the incident upon which Q 18:63 is dependent when it mentions the fish that escapes in a remarkable manner. In the Gilgamesh epic, Gilgamesh searches for and finds Utnapishtim, an immortal being who lives at the mouth of the rivers. Utnapishtim is regarded to be what is behind the mysterious "servant of God" in Q 18:65, and the "mouth of the rivers" is supposed to be reflected in the "junction of the two waters" [majma' al-baḥrayn] mentioned in Q 18:60 and 61.

The linchpin of any explanation attempting to link Q 18:60–65 with Alexander is the identification of the "fish" in Q 18:61 and 63 with the dried fish, in certain versions of the Alexander stories, that comes to life when Alexander's cook washes it in the spring of life. A link between the Alexander stories and Q 18:60–82 was first suggested by Mark Lidzbarski and Karl Dyroff in 1892,[5] and was subsequently developed almost twenty years later by Karl Vollers,[6] and Richard Hartmann,[7] and culminated in the monographic work of Israel Friedländer in 1913.[8] Before Friedländer's work, however, the association of the Alexander stories with Q 18:60–82 was based on the presence of "al-Khiḍr" in the Arabic, Ethiopic, and Persian versions of Alexander stories.[9] These scholars interpreted Q 18:60–64 in light of the identification of the "servant of God" with al-Khiḍr in Q 18:65–82, and thus the association of al-Khiḍr with Alexander.

There is a Syriac version of the Alexander stories that has been variously dated from the sixth to the tenth centuries C.E. The Syriac version was first roughly dated to the ninth or tenth centuries by E.A.W. Budge who argued that, on the basis of the spelling of proper names and vocabulary, the Syriac text was a translation of an Arabic original. This is a difficult position to maintain, given that only fragments remain of the Arabic versions of the Alexander stories. Theodor Nöldeke dated the Syriac version to the late sixth century, arguing that the spelling and vocabulary indicate not an Arabic but a Pahlavi original.[10] Nöldeke's dating is based, on the one hand, on the assumption that the bulk of Pahlavi literature appeared in the fifth and sixth centuries. On the other hand, the *terminus ad*

quem of Nöldeke is based on the contention that Pahlavi was not widely known after the sixth century. Aside from the dating, it is imperative to recognize that the fish episode, which is the key factor in both Friedländer and Wensinck's argument that Q 18:60–64 is derived from the Alexander stories, does not occur in the Syriac version. The origin of the fish episode, according to Friedländer, is a passage from a sermon on Alexander by Jacob of Serugh.

The sermon on Alexander by Jacob of Serugh, in which the fish episode is present, is dated to the early part of the sixth century on the basis of Jacob of Serugh's death in 521.[11] Lines 170–197 describe how an old man tells Alexander to command his cook to take a salted fish and wash it at every spring of water he finds. When the fish comes to life, the old man explains, the cook will have found the water of life. The sermon then goes on to tell how the cook is washing the fish in a spring when it comes to life and swims away. The cook, fearing Alexander would want the fish back, jumps into the water to retrieve the fish and gains immortality himself.[12]

It should be noted that there is an Alexander story in the Babylonian Talmud that involves a salted fish. The story, found in Tamīd 32a–32b describes how Alexander posed to the "elders of the south country" a number of philosophical questions. After some questions, Alexander proposes to go to Africa, but is told that the "mountains of darkness" are in the way. Alexander sets out and comes to a place with only women who teach Alexander wisdom. As he leaves, Alexander sits by a well and begins to eat. He takes out some salted fish and washes them in the well upon which they give off a sweet odor. Alexander declares that this means that the water of the well comes from the garden of Eden. Alexander then follows the water to the garden of Eden and is given an eyeball which is heavier than all of his silver and gold.[13] This story has several elements which have parallels in other Alexander stories, like Alexander's meeting the Amazons, and the gift of the heavy stone. It is significant, however, that although the fish in this story is salted, it does not come back to life nor does it escape.

The closest parallel to the fish episode is to be found in some of the Greek versions of the Alexander stories.[14] The story, not found in recension α,[15] occurs in recension β usually dated sometime between recension α and recension λ and manuscript L, these latter two difficult to date earlier than the middle of the sixth century.[16] In the Greek recension β [II.39], the fish episode is much shorter than in other recensions. It describes how Alexander and his party arrive at a water source surrounded by rushes. Alexander asks his cook to bring him some food. The cook washes a salted fish in the water source at which point the fish escapes into the water, but the cook does not tell anyone about the fish.[17] In recension λ, manuscript L, and recension γ dated no earlier than the seventh century,[18] the cook is also described as taking some of the water of life in a silver vessel and giving some to Alexander's daughter.[19] In all of the Greek recensions, the cook finds the spring of life by accident in contrast with Alexander's instructions in Jacob of Serugh's sermon that the cook use the fish as an indication that he had found the spring of life.

Based on the dates alone, it is possible that the fish story in the Quran could be derived from the fish episode in Jacob of Serugh's sermon. According to

Friedländer, the entire story associated with Moses and al-Khiḍr in the exegesis on Q 18:60–65 is taken from the Alexander romance.[20] The character identified as Moses in the Quran is Alexander. Alexander's cook who finds the water of life and becomes immortal is made into two different characters, both the "servant" of Moses of Q 18:61–64 and the mysterious servant of God of Q 18:65. The exegetes' identification of the servant of God with al-Khiḍr, according to Friedländer, is an attempt to explain the third character in the story. Wensinck's theory about the fish episode is close to that of Friedländer with one notable exception. Wensinck rejects the notion that the two servants are the same character and the exclusive identification of Alexander's cook with al-Khiḍr but he endorses the identification of the cook and Moses' servant along with the fish from the two stories. To support the identification of Alexander's cook and Moses' servant, Wensinck further adduces that the Arabic term "fatā," used for Moses' servant is more consistent with an appellation for Alexander's cook.[21] For Wensinck, this shows that Q 18:60–65 is dependent on the Alexander romance rather than Ibn Shāhīn's story of Joshua b. Levi from which he claims Q 18:66–82 is derived.[22]

There are a number of reservations against the identity of the "fish" in the Alexander romance and Q 18:61 and 63. The identity of the two fish is itself problematic. While the story in Q 18:60–65 has in common with the fish episode in Jacob of Serugh's sermon a fish whose escape is either made or noticed just before it is eaten, and the mention of some unusual water, it is not necessary to equate the two stories.[23] Given the information in the Quran alone, it is uncertain that the fish in 18:61 and 63 was dead and escaped by being brought back to life in the water of life. Q 18:61 states that the two people, presumably Moses and his companion, forgot their fish which took its way into the water. Q 18:63 likewise states that the fish took its way into the water. In neither case is there an indication, first, that the fish was dead and, second, that if it were dead its escape was due to its contact with the water of life. Even if it is assumed that the fish was dead and escaped by coming back to life, there is no indication in verses 61 or 63 that this resurrection took place on account of the fish coming into contact with the water of life. In fact, in verse 63 Moses' companion states that the fish escaped while he and Moses were taking refuge on a rock.

Another possible allusion to the fish in Q 18:61 and 63 is the fish upon which it is said that God created the Earth. There are a number of reports found in al-Ṭabarī [839–923] and Ibn al-Jawzī [1116–1201].[24] The report of al-Suddī given by Ibn al-Jawzī is an example of this story.

> al-Suddī reported on the authority of his teachers that: smoke emerged from the water. It was high above the water so it was called the sky. Then the water was caused to dry up and it was made into a single land mass. It was rent into pieces and made into seven land masses. The land mass was created upon the fish [ḥūt], fish [nūn]. The fish is in the water and the water is on top of some stones, the stones on top of an angel, the angel on top of a rock, and the rock in the wind.[25]

The association of the fish in this story with the creation of the world, and in particular with the rock and the water could be seen as parallels to the forgetting of the fish on the rock and the meeting place or origin of the waters mentioned in Q 18:60–65.[26] In several of the versions of this story given by al-Ṭabarī the word for fish is given as *nūn* as an allusion to the letter "nūn" at the beginning of sūrat al-Qalam (68:1), the "pen." This allusion is designed to explain the existence of the letter "nūn" at the beginning of the sūrah, being that both the fish and the pen were involved in the creation of the world.[27] The version cited above, transmitted by al-Suddī and, in another version by Mūsā b. Hārūn al-Hamdānī, however, uses the word *ḥūt* to refer to the fish upon which the world was created. This term is not uncommon, but is used in the Quran only in relation to the fish that takes Jonah,[28] and in relation to the fish with Moses. There is an interesting parallel to the Jonah story in the Alexander stories in which Alexander descends underwater in a diving bell and is swallowed by a large fish. When Alexander is spit up on the shore he vows to give up attempting to do the impossible.[29] al-Ṭabarī reports an interpretation of the fish episode, attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās, in which Moses is told to go to the sea and find a fish on the shore, at the disappearance of which al-Khiḍr will be found.[30] In this interpretation, the water is identified as the ocean and the fish as something that has been washed ashore. Whether or not the fish in the Moses story could be related to notions of this large or primordial fish, given the sparse information provided in Q 18:61 and 63, it is conceivable that the fish is not related to the cook and the fish episode from the Alexander stories.

More problematic for identifying Q 18:60–65 with the Alexander stories is the tendency to confuse the information given in the Quran with its interpretation in the commentaries. In the case of the fish episode, Wensinck and others have not paid close enough attention both to the variety within the early exegesis, and to the development of the explanations of Q 18:60–65 from earlier to later exegesis. For example, Q 18:61 states that the fish escapes taking its way *sarab-an*. The term "sarab-an" has been understood as describing the fish's escape as a "miracle" in most translations of this verse.[31] That the fish escaped by a miracle would be consistent with this episode being taken from the Alexander romance where the fish, having been dead is brought back to life by the water of life and swims away. This understanding of the fish's escape is at odds with that of the earliest exegesis. In his *Jāmiʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, for example, al-Ṭabarī lists three explanations of how "sarab-an" describes the fish's escape, all of which are reported on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās or by Ibn ʿAbbās on the authority of Ubayy b. Kaʿb from the Prophet Muhammad.[32] The first explanation claims that the fish took its way through a rock passage which Moses later discovered and followed to reach al-Khiḍr.[33] The second says that wherever the fish swam the water became solid like rock and Moses was able to walk over the water to an island on which he met al-Khiḍr.[34] The third explanation states that the fish made its way across dry land only until it reached the water.[35] In all three explanations, it is assumed that "sarab-an" modifies not the verb *ittakhadha* but the direct object [mafʿūl bi-hi] "his way [sabīla-hu]," describing the state of the path when taken by the fish.[36]

These different explanations, recorded by al-Ṭabarī in the early tenth century, show the variety of interpretations given to Q 18:60–65 in the early Muslim community.[37] There is also little indication that Q 18:60–65 was initially identified with the Alexander stories, except in two reports that reflect an attempt to link the fish in the Quran with the fish episode from the Alexander stories. Yūnus, on the authority of Ibn Wahb, on the authority of Ibn Zayd states that Moses exclaimed "how remarkable" ['ajab-an] because the fish, some of which had been eaten, was whole again and alive in the water.[38] In his *Ta'rīkh*, al-Ṭabarī mentions a report heard from Ibn 'Abbās that the fish Moses' companion had was salted, and that it came to life when it touched the water at the rock which was the water of life.[39] It is important to note that this last interpretation, which closely parallels the fish episode in the Alexander stories, is given as only one among many explanations, most of which are attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, for the fish episode in Q 18:60–65. This interpretation, in so far as it parallels the Alexander stories, must also be distinguished from the information given in the Quran itself. The report of Ibn 'Abbās is neither the only nor the "original" interpretation of the passage, but rather it is an attempt to make an association between the Quran and otherwise extra-Quranic stories.

In later exegesis, the various explanations of the fish episode in Q 18:60–65 are replaced with a more developed version of the story attributed to Ibn 'Abbās which parallels the fish episode in the Alexander stories. For example, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī [1150–1202] writes that the fish's resurrection was intended to be a sign to Moses that he had reached the meeting place of the two waters. The fish carried by Joshua was salted and came back to life when it touched the water at the meeting place of the two waters, the water of life which flows from a spring in the garden of Eden.[40] The meeting place of the two waters is assumed to be two rivers rather than ocean waters, and the miraculous escape of the fish is no longer seen to be guiding Moses through the water to his meeting with al-Khiḍr, but rather only an indication that al-Khiḍr could be found at the rock next to the water. Ibn Kathīr [1300–1373] has the same basic story although he retains the three explanations given by al-Ṭabarī for how "sarab-an" describes the fish's escape.[41] The explanations given in this later exegesis show that, over time, Q 18:60–65 became increasingly identified with the fish episode in the Alexander stories. It seems that by the twelfth century, possibly as early as the eleventh based on the evidence of the Persian recensions of the Alexander stories, exegetes understood Q 18:60–65 to be an allusion to the Alexander stories.

That the identification of the lost fish with the Alexander stories was not immediate with the earliest exegesis of Q 18:60–65 but did become the dominant explanation suggests the development of an interpretive strategy among Muslim exegetes. This is evinced both in the elimination of multiple explanations and in the elaboration of the fish episode and its links to more involved versions of the Alexander stories. It is also evident from the incorporation of details from the exegesis of Q 18:60–65 into the adaptation and recension of the Pseudo-Callisthenes Alexander Romance in Arabic, Persian, and Ethiopic.

The evolution of this exegesis shows a growing consciousness on the part of the exegetes as to the usefulness of the association of the lost fish in Q 18:60–65 with the Alexander stories.

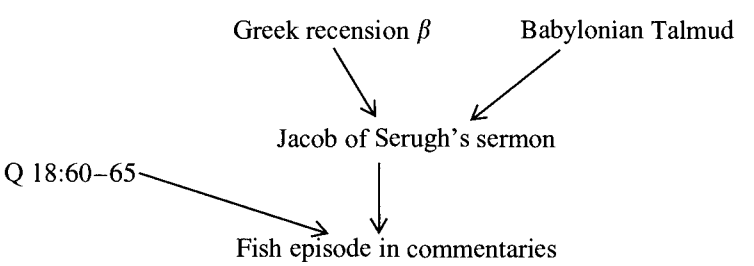
The association of Q 18:60–65 with the Alexander stories is, in part, due to the identification of *Dhu al-Qarnayn*, commonly understood as "the one having two horns," mentioned in Q 18:83–101, as Alexander the great. As is the case with the fish episode, it is not certain that the earliest explanations for Dhu al-Qarnayn identified the figure as Alexander.[42] One possibility is that Dhu al-Qarnayn refers to the Lakhmīd ruler al-Mundhir al-Akbar III [r. 506–554], who supposedly killed the poet 'Abīd b. al-Abraṣ and put Abū Du'ād al-Iyādī in charge of his horses.[43] This reference is not likely because there is no evidence that al-Mundhir III is reported to have done the things attributed to Dhu al-Qarnayn in Q 18:83–101. Another possibility is that Dhu al-Qarnayn is Cyrus the great.[44] This identification is based upon the reference to the ram with two horns which are the kings of Media and Persia in Daniel 8:21.[45] Given what is known of the conquests of Cyrus, it would be possible to identify him with the actions of Dhu al-Qarnayn in Q 18:83–101. There is no evidence, however, from the Arabic histories that Cyrus was thought to have conquered the world as is described in Q 18:83–101, nor is there any evidence in early exegesis that Dhu al-Qarnayn was identified with Cyrus.[46]

Of particular relevance to the origins of the later Alexander stories is the possible identification of Dhu al-Qarnayn with a South Arabian, Ḥimyarī king, variously named Ṣa'b Dhu Marāthid,[47] Dhu al-Adh'ār b. Abrahah Tubba' Dhu al-Manār b. al-Rā'ish b. Qays b. Ṣayfī b. Saba' al-Rā'id,[48] and Abū Karab Shamar b. 'Abīr b. Afrīqīsh.[49] The various campaigns of Dhu al-Qarnayn in Q 18:83–101 are attributed to this South Arabian king in the various stories associated with his reign.[50] In al-Ṭabarī, for example, the king, called al-Rā'id, first conquers the Turks in Azerbaijan, then sets out to conquer China after receiving an emissary from the king of India.[51] In the account of Wahb b. Munabbih, given in Ibn Hishām, the king, called Ṣa'b, meets the prophet "Moses al-Khiḍr" in Jerusalem who calls him Dhu al-Qarnayn. He then travels to the ends of the Earth, on his way either converting or conquering people.[52] The account also describes how al-Khiḍr leads Dhu al-Qarnayn through the land of darkness to a rock upon which is the spring of the water of life which al-Khiḍr drinks. There are a number of elements in Ibn Hishām's account that parallel elements not found in the early Greek and Syriac recensions but appear in the later Ethiopic and Persian recensions of the Alexander stories, including the mention of al-Khiḍr, the mention that the ground in the land of darkness was covered with rubies, and the story of the angel giving Dhu al-Qarnayn a heavy stone and a bunch of grapes for his men.[53] This suggests that Ibn Hishām's account, coupled with Q 18:83–101, upon which he comments, could represent the immediate source for the stories which attribute these elements to the Alexander stories.[54] These elements originally associated with Ṣa'b as Dhu al-Qarnayn were incorporated, along with the elements

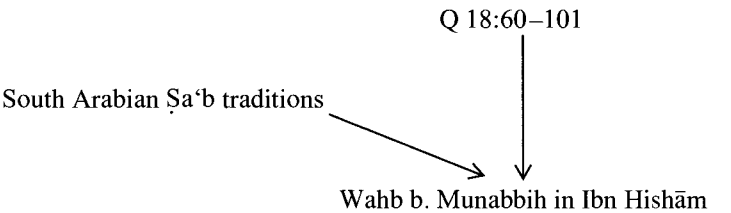
attributed to Dhu al-Qarnayn in Q 18:83–101, into the stories which identified Dhu al-Qarnayn with Alexander.

Given these points about the origins of the association of the Alexander stories with Q 18:60–101, it is necessary to reconsider some of the theories concerning the reconstruction of the history of the Alexander stories' recensions. It is not possible to show that the Ethiopic and Persian versions of the Alexander stories are derived directly from the Syriac versions.[55] There are a number of problems with the dating of the Syriac versions and their supposed influence on the Quran and later Alexander stories, not the least of which is the confusion of what has been called the Syriac Pseudo-Callisthenes, the sermon of Jacob of Serugh, and the so-called Syriac "Legend of Alexander." Second, the key elements of Q 18:60–65, 18:83–101, and the story of Ibn Hishām's Ṣa'b Dhu al-Qarnayn do not occur in the Syriac Pseudo-Callisthenes.[56] The fish episode, found in the sermon of Jacob of Serugh, although not necessarily the source for Q 18:60–65 is also missing from the Syriac Pseudo-Callisthenes. Third, the brief, so-called "Legend of Alexander," which is often said to be a prose version of Jacob of Serugh's sermon, is not identical with the sermon nor can it be shown to be dependent upon the Syriac Pseudo-Callisthenes. It omits several elements found in Jacob of Serugh's sermon, including the fish episode, and the elements it does mention could be derived from an independent Greek or Pahlavi source. Fourth, although Jacob of Serugh's sermon does contain the fish episode, although not identical to the fish episode in the Greek recension β, the sermon does not include the same key elements as found in the Quran and associated with Ṣa'b Dhu al-Qarnayn.

On the basis of these key elements, and the fish episode in particular, it is possible to make a hypothetical reconstruction of the sources for the Alexander stories in the later Ethiopic and Persian recensions, through the medium of Q 18:60–65, 83–101 and the commentaries on these verses.[57] The earliest references to the fish episode occur in the Greek recension β and the Babylonian Talmud. It is difficult to determine which is earlier, although the differences separating the stories indicate that they are independent sources. Both the Quran and Jacob of Serugh's sermon mention a fish episode. The episode in the sermon resembles the one in the Greek recension β. The story in Q 18:60–65, although later identified as the fish episode from the Alexander stories, does not resemble the earlier stories and is probably derived from sources independent of the Alexander stories.

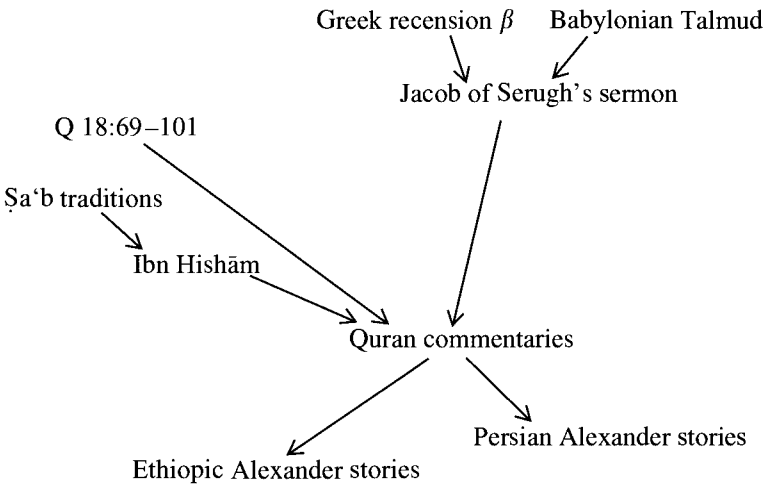


In Ibn Hishām, Wahb b. Munabbih identifies the Dhu al-Qarnayn of Q 18:83–101, and possibly the elements of 18:60–65, with a body of traditions associated with the South Arabian king Ṣa'b. It is not clear whether the stories associated with Ṣa'b derive from an earlier but not extant collection of stories about Alexander or if they are of South Arabian provenance. The elements found in Ibn Hishām's story of Ṣa'b, however, which are later associated with Alexander, do not occur in earlier recensions of the Alexander stories. This makes Wahb b. Munabbih, his sources, or other earlier ḥadīth transmitters the immediate source of the elements into the later Alexander stories.



It is also possible that the story of Ṣa'b in Ibn Hishām is only intended to explain Dhu al-Qarnayn in Q 18:83–101 but is not linked to the stories in Q 18:60–65 or 18:66–82. This is unlikely for a number of reasons. First, the story in Ibn Hishām does mention al-Khiḍr and Moses, although it seems that the two prophets are combined into a single character. Second, Ibn Hishām's story mentions a rock upon which is found the water of life, recalling the rock and the meeting place of the two waters in Q 18:60–65. Third, the bulk of the later stories concerning Moses and al-Khiḍr, as an explanation of Q 18:60–82, are attributed to Wahb b. Munabbih. If Wahb b. Munabbih is not the originator of the stories concerning Q 18:60–82, it is possible later exegetes derived the story from the mention of "al-Khiḍr Moses" in the account found in Ibn Hishām.

The most important stage in the evolution of the Alexander stories is the development of the commentaries on Q 18:60–101. Although the interpretations are attributed to a number of disparate sources, and there are a variety of interpretations found in the early commentary of al-Ṭabarī, it is clear that, in time, the exegetes identified all of Q 18:60–101 with the Alexander stories. The exegetes' source for the Alexander stories would have been something like Jacob of Serugh's sermon that contained the fish episode and Alexander's building the gates against Gog and Magog. The exegetes also took the traditions, found in Ibn Hishām's account of Ṣa'b, associated with Dhu al-Qarnayn and attributed them to Alexander as well.



This "full" version of the story seems to emerge as the dominant explanation of Q 18:60–101 in Muslim exegesis as early as the eleventh century. The earliest Persian version of the Alexander story containing all of these elements seems to be the anonymous *Iskandarnāmah* dated between the late eleventh and fourteenth centuries. The earlier versions of the Alexander stories in Persian, such as that found in Firdawsī's *Shāhnāmah*, which appears at the beginning of the eleventh century, do not include the fish episode, references to Alexander as Dhu al-Qarnayn, nor the gift of the grapes and the stone. Firdawsī's version does, however, include "Khizr" as leader of a people who finds the spring of life and becomes immortal.[58] Ethiopic versions of the story are said to belong to the so-called renaissance of Ethiopic literature in the thirteenth century. The dependence of the Ethiopic recensions on Muslim exegesis is evident from any number of elements incorporated into the Alexander stories, such as the character of al-Khiḍr, the fish episode, the gift of the grapes and the stone, and the epithet of Dhu al-Qarnayn attributed to Alexander.

Moses and the "servant of God"

According to Wensinck and a number of scholars who have followed his claims, Q 18:60–82 is supposed to be derived from the "Jewish" story of Rabbi Joshua b. Levi and Elijah. This story, first published by Adolph Jellinek in 1873,[59] describes how Rabbi Joshua b. Levi meets Elijah and asks to follow and observe his actions. Elijah agrees on the condition that Joshua will not question his actions, although he will not understand the reasons for them. A series of circumstances follow in which Elijah acts in ways contrary to what would seem to be just. Elijah kills the cow of a poor man who gave them hospitality, he fixes the collapsed wall of a rich man who refused them hospitality, and gives contradictory wishes to two

different groups of people. At the end, Joshua asks Elijah why he did these things and Elijah explains the hidden justice of his actions. The cow was killed in place of the poor man's wife who was supposed to die that day, and the wall, if left unfixed, would have revealed a treasure to the rich but undeserving man.

In part, Wensinck's claim is based upon a supposed confusion of the names in the Quran. According to Wensinck, because there is no mention of Joshua b. Levi in Muslim sources, the author of the Quran must have taken the "Joshua" here to be Joshua b. Nūn, the companion of Moses. Unfortunately, Wensinck does not acknowledge that it is not Q 18:60–65 itself but rather the later exegesis of the verses which identifies Moses' servant as Joshua b. Nūn. In addition, the substitution of Joshua b. Nūn for Joshua b. Levi does not account for the identity of the also unnamed "servant of God" in verse 65. A closer parallel would place Moses in the role of Joshua b. Levi and Elijah in the position of the "servant of God" later identified by the Muslim exegetes as al-Khiḍr.[60]

It was also unknown to Wensinck that the Hebrew Joshua b. Levi and Elijah story, given under the title *Ḥibbūr yāfeh me-ha-yeshū'a*, is a Hebrew paraphrase of an earlier Arabic work attributed to the eleventh century Nissim b. Shāhīn of Qayrawān.[61] In this, Wensinck was following the earlier opinions of Leopold Zunz,[62] Abraham Geiger,[63] and Friedländer[64] all of whom were ignorant of Ibn Shāhīn's Arabic original from which the Joshua b. Levi and Elijah story was lifted. Yet, even after the Arabic original of the story was identified, scholars have continued to maintain that Q 18:60–82 is dependent upon the Joshua b. Levi and Elijah story, despite the fact that it is not attested in Jewish sources before this eleventh-century text. This claim is epitomized by the argument of Obermann, the editor of Ibn Shāhīn's Arabic text. According to Obermann, the existence of the story in the Quran proves that Ibn Shāhīn did derive his story from an earlier, but not extant, rabbinic source.

Obermann bases his conclusion on three points. First, the Joshua b. Levi and Elijah story and Q 18:60–82 are similar enough to suggest a genetic relationship but not so similar as to indicate that one is borrowed from the other.[65] Second, "as a rule" the Quran draws upon "early post-Biblical religious lore, most frequently Jewish, less frequently of Christian origin."[66] Third, since Ibn Shāhīn claims his book to be a collection of materials that have been transmitted by "our masters and the most excellent authorities from among our sages," it is unthinkable that he would have included an "apocryphal, oral tale."[67]

There are several points in Obermann's argument that warrant further attention. For example, Ibn Shāhīn does not claim to have collected his stories *from* Jewish sages, but rather he writes that he has included stories *about* the sages. At the beginning of his text, Ibn Shāhīn states that he will recount "sayings of the sages as I know of or have discovered in the way of traditions, tales, and anecdotes about those of them who were in distress and found relief..."[68] On the very first page of the text, Ibn Shāhīn indicates that he is writing a book along the lines of the Muslim genre of *faraj ba'd al-shiddah*, but that his stories will feature Jewish rather than Islamic characters and themes.[69] This is not to say that Ibn Shāhīn

largely borrows stories from other *faraj* works, but rather that he makes the claim to be collecting stories that would constitute a Jewish work of the same genre.

Likewise, it is important to note that while many of the stories in Ibn Shāhīn's work have rabbinic precedents, not all of them do. The Joshua b. Levi and Elijah story is not unique in not seeming to have been based on an earlier rabbinic source. Seven of the stories, not including the Joshua b. Levi and Elijah story, have no clear rabbinic precedent.[70] Three more stories have Islamic parallels.[71] In two places, Ibn Shāhīn quotes passages with close parallels to verses from the Quran.[72] The language of these stories without rabbinic parallels also supports the claim that they were borrowed from Arabic and Islamic rather than Jewish sources, as it has been noted that the stories which have no rabbinic parallels are closer in language to classical Arabic than those derived from rabbinic sources in Hebrew or Aramaic.[73] It is also unclear whether, today, one should accept Obermann's statement that the Quran, "as a rule" is dependent upon earlier Jewish and Christian sources. A more wide-ranging and discerning study, with particular attention to the dates of the so-called "sources," is needed before making the assumption that all Jewish or Christian sources, especially those posterior to the Islamic sources they are supposed to have informed, are prior to and therefore an influence on but not influenced by Islam.

The claim that Q 18:65–82 is dependent upon the same rabbinic source as Ibn Shāhīn, is also not the only way of explaining the similarities between the two stories. In 1959, Haim Schwarzbaum argued that the story in Q 18:65–82, upon which Ibn Shāhīn was later dependent, was a combination of themes and motifs popular in late antique stories.[74] According to Schwarzbaum, there is no earlier Jewish or Christian story that parallels Q 18:65–82, but rather the story in the Quran pulls together the motif of the gnostic ascetic and that of the incomprehensibility of God's justice from several disparate sources. Schwarzbaum most closely identifies the story of the gnostic ascetic with stories current in monastic Christianity, especially those associated with the Christian versions of the so-called legend of the "hairy anchorite."[75] Among the various stories, there are several elements that parallel Q 18:65–82. First, the stories often involve a long journey through the desert to reach the gnostic ascetic. In some cases, the monk seeking the gnostic ascetic is guided by an angel or other supernatural force,[76] and the journey takes place through unknown wilderness to an otherwise unreachable location.[77] Second, the gnostic ascetic is often explicitly associated with Elijah.[78] The gnostic ascetic usually lives in a rock by a water source, and lives off the nearby plants for sustenance.[79]

Schwarzbaum further identifies two specific elements from the stories associated with the gnostic ascetic that parallel Q 18:65–82. The first, found in the *Life of Paul the Thebian* or the "first hermit" describes how St. Anthony, after having established himself as an ascetic, discovers that there is another ascetic more austere and more knowledgeable than he. He sets out and finds Paul living in a rock by a spring of clear water next to an ancient palm tree.[80] The second specific element is found in the story of Abbas Serapion, taken from the cycle of

stories associated with St. Mark the Athenian, about the three monks, Syrus, Isaias, and Paulus who journey to visit Anuph the confessor.[81] Schwarzbaum points out that this story parallels Q 18:71 because of the "boat" which figures as the means by which the three monks reach Anuph. According to Schwarzbaum, however, neither of these specific elements constitute direct precedents to Q 18:65–82. Rather, they represent more general motifs which were common in late antique Christianity.

Schwarzbaum is more specific about identifying a Jewish precedent for the Quran story, in the Moses–Akiba story found in the Babylonian Talmud, Menaḥot 29b. In this brief account, Moses ascends to heaven and finds God affixing the *taggīn*, or pen-strokes which resemble a crown added to the top of certain Hebrew letters, to the Torah. Moses asks why these *taggīn* are necessary, to which God replies that in the future Akiba will find great significance in every little mark of the Torah. Moses is then sent to one of Akiba's teaching sessions and, sitting in the back rows, is not able to follow the arguments being presented. At one point a student asks Akiba how he knows what he knows to which he replies that it was given to Moses at Sinai. Note that the irony of Akiba's claim is underlined by the fact that Moses is not able to follow Akiba's arguments. Moses returns to God somewhat confused at the source of Akiba's teachings and challenges God as to why God would give the Torah to him rather than to Akiba. God responds by showing Moses Akiba's reward which is his flesh being sold at the market. Moses does not understand how this fate matches Akiba's merits, but God refuses to explain himself. Schwarzbaum argues that this story, modified to replace God with a gnostic ascetic figure who is sought for esoteric knowledge, is the immediate source of Q 18:65–82.

The idea that the story in the Quran combines disparate elements from motifs current in late antiquity is a promising explanation, partly because it recognizes the relative originality of Q 18:65–82. Unfortunately, but perhaps because of his vast knowledge of folklore motifs, Schwarzbaum is too specific in identifying particular stories as the source for the story in the Quran. In addition, his assumption that parallels represent borrowings, or that an earlier context explains the use of the motif or story in another context, is unfounded. On the one hand, it is not necessary to identify the ideas associated with a supplicant seeking an oracle or seer to receive a word from a deity specifically with those of the "gnostic ascetic" in monastic Christianity. Nor would it seem necessary to attribute the originalities of the story in the Quran to a garbled oral transmission or a confused recounting. Any number of stories from ancient and late antique milieus involving these same elements could be adduced. The motif of a prophet, theurgist, or holy man seeking an immortal being, often by ascending to heaven, in order to receive esoteric knowledge is one common in late antiquity.[82]

On the other hand, the connection Schwarzbaum makes between Q 18:65–82 and the Moses–Akiba story is misleading. Although the story involves Moses questioning God's justice, it does not involve three separate episodes nor an explanation for the fate of Akiba.[83] Stories dealing with the more general theme

of theodicy were also common in late antiquity. Nor is it certain that the theodicy theme of the Moses–Akiba story is to be emphasized over the other elements of the story, such as Moses' inability to understand Akiba's teachings and his acceptance that the teachings are supposed to have come from him at Sinai. First of all, there is no apparent explanation for Akiba's demise given by God, leaving the reader to expect an ironic significance reflective of Moses' presumption.[84] Second, there are other variants of this story, which Schwarzbaum mentions, which center on Moses' reluctance but eventual acceptance of prophethood as being based on God's showing him that later generations would cite *halakha le-Moshē mi-Sinai* as their authority.[85] It is also important to note that the Moses–Akiba story in the Babylonian Talmud is told in the context of other stories explaining the *taggīn* and may be strictly etiological.

Another explanation for the relationship between the Quran and Ibn Shāhīn was recognized by the editor of the Hebrew paraphrase of the Joshua b. Levi and Elijah story. Although he was not aware of Ibn Shāhīn's Arabic original, Jellinek repeats the earlier assertion made by Zunz that the story of Joshua b. Levi and Elijah is related to Q 18:60–82.[86] But in his discussion of another Hebrew story about Joshua b. Levi and Elijah, the frame-story of which is similar to the Ibn Shāhīn story, Jellinek states that both Joshua b. Levi and Elijah stories seem to originate from an earlier Arabic source, although he does not identify that source.[87] Jellinek also mentions that the story of Nathan b. Hanna, found in the Hebrew paraphrase of Ibn Shāhīn is similar to a story found in the Arabian Nights.[88]

The suggestion that the Joshua b. Levi and Elijah story is related to Q 18: 60–82 through an intermediary Arabic source is useful. It is unlikely that the Ibn Shāhīn story was derived directly from Q 18:60–82, for a number of reasons. Ibn Shāhīn's story has no mention of the events in Q 18:60–65. The only unusual act of both the servant of God and Elijah is the repair of the wall so that the inhospitable man would not find the treasure buried there.[89] Also, Q 18:60–82 is ambiguous about the identity of the servant of God and Moses' intention to meet this servant at the meeting place of the two waters. In this respect, Ibn Shāhīn's story seems to have more in common with the commentaries on Q 18:60–82 than with the verses themselves. Moses' intention to find al-Khiḍr and the conversation with God that prompts the meeting found in the Ubayy b. Ka'b story is a close parallel to the opening of Ibn Shāhīn's story. A connection to the commentaries on Q 18:60–82 would also help to explain the absence of Moses and the use of Elijah in Ibn Shāhīn's story.

The possible link between muslim exegesis of Q 18:60–82 and Ibn Shāhīn's story is particularly evident from the association of al-Khiḍr and Elijah.[90] It is important to remember that Q 18:65 does not contain information singling out the anonymous "servant of God" as being immortal and associated with esoteric knowledge or fertility. These characteristics are introduced into the story only in the exegetical account of Ubayy b. Ka'b, with the identification of the "servant of God" as al-Khiḍr, and the later elaborations of al-Khiḍr's associations with immortality, esoteric

knowledge, and fertility. Rather than showing that Q 18:65–82 is dependent upon the Joshua and Elijah story, the close association of al-Khiḍr and Elijah suggests that the Joshua and Elijah story is ultimately dependent on the Ubayy b. Ka'b story.

The close association of al-Khiḍr and Elijah is a common feature of the stories associated with al-Khiḍr. For example, in al-Mas'ūdī, al-Nawawī, and other sources, al-Khiḍr's real name is given as Baylā b. Malkān which could be related to the Syriac name for Elijah [Ilīyā] if the single dot under the first letter was taken to be two dots.[91] Ibn Ḥajar also mentions a story, on the authority of an anonymous man who had been stationed in Jerusalem and 'Asqalān, that associates Elijah and al-Khiḍr. In this story, the man meets Elijah praying in a valley, and asks him if he is still receiving revelations from God:

> I said: "Is God revealing [things] to you still today?" He said: "No, God sent Muḥammad as the seal of the prophets." I said: "How many prophets are still alive?" He said: "Four: myself and al-Khiḍr on the earth, Idrīs and Jesus in heaven." I said: "Have you and al-Khiḍr met?" He said: "Yes, every year at 'Arafāt." I said: "What happens to you?" He said: "He takes from my knowledge and I take from his knowledge."[92]

Note that in this story, al-Khiḍr and Elijah are paralleled on account of both their immortality and their special esoteric knowledge. There are numerous other stories that attribute a prophetic knowledge to Elijah and al-Khiḍr that is beyond that of other prophets. In the Ubayy b. Ka'b story, for example, al-Khiḍr's knowledge is made to be greater than that of Moses. A similar notion is evident in the story of Elisha wanting to see Elijah depart from Earth and acquire his powers in 2 Kings 2.

Likewise, both al-Khiḍr and Elijah are associated with fertility, and the life-giving water of rain in particular. Reports in the commentaries on Q 18:60–82 state that al-Khiḍr's association with the color green is due to his ability to cause the earth to be fertile. In a saying attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, al-Khiḍr's name is said to be due to the fact that he sat on a white skin and it became green.[93] Both al-Nawawī and al-Diyārbakrī comment that the "skin" is symbolic of the earth, emphasizing al-Khiḍr's ability to cause the earth to be fertile. It is also said that it will become green in every place that al-Khiḍr performs his prayers.[94] Elijah's association with fertility and rain production is widespread in Biblical and rabbinic literature. Elijah is able to make food increase in 1 Kings 17:14–16, raise the dead in 1 Kings 17:17–24, and cause it to rain in 1 Kings 18:41–45, all of which indicate his association with fertility.

It is also unlikely that the association of al-Khiḍr and Elijah is the result of a confusion of the two characters, but rather that the character of al-Khiḍr was developed to appropriate the characteristics associated with Elijah in Biblical and rabbinic stories. That the two characters were recognized as distinct is evident from the early remarks preserved in al-Ṭabarī and other sources identifying

al-Khiḍr as Persian and Elijah as Israelite.[95] It would be difficult to maintain that the Muslim scholars writing and reading these stories would not see the connections between al-Khiḍr and Elijah as obvious. The close similarities between the two names and the attributes of the two characters is an indication not that the Islamic sources are confused, but that there was an effort to make the al-Khiḍr who emerged from the explanation of Q 18:60–82 a close parallel to Elijah. Given these connections, and the various other cases in which al-Khiḍr and Elijah are associated in early Islamic literature, it would be an obvious choice for Ibn Shāhīn to substitute Elijah for al-Khiḍr in his version of the story.[96]

Related to Ibn Shāhīn's use of Elijah to play the part of the al-Khiḍr character is his use of Joshua b. Levi in the place of the Moses character. In this regard, it is important to recognize the existence of a number of different versions of a folk theodicy story which is usually associated with Moses. This story could be seen as a combination of the commentaries on Q 18:65–82 and a story from folk literature about the interaction of three men and a purse. It is impossible to pinpoint the origins of the story of the three men and the purse, but there is scant evidence that the story originated in the *Derashōt 'al ha-Tōrah* of Joshua b. Shu'ayb, written sometime during the fourteenth century, as postulated by Louis Ginzberg.[97]

In the version of the story in Ibn Shu'ayb, Moses is shown God's justice from Sinai by observing the interactions of three men and a purse.[98] Moses first sees a man stop by a river and lose his purse. Next, another man comes and takes the purse. The first man, the owner of the purse, returns, does not find his purse, but sees another man nearby and demands his purse back. The man nearby claims he has not taken the money, so the owner of the purse kills him. Moses asks God what justice this represents and God explains that the man who found the purse had had it formerly stolen from him by the first man. The man who was killed had, at an earlier time, killed the father of the man who lost the purse by the river.[99] Related versions of this story can be found in other Jewish texts from the fourteenth century and even later Jewish and non-Jewish versions of the tale in European folklore.[100]

This same story of the three men and the purse is also found in Arabic and Persian literature contemporaneous with if not earlier than the work of Ibn Shu'ayb. In the *Alf layla wa layla*, for example, it is an unnamed prophet who lives on top of a mountain who observes the interaction of the three men and the purse.[101] It is also found in the *'Ajā'ib al-makhlūqāt* of Zakarīyā b. al-Qazwīnī [1202–1283] and repeated in the *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān* of Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Damīrī [1344–1405].[102] In these versions, Moses is identified as the observer of the three men, and it is possible that these versions combine elements from the story in *Alf layla wa layla* with Q 18:65–82 and the exegesis on these verses. In a Persian poem by Nūr al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī [1414–1492], the first man who loses the purse is identified as being like al-Khiḍr, thus further strengthening the link between the tale and the exegesis on Q 18:65–82.[103] Given Jāmī's close

connection with the Naqshbandī order,[104] it is possible that he took his story from a ṣūfī commentary on Q 18:65–82 or the *Iskandarnāmah*,[105] or he derived it from one of the mystical circles of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with which Ibn Shu'ayb was also closely associated.[106]

The association of Moses with these stories bears on the question of why Ibn Shāhīn used Joshua b. Levi and not Moses as the observer of apparent injustices in his theodicy tale. In part, this could be due to Ibn Shāhīn's expressed intention to eschew stories which deal with Biblical characters and episodes.[107] In addition, given the arrogance attributed to Moses in the Ubayy b. Ka'b story, it is possible that Ibn Shāhīn wanted to avoid such an association with Moses in his text. Perhaps more pertinent to the use of Joshua b. Levi and Elijah are the precedents in rabbinic literature which describe Joshua b. Levi as having conversations with immortal beings both on earth and in heaven. In the Babylonian Talmud, for example, Joshua b. Levi recounts three things told to him by the angel of death.[108] There are also several stories that associate Joshua b. Levi directly with Elijah.[109] It has been shown that elements of the stories about the journeys of Pythagoras have been incorporated into several of the stories about Joshua b. Levi,[110] many of which are also closely related to accounts of Moses.

Dhu al-Qarnayn

Probably the most promising but still underdeveloped thesis of earlier scholarship on Q 18:60–82 is the suggestion that the story is related to the Epic of Gilgamesh. The numerous parallels that exist between the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Alexander stories have been identified and discussed at length in earlier scholarship.[111] Insofar as Q 18:60–65 is thought to be related to the Alexander stories, and the Alexander stories related to the Epic of Gilgamesh, Q 18:60–65 can be seen as indirectly related to the Epic of Gilgamesh. Wensinck, however, identifies specific elements in Q 18:60–65 as being from the Epic of Gilgamesh but not the Alexander stories, such as the "meeting place of the two waters" in Q 18:60–61 and the supposedly immortal "servant of God" in Q 18:65. As with Wensinck's other explanations of these verses, the relation he sees to the Epic of Gilgamesh is not based on Q 18:60–65 alone but on the information attributed to these verses in Muslim exegesis. Granting, for the moment, that Wensinck does not make this distinction between the sources, and granting that the exegetes give no indication of being aware of the Epic of Gilgamesh, it is still unclear why the Gilgamesh and Alexander stories would be conflated in Q 18:60–65. Behind this question is a more significant issue, namely that given the acknowledged connection made between Q 18:60–65 and the Alexander stories, Wensinck gives no reasons for the association of Moses and Alexander.

The parallels drawn so far between Gilgamesh and Alexander are inadequate. According to Wensinck, in both the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Alexander stories, the hero goes on a quest to gain immortality. This immortality is found at a water

source in both stories, and with this water source is associated an immortal being with whom the heroes of the stories have dealings. The second part of Wensinck's contention is correct in a broad sense. In the Epic of Gilgamesh, Utnapishtim and his wife are said to have been granted immortality by the gods, although the source of immortality for Gilgamesh is a plant at the bottom of the sea. Many of the Alexander stories that post-date the Quran, make al-Khiḍr to be immortal, in some cases because he drank from the water of life. In some of the Alexander stories that pre-date the Quran, it is Alexander's cook, and in one case Alexander's daughter, who become immortal by drinking from the water of life. Despite these broad similarities, it is difficult to equate these two stories beyond the observation that they share certain elements which are in common with a huge number of other stories.[112]

More problematic than characterization of the two stories in terms of immortality being found at a water source is the alleged parallel between the characters supposed to represent the immortal beings in the two stories. The Epic of Gilgamesh provides, in Utnapishtim, a clear example of an immortal being who is possessed of esoteric knowledge of the gods. Gilgamesh, like Moses who comes to al-Khiḍr in the commentaries on Q 18:60–82, comes to Utnapishtim in search of the meaning of his friend Enkidu's seemingly unjust death.[113] In the Alexander stories, however, it is unclear which character should be identified as the parallel of Utnapishtim and al-Khiḍr. In those versions of the Alexander stories influenced by the commentaries on Q 18:60–82, the character of the immortal being is usually identified as al-Khiḍr.[114] In the Alexander stories not influenced by the commentaries on Q 18:60–82 there are two different characters that coincide with the al-Khiḍr and Utnapishtim figures. In the Greek manuscript L, Alexander is led into the land of darkness by an old man who is supposed to know the location of the water of life. It is Alexander's cook, however, who accidentally discovers the water of life and gains immortality. In Jacob of Serugh's sermon, Alexander is led into the land of darkness by a wise old man he met in conversation with a company of other wise old men in the north. Once in the land of darkness, however, it is the cook, also in the sermon, who discovers the water of life and becomes immortal along with his fish.[115] The combination of the two different characters from the Alexander stories, the wise man and the immortal man, makes both the commentaries on Q 18:60–65 and the later Alexander stories closer to the model of the wise and immortal Utnapishtim in the Epic of Gilgamesh.[116]

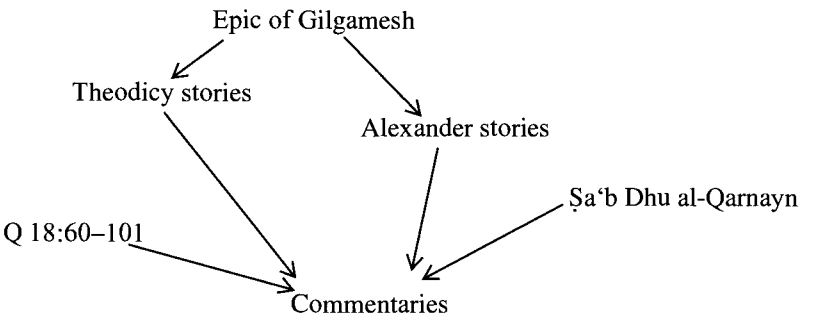
The first part of Wensinck's contention, that both Gilgamesh and Alexander go on a quest to gain immortality, is also an oversimplification of the two stories. With respect to the quest for immortality in the Alexander stories, it is important, first, to note that not all of the versions describe Alexander's quest for immortality at the water of life. In the Greek recensions λ and γ, and manuscript L, the quest for the water of life comes as a single episode among others in which Alexander attempts to accomplish impossible feats such as descending into the ocean in a glass jar which is swallowed by a giant fish, and ascending to heaven attached to large birds.[117] In the Persian recensions the quest for the water of life is

mentioned in association with the fish episode during Alexander's journeys in the land of darkness, but otherwise the theme is left undeveloped.[118] The Ethiopic versions mention all three episodes among a mass of other information taken from Ethiopic literature involving the relatively fabulous nature of Alexander's journeys.[119] Given the literary context, in the cases where it appears, the quest for the water of life episode is part of the larger theme of Alexander's worldwide conquests. The episode of the journey in the land of darkness and those associated with it function to show the fantastic extent of Alexander's conquests, and were at times understood as emphasizing Alexander's foolish pride in attempting to accomplish the humanly impossible.

In the Epic of Gilgamesh, on the other hand, the immediate cause of Gilgamesh's journey in search of Utnapishtim is the death of Gilgamesh's companion Enkidu. Gilgamesh travels through the gate at the Mashu mountains, and for twelve leagues through the land of darkness, until he arrives at a garden in which gems grow, by the edge of the sea. In the garden, Gilgamesh meets the young woman Sidduri who tells him about Urshanabi who might ferry Gilgamesh across the sea to Utnapishtim. The two travel together for three days until arriving at Dilmun where Utnapishtim and his wife live. Utnapishtim tells Gilgamesh two secrets of the gods: the story of the flood, and about the existence of a plant at the bottom of the sea which restores men to their youth. Gilgamesh retrieves the plant but, on his return to his home in Uruk to share the plant with his companions, a snake comes and eats the plant.[120]

Several of the elements in this section of the epic parallel episodes from the various Alexander stories, such as the Mashu mountains, the land of darkness, gems, and the long ocean journey.[121] There is little doubt that, on this episode in particular, the Alexander stories are drawing upon themes earlier associated with Gilgamesh. Note, however, that Gilgamesh's journey to Utnapishtim is made on account of Enkidu's death. Unlike the immediate pretext in the Alexander stories, Gilgamesh is not seeking only, or even primarily, immortality, but rather is seeking the justice of Enkidu's and his own impending death. In this sense, Gilgamesh's questioning of Utnapishtim recalls Moses' questioning of al-Khiḍr in the Islamic theodicy stories. If a parallel exists between the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Alexander stories, it would need to be drawn between the failures of Gilgamesh and Alexander. Both Gilgamesh and Alexander fail to gain immortality either for themselves or their people. But, more important is what this failure signifies. Gilgamesh fails to find a satisfactory answer to his friend's death other than fate, and Alexander is not able to conquer the world, whether by means of obtaining his own immortality, ascending to heaven, or with the force of his army.

It is important to recognize that elements of the Epic of Gilgamesh do surface in the Alexander stories, and that elements of both the Gilgamesh and Alexander stories are combined, along with the stories associated with Ṣa'b Dhu al-Qarnayn, in the commentaries on Q 18:60–101. Instead of considering the Epic of Gilgamesh and Alexander stories as being confused in the Quran along with a



number of theodicy stories, it is preferable to uncover how and to what end the exegetes appropriated elements of these earlier stories into their interpretation of Q 18:60–101. By interpreting Q 18:60–101 in light of these extra-Quranic stories, the exegetes are able to show how the Quran is inclusive of earlier stories and revelations. This approach, on the one hand, allows the exegetes to contend that these earlier stories are part of the revelation included in the Quran and can only be shown to be such from the position of the exegetes. On the other hand, the exegetes use these extra-Quranic elements to build intertextual links among the various verses relative to Moses in their attempt to evaluate his character and compare it to the Prophet Muhammad. Keeping in mind the distinction between the text of Q 18:60–101 and the exegesis of these verses, it is possible to begin to uncover not the sources for the Quran, but the sources to which the exegetes make allusions, purposefully, in their interpretations of the Quran.

The link between the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Alexander stories, and Q 18:60–101, and 18:60–65 in particular, can be further examined in light of the expression "meeting place of the two waters" [majmā' al-baḥrayn] found in Q 18:60, and referred to again [majmā' bayna-himā] in Q18:61. There are no clear parallels between this expression and elements from the earlier stories examined. The obvious possible parallel in the Alexander stories is supposed to be either located at the garden of Eden or at a flow from a source in the garden of Eden.[122] In the Epic of Gilgamesh, Utnapishtim is said to reside at the "mouth of the waters." The Akkadian phrase *ina-pi-narati*, has been understood to also mean the "head of the waters" signifying the junction and source of the waters, flowing from Dilmun, the Sumerian equivalent of the garden of Eden. Both of these water sources are associated, in different contexts, with the garden of Eden, although in the Epic of Gilgamesh the water at the "mouth of the waters" is not considered to grant immortality.

In the exegesis on Q 18:60–61, the "meeting place of the two waters" is understood in a variety of ways, but usually as linked to the notion of the waters of Eden found in the Gilgamesh and Alexander stories. In the reports given by al-Ṭabarī there is no indication of the location of the "meeting place of the two

waters," though there are various reports concerning how long it took Moses to reach the spot.[123] This is part of a tradition that places the episode described in Q 18:60–82 in the context of Moses' journey to the "water" of Midian, mentioned in Q 28:23. In Muslim exegesis on the episode of Moses at the well of Midian there are several allusions to elements from the Epic of Gilgamesh. First, according to the commentaries on Q 28:21–24, when Moses first arrives at the well and sees two sisters, among them his future wife, he either scares away the other shepherds who are there or lifts a giant rock from the well so that the sheep of his future wife can be watered.[124] The act of heroism, associated with the parallel act performed by Jacob at the well where he met his wives in Genesis, recalls the speech Gilgamesh gives to Sidduri when he encounters her after having traveled a long distance through the land of darkness. Second, after watering the sheep, Moses collapses under a tree from exhaustion and hunger, and is offered hospitality by Zipporah his future wife.[125] This episode, likewise parallel to the Jacob story in Genesis, can be taken as an allusion to Gilgamesh's exhaustion at the end of his journey through the land of darkness. Third, the father of the daughters, in some cases identified with the prophet Shu'ayb, gives Moses a rod which was given to him by an angel of God.[126] Given the miraculous powers of the rod, its origins in the garden of Eden, and its association with fertility, this episode could be seen as an allusion to the plant of life which Utnapishtim gives to Gilgamesh.

There is another tradition concerning the location of the "meeting place of the two waters" preserved in the commentaries of al-Zamakhsharī, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, and Ibn Kathīr. In these reports, it is said that the location of the waters is where the Persian Sea and the Roman Sea meet.[127] The Roman Sea is usually identified as the Mediterranean Sea, and the Persian Sea as the Indian Ocean. The meeting place of these two waters is not considered to be in the Mediterranean, but rather at the ends of the Earth where the waters of the oceans flow together and surround the continents. This understanding of the location is reflected in the report given in Ibn Kathīr on the authority of Qatādah, that the place where the two seas meet is where the Persian Sea is the farthest east and the Roman Sea is the farthest west. Another related report is given in Ibn Kathīr on the authority of Muḥammad b. Ka'b al-Quraẓī. In this report, it is said that the location of the waters is in Tangiers [Ṭanjah], the farthest city to the west.[128] By locating the "meeting place of the two waters" at the edges of the Earth, the exegetes are identifying it with the garden of Eden also thought to be located in either the far west or far east. This identification with the garden of Eden is made explicit in a passage from Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī in which he states that the water at the "meeting place of the two waters" flows from a spring at the garden of Eden.[129]

It does not appear that Muslim exegetes were familiar with the name of Gilgamesh; but that they were familiar with certain key elements of the Gilgamesh story, especially his journey to Utnapishtim, is evident. It is probable that, in late antiquity and beyond, the Gilgamesh story was known through the medium of the Alexander stories, and that the figure of Alexander represented what the figure of

Gilgamesh had represented.[130] In the exegesis on Q 18:60–101, and the stories influenced by these verses and their exegesis, it is the figure of Dhu al-Qarnayn that is often used to personify a certain character type associated with the stories surrounding Gilgamesh, Alexander, and other figures such as the South Arabian Ṣa'b. But in the exegesis on Q 18:60–82 and other verses such as Q 28:21–24 it is Moses who is used to typify the character type associated with these stories. In order to explain this association of Moses with elements from the stories of Alexander and Gilgamesh, it is important to understand in what ways and for what reasons Moses is said to be like Alexander.

One possible connection between Moses and Alexander is that both Moses and Alexander are said to have been "horned."[131] The horns of Alexander are understood in a number of different ways in Muslim exegesis. Ibn Kathīr gives several explanations for the horns of Alexander.

> Wahb b. Munabbih said: There was a king whose name was Dhu al-Qarnayn because the sides of his head were copper.
>
> He said: Some of the People of the Book say: Because he was king of Rome and Persia. Some of them say: There was on his head something resembling two horns.
>
> Sufyān al-Thawrī, on the authority of Ḥabīb b. Abī Thābit, on the authority of Abū al-Ṭufayl said: 'Alī was asked about Dhu al-Qarnayn and he said: He was a trustworthy servant of God. He was sincere and summoned his people to God, but they hit him on his *qarn*. He died but God brought him back to life. Again he summoned his people to God and they hit him on his *qarn* with the result that he died. Therefore he is named Dhu al-Qarnayn.
>
> It is said that he is named Dhu al-Qarnayn because he reached the East and the West where the tip [qarn] of the sun rises and sets.

The third of the explanations attributed to 'Alī is the most fascinating but also the most enigmatic because the story does not seem to be related to either Alexander or Moses, nor any of the stories which are associated with these figures. The second of the explanations, attributed to Christians and Jews, clearly seems to identify Dhu al-Qarnayn with Alexander, explaining that the expression "two horns" symbolizes his rule over both Rome and Persia.[132] This reference probably originates with the reference in Daniel 8:21 to the goat with two horns representing the kings of Rome and Persia. There is a similar reference in the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 49:27 that describes Edom, or Rome, as being horned or having the power associated with horns [ba'al qarnay'im].

With respect to the theory that Dhu al-Qarnayn had something resembling two horns on his head, it is important to note that in Jewish and Christian literature both Alexander and Moses are represented as having actual horns on their heads and Alexander is portrayed as horned on silver coins. The earliest known reference to Moses being horned is found in the Latin recension of the Bible attributed

to Jerome in the fourth century. Jerome understood Exodus 34:29 to mean that when Moses returned from speaking with God he was horned. Jerome's horned Moses was later rendered into the Anglo-Saxon vernacular translations of the Bible in fourteenth-century Europe, and became the basis for an entire tradition of art depicting Moses with horns. It is also important to note that, in the thirteenth century, Rashi's commentary on Exodus 34:29 states that Moses' face shone as though it were horned. Rashi was apparently familiar with both understandings of Exodus 34:29, the notion of actual horns on Moses and the notion of Moses' face shining. It is not possible, given the available evidence, to say how widespread was the idea that Moses was actually horned, but it is conceivable that Christians and Jews thought in terms of Moses when considering the question of a Biblical reference to a person having horns.

The first explanation in Ibn Kathīr, attributed to Wahb b. Munabbih, the originator of the story linking the expression Dhu al-Qarnayn to the South Arabian Ṣa'b, states that the sides of Dhu al-Qarnayn's head were copper [nuḥās]. There are several descriptions of Moses in which his face is said to shine because he saw God on Sinai. Commenting on the Sinai scene in Q 7:143–145, al-Ṭabarī states, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, that after Moses saw God no one was able to look at his face so he would cover it with a piece of silk.[133] Another story, also related from Ibn 'Abbās, tells that Moses entered a cloud that surrounded Sinai and spoke to God. When he emerged a radiant light descended on his forehead and no one could look at him so they covered his face with a veil.[134] This notion of Moses' face shining is consistent with the understanding of Exodus 34:29 in the Peshiṭta and in the Targums.[135] The verb *qaran*, in the Masoretic text, is a *hapax legomenon* which seems to have been understood in the Aramaic versions in relation to *qarnay'im* in Habakkuk 3:4 which is taken to be "rays of light."[136] In several of the manuscript sources for the Septuagint, the skin of Moses' face is said to change colors, rather than to shine.[137] Presumably, this variation reflects the same interpretation of the other Greek and Aramaic versions, that Moses did not have horns but that the appearance of the skin of his face changed.[138] These descriptions of Moses' skin are analogous to the description of Dhu al-Qarnayn having copper on the sides of his head. Although an explicit connection between Moses and Alexander is not made in these passages, the description of both is consistent enough to allow that a connection between the two be made on the basis of the unique appearance of their heads.

The fourth explanation of Dhu al-Qarnayn in Ibn Kathīr makes a more explicit connection between Alexander and Moses on the basis of Q 18:60–101. In Q 18:60–61 Moses is traveling to the "meeting place of the two waters" which is understood in several of the commentaries as being located at the ends of the Earth, at the meeting place of the Roman and Persian seas where the extreme east meets the extreme west. In Q 18:86 and 90 Dhu al-Qarnayn reaches the place where the sun rises and where the sun sets, in the extreme east and the extreme west. The identity of the "meeting place of the two waters" and the locations to which Dhu al-Qarnayn travels is captured in the explanation that the name Dhu

al-Qarnayn is attributed to the one who went to the ends of the Earth. In this sense, both Moses and Alexander can claim the title Dhu al-Qarnayn because both of them, according to Muslim exegesis, in the course of thirty verses, travel to the same locations.

Conclusions

It is important to recognize that the details in Q 18:60–101 were such that Muslim exegetes could and did see in them reflections of popular late antique motifs including those related to Biblical contexts. To assume that the Quran intended these associations would be to conflate the Quran with its earliest interpreters, and implicates a number of literary and theological perspectives not always made explicit by those who make the assumption. Instead of viewing parallel motifs and stories as sources for the Quran, it is possible to understand the Muslim exegetes' use of these extra-Quranic materials as part of a larger interpretive strategy. The identification of the lost fish with the fish in the Alexander stories allowed the exegetes to link Moses' journey to the "meeting place of the two waters" with Alexander's journey to the ends of the Earth in search of the water of life. More significantly, this enabled Muslim exegetes to read Q 18:60–82 as a critique of Moses' hubris, equivalent to the pride of Alexander in his quest for fame and immortality.

In addition to appropriating motifs already in existence, the Muslim exegetes also use the introduction of al-Khiḍr to further their reading of Q 18:60–82. The existence of al-Khiḍr in Arabic, Ethiopic, and Persian versions of the Alexander stories demonstrates that these Alexander stories are not sources for, but are rather based upon the early Muslim exegetes' identification of the "servant of God" in Q 18:65 with al-Khiḍr. The character of al-Khiḍr first appears in statements attributed to the Prophet Muhammad and transmitted by Ubayy b. Ka'b. It is this Ubayy b. Ka'b account that introduces a number of the elements which make Q 18:60–82 parallel other late antique stories, such as the fish as a sign of having found the waters and the pride of Moses. Like Elijah with whom he is associated in other contexts, al-Khiḍr personifies immortality, and in the exegesis of Q 18:60–65 is closely identified with the water of life. Through the actions and statements of al-Khiḍr, the Muslim exegetes can explain that the encounter between Moses and al-Khiḍr was supposed to be a lesson from God to Moses about his pride.

That this lesson was intended by the exegetes is also evident from additional aspects of the exegesis of these verses. Some of the exegetes add a conversation, not found in Q 18:60–82, between al-Khiḍr and Moses after they have boarded the ship which al-Khiḍr will eventually scuttle.

> Moses said: "God willing, you will find me patient and I will not disobey your command."

> So the two of them set out walking along the bank of the water. They did not have a boat but a boat passed by them and they spoke to the crew asking to take them on board. The crew knew al-Khiḍr and took the two on board without charge.
>
> A sparrow came and sat on the edge of the boat. It pecked once or twice at the water. al-Khiḍr said: "Oh Moses, my knowledge and your knowledge diminish the knowledge of God only to the extent that the pecking of this sparrow at the water [diminishes the water]."[139]

The comparison of God's knowledge to the water and the combined knowledge of al-Khiḍr and Moses to a sparrow's beakful of water, emphasizes that God's knowledge, which Moses has earlier claimed as his own, is beyond human comprehension. Putting this comment into the mouth of al-Khiḍr adds, to his three statements already recorded in Q 18:66–82, another lesson from al-Khiḍr to Moses, and is a further indication that the unusual episodes in these verses were understood to be reproof of Moses' claim.

There is also another story, attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, that is found in the later, probably thirteenth century, work of al-Kisā'ī. In this account, Moses finds tablets of gold while he is walking along the edge of the water after having parted from al-Khiḍr. On the tablets, the following was written.

> There is no god but God. Muhammad is the Apostle of God. How strange it is that one who believes in fate and destiny could be angry or frivolous. How strange it is that one who knows he will die could rejoice. How strange it is that one who is certain of the transitoriness of this world and sees vicissitudes amongst its people could be tranquil at heart.[140]

The message itself is enigmatic, but seems to reinforce the idea that God determines the fate of all people and that, regardless of human claims, what God determines will happen. This message also suggests that the episode between Moses and al-Khiḍr was understood to be about theodicy. Moses' pride in claiming the human origins of his knowledge is equated to his questioning of al-Khiḍr's unusual actions, and both are seen as challenges to the ultimate authority of God. The humiliation Moses experiences because of his ignorance of the reasons behind al-Khiḍr's actions shows that Moses' own knowledge is not comparable to the divine knowledge that he was given by God.

It may not be coincidence that the theme of Alexander's pride and attempt to enter Paradise, which is conflated with Moses in the exegesis of Q 18:60–82, resonates strongly in Jewish recensions of the Alexander stories. In the Latin *Iter ad Paradisum*, Alexander is given a heavy stone at the gates of the garden of Eden, and the significance of it as a sign of his insatiable pride is explained by a Jewish sage.[141] A similar episode is found in the later Hebrew *Sefer Aleksandros Moqdon*, in which Alexander is given a piece of eye-flesh which he is unable to lift from

the ground.[142] Both of these accounts are closely related to the episode recounting the gift of the heavy eyeball at the gates of the garden of Eden in the Babylonian Talmud. The episode is also present in other versions of the Alexander stories, especially the Ethiopic recensions,[143] and is widely attested in rabbinic literature alongside accounts of Alexander's other attempts to enter Paradise on his own.[144]

Drawing upon and appropriating to Moses the theme of Alexander's pride from Jewish sources, Muslim exegetes also use the Ubayy b. Ka'b account to suggest a Biblical precedent for Q 18:60–82. Having Moses challenge God's authority is a theme found in the Biblical accounts of Moses' prophethood and their Quranic parallels. For example, in the story of Moses' commission in Q 28:33, Moses refuses to go before Pharaoh, afraid the Egyptians would kill him for his earlier killing of an Egyptian. In Q 28:34 and Q 20:25–32, paralleling Exodus 4:10–17, Moses asks God to send his brother Aaron before Pharaoh. Exodus 4:16 makes Moses out to be God inspiring Aaron his prophet before the Pharaoh, as does Exodus 7:1.

Yet the Ubayy b. Ka'b account provides a more specific Biblical context for Q 18:60–82. At the beginning of the account, Moses' remarks about his knowledge are portrayed as being in the context of his leading of the Israelites in the Wilderness of Wandering.

> Ubayy b. Ka'b reported that the Prophet Muhammad said: "Moses the prophet stood up and addressed the Israelites. He was asked: "Who is the most knowledgeable among the people?" He said: "I am the most knowledgeable."
>
> God admonished him when he did not attribute knowledge to him. Then God revealed to him: "A servant of mine is at the meeting place of the two waters. He is more knowledgeable than you."

In Exodus 18:17–27, a similar scene appears in which Moses is counseled by his Midianite father-in-law against judging the Israelites by himself. That these verses were understood by the rabbis as an indictment of Moses' self-importance is illustrated by the comments on them in rabbinic exegesis. Rashi, for example, seems to interpret Exodus 18:17 as an indictment of Moses' self-appointed position among the people.

> (Moses sat ... and the people stood). He was sitting like a king and they all stood. The matter was reprehensible to Jethro because he [Moses] was demeaning the honor of Israel. He [Jethro] reproved him for this.[145]

The unusual character of Jethro also plays into the interpretation of this encounter with Moses. Exodus 3:1 makes Jethro a "priest" [kōhen], a term otherwise reserved only for priests of Yahweh, and Exodus 18:7–12 also puts Jethro in the capacity of a priest to Yahweh, making a burnt offering and other sacrifices. These same identifications have led modern Bible scholars to attribute Midianite or Kenite

origins to the Yahweh-centered religion of the Israelites.[146] That Muslim exegetes recognized these same implications is suggested, in their conflation of Jethro and the Arab prophet Shu'ayb, as discussed in Chapter 2.

In their exegesis of Q 18:60–82 and the use of the Ubayy b. Ka'b story in particular, by appropriating and incorporating key elements from Jewish and other late antique sources, the Muslim exegetes were able to develop fully the "lesson" of Q 18:60–101 and bolster their own interpretive authority. Without the exegetical addition of al-Khiḍr and the elaboration of the lost fish and the journey to the water of life, the Quran verses would be puzzling at best. Significantly, the negative evaluation of Moses which emerges from the exegesis of Q 18:60–82 is made possible by the appropriation of materials specifically from Biblical and Jewish contexts. The Muslim exegetes seem to draw purposefully upon Jewish sources in order to turn the Jews' "proof-texts" back against themselves and their own claims for authority vis-à-vis these texts. Connecting the Moses of Q 18: 60–82 with the Moses of Exodus 18, and to Alexander through both the lost fish and the Dhu al-Qarnayn of Q 18:83–101, the Muslim exegetes portray a Moses at odds with the image of the Prophet Muhammad and the basis for their own authority in the revelation of the Quran.

2

Q 28:21–28

Chapter 1 examined how the Islamic exegesis of Q 18:60–101, through the association of Moses with al-Khiḍr and Dhu al-Qarnayn, emphasized the portrayal of Moses as a prophet who failed to attribute his knowledge and leadership to God. This analysis showed that the appearance of extra-Quranic items in Islamic exegesis can be more fully appreciated not as confused borrowings but as purposeful appropriations promoting the position of the exegetes via the authority of the Prophet Muhammad.

Chapter 2 focuses on the exegesis surrounding the story of Moses in Midian, found in Q 28:21–28, with particular attention to how the exegetes conflate Moses and Jacob. Previous scholarship on the exegesis of these verses assumes that the similarities between the Midian episode in the Quran and the Jacob story in Genesis 28:10–31:21 are the result of a mistaken confusion of the two stories. As was found to be the case with earlier studies of Q 18:60–82, this explanation is based on a number of problematic assumptions, not the least of which is the inadequate distinction between the Quran and its later exegesis. A closer examination of Q 28:21–28 alone, without the later accompanying exegesis, shows that the evidence for possible parallels between these verses and the Jacob story is inconclusive at best. Further analysis of some of the early commentaries on Q 28:21–28, where the parallels with the Jacob story are more evident, however, indicates that despite the ambiguity of the Quran, it does seem to be the intention of Muslim exegetes to conflate the Moses and Jacob stories. The investigation of related Jewish and Christian sources shows that this conflation is consistent with the development of motifs common in late antiquity, and can be understood as part of a purposeful linkage of Moses with Jacob, or Israel, the progenitor of the Israelites.

Through an investigation of the relevant sources, the following pages demonstrate how selected Quran exegesis capitalizes on the ambiguities of Q 28:21–28 in order to identify Moses with Jacob and the Israelites, and in doing so further emphasizes the significance of Moses' encounter with al-Khiḍr and association with Dhu al-Qarnayn. Section one reviews the conclusions of some previous scholarship on these verses and this conflation, underlining the importance of a careful examination of the Islamic exegesis as distinct and purposeful elaboration

of the Quran text. Section two looks at a number of the points which the exegetes stress in the narrative of Q 28:21–28 to make the conflation of Moses and Jacob. The exegetes use this conflation to highlight the separate lineages of Moses and Muhammad, descended, respectively, from Isaac and Ishmael. Section three examines the exegetical identification of Jethro and the prophet Shu'ayb, and the close comparison the exegetes appear to make between the Moses of Midian and the Moses of Q 18:60–82. Among other things, this exegetical strategy helps to highlight a distinction between the prophets Moses and Muhammad, both descended from Abraham, but through the different sons Isaac and Ishmael.

Q 28:21–28

Previous scholarship has noted that the story of Moses at Midian in Q 28:21–28, and in the exegesis of these verses, seems to transpose elements of the Jacob story onto the Moses story. The earliest recognition of something unusual in these verses is found in the influential work of Abraham Geiger, accepted in 1834 as his doctoral thesis and published a year later in German as *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthum aufgenommen?*[1] Geiger notes two "mistakes" in Q 28:21–28.

> There is a mistake to be found in the very brief account of Moses' flight to Midian and his residence there, for Muḥammad speaks of two instead of seven daughters of the Midianite. Instead of letting the vision in the bush be the occasion of Moses' leaving Midian, as it is in the Bible, Muḥammad erroneously makes out that Moses had formed the resolution to leave the country before this even, and that the vision appeared to him on the way.[2]

There are a couple of assumptions evident from Geiger's remarks. First, Geiger's language indicates that he thinks the story in Q 28:21–28 is dependent upon and, therefore, supposed to be consistent with the story in Exodus 2:15–21. Given the parallels between the two stories, this is not an unreasonable assumption. There is a basic similarity between the stories' plots. Both involve Moses' flight after having killed an Egyptian. In both accounts, Moses waters the daughters' sheep at the well after seeing that they are being held back from the well by other shepherds. Both accounts describe how the daughters return to their father and how one of the daughters returns to bring Moses back to her father. Finally, both stories recount the marriage of Moses to one of the daughters.

Although Geiger does not mention it, there is also an unusual linguistic coincidence connecting the account in the Quran and in Exodus. Exodus 2:12 states that Moses "turned this way and that" [vay-yafen kōh va-khōh] before killing the Egyptian. Later rabbinic exegesis on this phrase attributes to Moses in this action a divine insight that justifies his killing. Turning one way, Moses saw that Dathan, the Egyptian Moses ends up killing, had raped the wife of a Hebrew slave.

Turning the other way, Moses saw that Dathan had set out into the fields to kill the husband of the woman.[3] An expression similar to that found in Exodus 2:12 occurs in Q 28:18 [yataraqqabu] when Moses awakes in the morning after killing the Egyptian, and is repeated in Q 28:21 when Moses leaves the city for Midian. In both cases, the expression in the Quran "turning this way and that" comes as an adjectival clause [ḥāl] modifying the agent of the preceding action: "In the morning he was in the city, afraid, turning this way and that" [aṣbaḥa fī al-madīnati khā'if-an yataraqqabu] and "he left, afraid, turning this way and that" [kharaja khā'if-an yataraqqabu].

It is also evident that Geiger assumes that Muhammad is the author of the Quran. This is a common assumption, shared by the bulk of early Western scholarship on the Quran. Following the tone set by Geiger's work, later scholars used the authorship of Muhammad to explain the inconsistencies separating the stories in the Quran from the "original" version in Jewish and Christian sources. It is clear that Geiger considers these inconsistencies to be due not only to the fact that the Quran is dependent upon a garbled version of Exodus, but that Muhammad is responsible for this flawed transmission. Although he notes rabbinic interpretations as the possible source for other inconsistencies between Exodus and the Quran, Geiger does not provide a rabbinic precedent for the two daughters nor an explanation for the change in the timing of the burning bush episode other than the theory that Muhammad's knowledge of Exodus was inaccurate.

Following Geiger in assuming Q 28:21–28 to be a mistaken version of a Biblical narrative, later scholars have proposed a source other than Exodus 2:15–21. In his *Die biblischen Erzählungen im Qoran*, Heinrich Speyer claims that the source for the two daughters in Q 28:21–28 is to be found in rabbinic commentaries that link the Midian episode to the Jacob story.[4] According to Speyer, the confusion between the stories of Moses and Jacob at wells originates in a conflation of the wells in rabbinic literature. Speyer cites a passage in the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 2:15.

> (He settled in the land of Midian. He sat down by a well). He adopted the way of his forefathers. Three met their wives at a well: Isaac, Jacob, and Moses.[5]

In this passage the point of comparison is the fact that Moses met his wife at a well. Also, note that Moses is compared to Isaac and to Jacob. The mention of Isaac, Jacob, and Moses together would seem evident given the obvious parallels between the three well episodes associated with each character in the Bible.[6]

Speyer does not, however, discuss how the conflation of Jacob and Moses was transmitted to Q 28:21–28. If Speyer is suggesting that the Quran was directly dependent upon the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus, then it would be incumbent first to show that the materials in the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus are earlier than the Quran. It is evident from parts of the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus that the interpretive traditions it preserves are closely related to a number of late works including the Midrash Tanḥuma, the Pesiqta de Rab Kahana, Midrash Rabbah

on Genesis and the Midrash Rabbah on the Song of Songs, all of which are difficult to date much earlier than the seventh century, and scholars date the reduction of the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus to the tenth century.[7] Speyer also does not explain how this specific rabbinic reading of the Bible got into the Quran and, in the process, got confused to the point that the well narratives relating to Jacob and Isaac have disappeared but the elements of Jacob's story not mentioned in the Midrash Rabbah, such as the two daughters, have remained. It is possible to posit that the passage in the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus reflects the existence of an earlier oral tradition, but the existence of such a tradition does not require seeing Q 28:21–28 as a garbled version of that tradition. The assertion that a given written source was in oral circulation before its redaction is certainly plausible but ultimately unreliable for establishing influence, and is especially spurious when the presence of a story or theme in an earlier text is used as evidence of that text being influenced by the presumed oral origins of a later written text.

There are other references in rabbinic literature, contemporary with and later than the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus, which Speyer does not mention, that link Moses' sitting at the well with Jacob alone. Some of these references seem to be truncated versions of the reference to Jacob and Isaac found in the Midrash Rabbah. For example, Ibn Ezra [1080–1164] mentions in his *Sefer ha-shem*, that Moses sat at the well adopting the way of Jacob.[8] It may be that such a reference to Isaac or Jacob is to be understood as a kind of Masoretic note to the reader like those which indicate the number of times a given verbal form or phrase occurs in the text of the Torah. This sort of reference is also similar to the more strictly semantic parallel drawn between Moses and Jacob in the commentary of Rashi [1040–1105]. In his commentary on Exodus 2:15, Rashi states that the first verb in verse 15 "he settled" [vay-yēshev] is to be understood in light of the identical verb in Genesis 37:1 referring to Jacob's settling in the land. He then states that the second occurrence of the same verb in verse 15 is to be understood as "he sat down" because Moses learned this sitting at a well from Jacob who met his wife at the well. Given the dates, it is possible that it is Rashi's reference that is later repeated in Ibn Ezra and is expanded to include Isaac along with Jacob in the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus.

There are two other references, which Speyer does not mention, in the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis which is usually dated before the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus, but thought to have been redacted sometime after the Babylonian Talmud. These references are fuller in their link between the Jacob and Moses stories but they seem to mitigate against rather than support the existence of a tradition conflating the well episodes of Jacob and Moses in Midian. First, there is the interpretation of Genesis 29:1–3 attributed to R. Ḥama b. Ḥanina comparing Jacob's well not to the well in Midian but to the well from which the Israelites drew water in the wilderness, and also compares the three herds of sheep to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

> (He [Jacob] looked and there was a well in the field). This refers to the well [in the wilderness]. (There were three herds of sheep lowing near it).

> That is Moses, Aaron, and Miriam (because from that well the herds were watered). From there each one drew water for his standard, his tribe, and his family. (The rock upon the mouth of the well was great). R. Ḥanina said: It was only the size of a small sieve. (All the herds gathered there). When they established their camps. (They rolled the rock from the mouth of the well and watered the sheep). From there each one drew water for his standard, his tribe, and his family. (Then they returned the rock to its place on the mouth of the well) for the coming journeys.[9]

Other interpretations also attributed to R. Ḥama b. Ḥanina, use the episode of the well to recount the history of Israel, comparing the well, sheep, rock, and water to the temple cult at Zion, the Biblical legal system, Israel under Babylonia, Media, and Greece, the Sanhedrin and the Sages, and the common people of the synagogue.[10] R. Yoḥanan claims that the well symbolizes Sinai, and the three flocks the priests, Levites, and Israelites. Although the well of Jacob is linked to a well associated with Moses, it is not the well of Midian, but rather one of the wells in the wilderness from which the Israelites drew water, usually thought to be the well mentioned in Numbers 21:17.[11] The mention of the "rock" on the well in connection with Moses is most probably a reference not to the well in Midian, but to the "rock" which Moses strikes with his rod causing water to flow from which the Israelites could draw water.

The remark that the rock is replaced for the "coming journeys" could be interpreted as an indirect reference to the motif of finding a well on a journey in the stories associated with the history of the Israelites' wanderings. This phrase parallels the explanations given for the returning of the rock in the analogies drawn between the well episode and the temple cult, the legal system, and the people of Israel. In reference to the temple cult, it is stated that the rock being returned to the mouth of the well signifies the coming of the next festival, referring to the cycle of the seasonal festivals. The return of the rock also symbolizes the continued adjudication of the courts, and the endurance of the merit attained by the patriarchs despite the rule of Israel by foreign kings. In each case, the return of the rock represents the continuation of a regular pattern. Both Moses' and Jacob's arrival at a well in the course of their journeys might be seen as examples of such a pattern, except that both these events took place before the exodus. If the "well" in this analogy is to be identified with that mentioned in Numbers 21:17, then the return to the well could refer to the wandering of the Israelites in the wilderness.

There is another reference in the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 29:9 which does link the well episode of Jacob with the well episode of Moses in Midian. The comparison is made, however, for the purpose of emphasizing not the similarity but the difference between the two episodes.

> (They said: We cannot ... while he was still speaking to them, Rachel came). R. Simeon b. Gamaliel said: Come and note the difference between one

> location and another. In the other place there were seven women, and the shepherds wanted to assault them, as it is said: "the shepherds came and drove them away" [Ex. 2:17]. Here, in contrast, there was only one woman and not one of the men laid a hand on her, because, "the angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them" [Ps. 34:8]. That is those who live among those who fear him.

That the reader would have already considered the parallel between the two episodes at wells, both involving women who require the help of the hero to water their sheep because of other shepherds, is presumed by R. Simeon's comment. The similarities between the two episodes is not stressed in this interpretation, but R. Simeon instead points out that, in the Jacob story, the shepherds do not harass Rachel as they do the seven women at the well of Midian. Jacob's feat is not to protect Rachel but to move the rock and water her father's sheep. The Jacob story is in contrast with the Midian episode in which Moses saves not one but seven women from hostile shepherds.

This comment on Genesis 29:9 points out a significant detail obviating the link between Q 28:21–28 and the Jacob story on account of the two daughters mentioned in both. R. Simeon points out that in the Jacob well episode there is only one daughter who comes later after Jacob has already arrived. Although the reader finds out in Genesis 29:16–17 that there is another daughter, it is only after he has worked for the hand of Rachel that Jacob discovers he has been married to another sister in Genesis 29:25. In Exodus 2:15–21 the seven daughters are all at the well from the outset, and only later does a single daughter return to bring Moses back from the well. Q 28:21–28 likewise mentions both daughters at the well at the time of Moses' arrival. Unlike the story in Genesis 29:9 in which it is a rock that Jacob must move, it is the shepherds who keep the daughters from watering their sheep in both Exodus 2:15–21 and Q 28:21–28.

Despite these reservations, it is important to recognize that Speyer points out other parallels between Q 28:21–28 and the Jacob story in Genesis. Speyer argues that the description of the vow Moses makes with his future father-in-law in Q 28:27–28 parallels the vow Jacob makes with his future father-in-law in Genesis. The mention of a specific number of years in the vow between Moses and his future father-in-law has no precedent in Exodus 2:15–21. According to Speyer, Moses' agreement to serve as a shepherd for a set number of years in exchange for his marriage is taken from Genesis 29:18 where Jacob agrees to serve Laban for seven years in exchange for his marriages to Leah and Rachel.[12] Speyer does not, however, explain why the seven years found in Genesis 29:18 is not found in Q 28:27. Instead, the agreement of Q 28:27 is that Moses will serve for eight or ten years. The choice between two periods of time in Q 28:27, as well as the unusual expression "eight or ten seasons" (or "pilgrimages" [ḥijaj]), are not explained by Speyer's reference to Genesis 29:18. It might be argued that the phrase "I do not want to be a burden on you" in the latter part of Q 28:27 is an inversion of the seemingly unfair imposition of additional years onto the service

of Jacob for the marriage of Rachel and the herd animals [Gen. 31:41]. This explanation would allow the oath in Q 28:27 to be seen as an allusion to but not necessarily borrowed from the Jacob story.

Speyer does identify a close linguistic parallel in the language used to express the vow in Q 28:27 and in the Jacob story. In Q 28:28, Moses says: "This is between me and between you" [dhālika baynī wa bayna-ka] and in Genesis 31:44 Laban says: "Let us make a covenant, me and you, and this is a witness between me and between you" [hayyah le'ēd bēynī u-bēyne-kha]. There are a number of difficulties with the identification of the two stories based on the similarities of language in Q 28:28 and Genesis 31:44. First, in Genesis 31:44, it is not Jacob, the character that Moses would represent if Q 28:28 is supposed to be taken from Genesis 31:44, but his father-in-law who makes the statement of the oath. Second, the oaths in Q 28:28 and Genesis 31:44 are two different oaths. To parallel the Jacob story, the language used in the oath of Q 28:28 would have to parallel Genesis 29:18–19. The oath of Genesis 31:44 is one of many oaths in the Jacob story, paralleling the oath of Genesis 28:20–22, and the second oath Jacob makes with his father-in-law. Q 28:21–28 has only one oath between Moses and his future father-in-law. Third, in order to demonstrate that Q 28:28 is dependent upon Genesis 31:44 it would be necessary to demonstrate that the expression "X is witness to the oath between me and you" is not already found to be common in the formulas associated with the making of oaths in the Near East.

Although Speyer does not seem to consider the possibility, there is reason to see the source of the oath of Q 28:28 not in the Jacob story, but in the Moses story of Exodus 2:15–21. In a footnote, Speyer does mention a reference to Ephraim the Syrian's [306–373] commentary on Exodus that emphasizes the similarities between Moses and Jacob.

> Jacob preserved the daughters of Laban from the disgrace of shepherding just as also Moses was preserving Zipporah and her sisters from the labor of the sheep.[13]

Unfortunately, Speyer does not develop how this passage is related to Q 28:21–28 beyond mentioning it in connection with the reference he cites from the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus. It is important to note that the reference in the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus draws a parallel between Moses and Jacob because of the well at which they meet their future wives. In this passage of Ephraim, the parallel between the two stories is drawn on the basis of what results from the oaths that Moses and Jacob make with their fathers-in-law. Because both Jacob and Moses served their fathers-in-law as shepherds, they kept their wives and the sisters of their wives (being the same people in one of the stories) from being shepherds.

It could be argued that this passage from Ephraim is further evidence of an earlier conflation of the two stories, although it is also possible, given the obvious parallels between the two stories in Genesis and Exodus, that Ephraim's reference is independent of both the rabbinic references and Q 28:21–28. In focusing on the

consequence of Jacob and Moses' oaths, Ephraim's statement makes Zipporah and her sisters parallel to both of Laban's daughters rather than to Rachel alone, as a comparison of the two well scenes would, such as that attributed to R. Simeon. Before considering this reference as a possible source for Q 28:21–28, it is necessary to note that Syriac has no dual forms, so that the word used for Laban's "daughters" is plural. Without outside knowledge of the number of Laban's daughters being two, it would be difficult to see this passage as the source for there being two daughters at the well of Midian.

The comparison of Jacob and Moses in Ephraim is probably due to the fact that the first verb in Exodus 2:21 was understood to involve an oath on the part of Moses with his father-in-law. In the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and the Peshiṭta, Exodus 2:21 is understood as meaning that Moses "chose" or "agreed" to dwell by his father-in-law. This translation of Exodus 2:21 follows the understanding of Judges 17:11 in the Targum Nebi'im which has the same sequence of verbs as does Exodus 2:21 expressing the meaning "he chose to dwell." The tradition of understanding an oath in Exodus 2:21 is also evident from an opinion of R. Judah preserved in the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 2:21.

> R. Judah said: He made an oath with him because the word [vay-yō'el] is an expression for taking an oath as it says: Saul adjured [va-yō'el] the people [1 Sam. 14:24]. Why did he make an oath with him? because he [Jethro] said to him [Moses]: I know that when Laban gave his daughters to Jacob your forefather, he took them and left him without his knowledge. I fear that if I give you my daughter you will do the same to me. Therefore, Moses made an oath at that time, and he gave to him Zipporah.

In this passage, the parallel between Moses and Jethro and between Jacob and Laban is used as evidence for an argument about the semantics of the initial verb in Exodus 2:21, not for the identity of the two stories. The parallel is used to support the view that Exodus 2:21 should be understood to involve Moses making an oath. The analogy made between the oath Jethro/Laban put upon Moses/Jacob and the oath Saul puts upon the people in 1 Samuel 14:24 is apropos because it also focuses on the results of the oath. Saul does not want the people to eat otherwise they will not be ready to conquer and loot the animals of the Philistines just as the two fathers-in-law do not want their daughters to be taken without their husbands shepherding in return.

There is another tradition of understanding what Moses did in Exodus 2:21 which is likewise linked to the notion of his making an oath. The Targum Neofiti translates the beginning of Exodus 2:21 as meaning that Moses "began to dwell" by his father-in-law.[14] This sense of the first verb in Exodus 2:21 follows how the same word is understood in Deuteronomy 1:5, the Targum Nebi'im to Judges 19:6, and the Targum to 1 Chronicles 17:27.[15] Although the verb itself is not taken to mean the making of an oath, that Moses made an oath with his father-in-law is

connoted in Moses' implicit agreement to stay in Midian. This is the sense of Moses' action given in the opinion of R. Nehemiah and the sages in the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 2:21.

> R. Nehemiah said that he agreed to abide with him, for the word always refers to passing the night, as it is said: "Be content [hō'il], please, and spend all night" [Judg. 19:6].
>
> The sages said: He agreed to tend his sheep, for the word means beginning. When he married his daughter he began by agreeing to look after his sheep.

In both cases, although the word is said to signify either "being content" or "beginning," implicit in the action Moses takes is an agreement with his father-in-law. This is more evident from the opinions attributed to R. Judah and the sages in the Sifre on Deuteronomy 4:1.

> (On the other side of the Jordan, in the land of Moab, Moses undertook to expound this Torah). R. Judah said: The word for "undertook" means "begin" as it is said: "Begin to stay all night and let your heart be glad" [Judges 19:6] and "Now begin to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue forever before you" [1 Chr. 17:27].
>
> The sages said: The word means "swearing an oath" as it is said: "Moses swore to dwell with the man" [Ex. 2:21] and "Saul swore to the people saying: Cursed be the man" [1 Sam. 14:24].[16]

The confusion over the opinion of the sages shows that, whether the sense of the word is taken as "to undertake" or "to swear to do something," it implies an agreement. The opinion of the sages, in making explicit that Moses' agreement was to tend the sheep of his father-in-law, draws a close parallel with the interpretations of R. Judah and Ephraim. In these cases, it is assumed, on the basis of Exodus 2:21, that Moses made an agreement to tend the sheep of his father-in-law in exchange for his marriage to Zipporah.

Given this understanding of Exodus 2:21, it is difficult to contend that the oath in Q 28:27–28 is dependent upon the Jacob story. The parallel drawn between the Moses and Jacob stories in Ephraim and the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus focus not on the well but on the effect of the oaths taken by both Moses and Jacob. It is possible that the oath mentioned in Q 28:27 is taken from an earlier conflation of the Jacob and Moses stories, although the evidence to support such a conclusion is problematic. The brief parallel drawn in Ephraim does not include any of the elements in Q 28:21–28 considered to be imports from the Jacob story, and the oath mentioned in Q 28:27 could be an elaboration of the oath between Moses and his father-in-law already present in Exodus 2:21. Likewise, lacking further evidence, it is not necessary to assume that the two daughters in Q 28:21–28 are derived from or based upon the daughters of Laban. It is possible that there being

two daughters is related to other narrative concerns, such as a literary device paralleling the daughters to all the other major characters of the Moses story in the Quran, such as Moses and Aaron, Moses' mother and sister, or Pharaoh and Hāmān, who also come in pairs. Based on the information in the Quran alone it is not even necessary to conclude that there were not seven daughters in Midian, only that two of them were at the well when Moses arrived.

Moses and Jacob

Although it cannot be demonstrated that Q 28:21–28 is dependent upon the Jacob story, it is evident that many of the earliest Muslim exegetes did interpret the verses describing the Midian episode in light of the Jacob story. The approach of scholars like Geiger and Speyer is unfortunate in its attempt to identify Jewish and Christian sources garbled in the Quran (whether by Muhammad or otherwise), rather than examining how Muslim exegetes read the Quran in light of their understanding of extra-Quranic traditions. The exegetes, by the addition of small details to the Quran narrative, often elements specific to Genesis 28–31, made certain their own interpretive conflation of Moses and Jacob. One of the clearest indications of this conflation is the addition of Moses having to remove a rock from the well at Midian.

The introduction of a rock on the well of Moses is first mentioned in al-Ṭabarī's commentary on Q 28:23, given on the authority of al-Suddī.

> al-Suddī said: The two women told Moses: "We cannot water our sheep until the shepherds gather theirs. Our father is an old man." So Moses came to the well and lifted the stone from the well. A band of people from Midian used to gather around the rock in order to lift it. Then Moses drew water in buckets for the two women. They gathered their sheep and returned home quickly. They were watering from surplus basins.[17]

This explanation combines elements found in both Exodus 2:15–21 and Genesis 29:1–14. On the one hand, Q 28:23 already mentions that the two daughters had to hold back until the shepherds gathered their sheep. This is a rough parallel to Exodus 2:17. The mention of the surplus basins, not found in the Quran, could be an allusion to the "troughs" mentioned in Exodus 2:16 into which Moses drew the water for the daughters' sheep. al-Suddī also adds that after receiving the assistance of Moses they hurried home to their father, recalling how their father questions them about their quick return in Exodus 2:18. On the other hand, al-Suddī mentions that there was a rock on the well that Moses needed to lift in order to water the daughters' sheep. The phrase "a band of people from Midian used to gather around the rock in order to lift it" is a close parallel to Genesis 29:3 which states "so when all the herds were gathered there, they used to roll the stone from the mouth of the well." The combination of the perfect and imperfect verbs to form the narrative aspect or past continuous tense is also similar in both phrases.

Note that in Genesis 29:3 and 10, the stone is "rolled" away from the mouth of the well rather than being "lifted" from on top of the well. This change allows Muslim exegetes to stress that Moses' moving of the rock was a remarkable feat. Besides mentioning that the stone was large, Genesis 29:3 does not emphasize that it required all of the shepherds gathered to roll away the stone, nor that Jacob's rolling the stone in Genesis 29:10 was considered a miraculous event. There are several different reports mentioned in the exegesis of Q 28:23–24 that emphasize the unusual nature of Moses' moving of the rock. In a number of reports, given on the authority of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Ibn Jurayj, and Shurayḥ, it is said that it normally took ten men to lift the rock but Moses was able to lift it himself.[18] In al-Zamakhsharī's commentary on Q 28:23, several reports of different numbers of men are given.

> It is reported that the shepherds used to place a rock on the mouth of the well which took seven men to lift. It is said: ten. It is said: forty. It is said: one hundred. He [Moses] moved it himself.[19]

By putting these numbers together, al-Zamakhsharī shows that it is not important that "ten" men were required to lift the rock but that Moses accomplished what no other single man could do.

That Moses' action at the well was considered to be a heroic or miraculous feat is consistent with but distinct from what is found in other sources. Earlier Jewish and Christian sources do not construe Moses' action as a feat of strength, but rather as an example of his abilities as a law-giver. In the Abōt de Rabbi Nathan, Chapter 20:4, Moses' action is described as miraculous.

> (Moses stood up, saved them, and watered their sheep). Moses came and sat in judgment over them [the shepherds at the well]. He said to them: "It is the way of the world that men draw the water and women water [the sheep], but here the women draw the water and the men water [the sheep], inverting justice. There are here those guilty of negligence."
>
> There are those who say that every time Moses stood next to the edge of the well, the water would surge up to meet him. When he moved back the waters would return to their place.[20]

The Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 2:17 repeats that Moses' action at the well was that he came and sat in judgment over the shepherds. This story is similar to Ephraim's comparison of Jacob and Moses, in which the focus is not on a feat of strength performed, but rather on the fact that both Jacob and Moses watered the women's sheep for them. Note, however, that in Genesis 29:3–11 there is no mention of the women doing the work of men, but only that the shepherds had to wait until the stone was moved from the mouth of the well. Ephraim's comment, consistent with the explanation given in the rabbinic sources, is apt for the episode of Moses at the well, but does not appear to be evident in the Jacob well episode taken by itself.

There exists a much longer description of Moses' action, described in this same fashion, as that of a legislator, in Philo's [25 BCE–50 CE] treatise on the life of Moses.

> Seven girls, daughters of the priest, had come to a well, and, after attaching their buckets to ropes, drew water, taking turns so that they shared the labor equally. In this way they expeditiously filled the troughs which were near, when some other shepherds appeared who, disregarding the weakness of the girls, tried to drive them and their flocks away, and brought their own animals to the place where the water was already drawn, thus appropriating the work of others.
>
> But Moses, who was not far off, seeing what had happened, quickly ran up and, when he was close said: "Stop this injustice. You think you can take advantage of the loneliness of this place? Are you not ashamed to let your arms and hands be idle? You are people of long hair and lumps of flesh, not men. The girls are working like young men not shirking their duties, while you, young men, are acting lazy like girls. Away with you. Give place to those who were here before you, to whom the water belongs. Rather, you should have drawn the water for them, to make the supply more abundant. Instead, you are trying to take from them what they themselves have provided. I swear by the heavenly eye of justice, you shall not take it. For that eye sees even what is done in the greatest solitude. In any event, justice has sent me and appointed me to help those who did not expect it. I fight to aid these girls, allied to a mighty arm which those who do evil cannot see, but you will feel its invisible power wounding you if you do not change your ways."
>
> As he said this, they were seized with fear that they were listening to some oracular utterance. For as he spoke, he grew inspired and was transfigured into a prophet. They became submissive and led the girls' flocks to the troughs, after removing their own.[21]

In Philo's account, like that of the Abōt de Rabbi Nathan and Ephraim, the problem between the shepherds and the daughters is a matter of women doing the work of men. In all three cases, Moses' feat is to reprimand the shepherds, foreshadowing his later rôle as the one who will judge over Israel, in Exodus 18 when Moses' father-in-law returns with his wife and sons to meet him in the wilderness near Sinai.[22]

It is only in the later rabbinic sources that Moses' action at the well is construed as a feat of strength. In the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 2:17 there are two different explanations of how Moses used his strength to save the daughters.

> R. Yoḥanan, on the authority of R. Eliezer son of R. Yose ha-Galilī, said: The shepherds came with the intention of violating the women. Therefore Moses saved them. Here it is said "and he saved them" as it

> is said "the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her" [Deut. 22:27]. Just as this verse refers to violation, so does this verse here.
>
> The sages said: This teaches that the shepherds threw the women into the water, from which Moses drew them out. The expression "and he saved them" is used to express saving from drowning. It is said: "Save me oh God. The waters have come even into the soul" [Ps. 69:2].[23]

Both R. Yoḥanan and the sages characterize this feat not in terms of Moses' justice but his physical strength, paralleling the use of the rock in the commentaries on Q 28:23. The stories of the shepherds seeking to violate the daughters or throwing them into the water are intended to explain the use of the expression "he saved them" in Exodus 2:17 which apparently seemed like an unusual way to describe Moses' actions if all he did was to draw water for the daughters. This tradition seems to be independent of the stress on strength made by the commentaries on Q 28:21–28 in their conflation of Moses and Jacob's action at the well. In the case of the commentaries on Q 28:21–28, Moses' feat of strength is not directed against the shepherds, but, as is implied by Genesis 29:3–11, is rather compared to the relative weakness of the shepherds.

Another element from the Jacob story which Muslim exegetes link to Moses in Midian is the oath made between God and Jacob in Genesis 28:20–22. In the text of Q 28:24, there is already a hint upon which the exegetes capitalize.

> So he [Moses] watered [their sheep] for them. Then he took refuge in the shade and said: "My Lord, I am in need [faqīr] of something good [khayr] that you send down to me."

Muslim exegesis on this passage understands Moses' request to God in light of his long journey from Egypt to Midian. There are a number of reports, attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, which state that Moses was asking God for food because he was starving to death after walking from Egypt.

> When Moses fled from Pharaoh he was struck with intense hunger so that his intestines were visible through his skin when he watered for the two women and took refuge in the shade and said: "My Lord, I am in need of something good that you send down to me."[24]

In another report, given on the authority of Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī, it is said that Moses was also asking for money, probably because he had fled from Egypt and had neither food nor other belongings.[25] These descriptions of Moses' needs parallel Genesis 28:20 in which Jacob asks God to provide food and clothing for him because he has fled from home and been left without either. The allusion to the Jacob story does not appear to be to the oath in Genesis 29:18, as suggested by Speyer, but the Muslim exegetes seem to relate Q 28:24 and Genesis 28:20–22 in which the oaths are made with God.

There is also a report, preserved in al-Zamakhsharī's commentary on Q 28:24, that Moses was asking God not only for food, but for protection from his enemies.

> It is said that he intended: "I am in need of the things of this world that you might send down to me something of the other world, being protection from the unjust people," because his dominion and wealth had been with the Pharaoh.[26]

Note that, in the comment in al-Zamakhsharī, there is an opposition drawn between the fact that Moses had earlier been under the protection of Pharaoh, and now is placing himself under the protection of God. This parallels the situation of Jacob, who leaves the protection of his father and enters into the protection of God. In return, Jacob promises that Yahweh will be his God when he returns to his father's house. The oath with God also parallels the oath that Jacob makes with Laban for his daughters and, later, for the speckled sheep.

In the case of Q 28:24, Moses also makes an oath with God that parallels the agreement with his future father-in-law in Q 28:27–28. Both Q 28:24 and verses 27–28 describe Moses' making of an agreement to be under the protection of someone else. This parallel is also evident from the text of Q 28:21 in which Moses asks God to save him from his enemies, and in Q 28:25 where the father of the daughters tells Moses he is safe in Midian from his enemies. In both cases, the new patron is made responsible for protecting Moses from his previous patron, the Pharaoh. A report, given on the authority of the Prophet Muhammad, states that Moses worked for his future father-in-law for a fixed period of time in order to receive both food and the hand of Zipporah in marriage.[27] According to the exegesis of these verses, Moses ends up leaving Midian with a wife, a rod, and sheep, all symbols of fertility, and of his new identity, not as the son of Pharaoh but as the prophet of Israel.

Just as the oath between Jacob and God results in Jacob's return from Laban with wives, sons, and sheep, and his becoming Israel and the father of the twelve tribes, the oath between God and Moses foreshadows Moses' commission to lead the Israelites from Egypt. In the discussion between Moses and God in Q 28:33–35, Moses states his fear of returning because he had killed an Egyptian, and God promises him protection. Several exegetes also see other allusions between Q 28:24 and the description of Moses' commission. For example, in Q 28:30 it is from a tree [shajarah] that Moses hears God speak just as it is from under a tree that Moses asks God to protect him in Q 28:24.[28] Also, it is mentioned that when Moses arrived at Midian, the journey was so long that the bottoms of his feet fell off.[29] This unusual remark could be meant to emphasize the distance that Moses walked, but it could also be an attempt to parallel this scene with the commission of Moses in Q 20:10–33, especially the command of God for Moses to remove his shoes in Q 20:12. The connection between the oath to God by the well and the commission highlights the same connection between the two oaths in the Jacob story.

Another way by which Muslim exegesis on Q 28:21–28 links the Moses and Jacob stories is the names that are given to the two daughters. There are several reports preserved in al-Ṭabarī which give the names of the daughters as Zipporah [Ṣafūrā] and Leah [Līyā].

> The names of the two girls were Leah and Zipporah. The wife of Moses was Zipporah, the daughter of Jethro [Yathrūn], the priest [kāhin] of Midian. A priest is a rabbi [ḥabr].[30]

This report, attributed to Shu'ayb al-Jabā'ī, is interesting because it closely parallels the information found in Exodus 2:15–21. On the one hand, this report states that the wife of Moses was Zipporah, as is also reported in Exodus 2:21. There does not seem to be any disagreement in Muslim exegesis that Zipporah was the name of Moses' wife.[31] On the other hand, this report knows the unusual bit of information that the father of the daughters is the "priest" [kōhen] of Midian, as is stated in Exodus 2:16 and 3:1. More significant is the fact that the name of Zipporah's sister is given as Leah, the name of the wife that Jacob marries first although he had intended to marry Rachel in Genesis 29:15–30. There are also Muslim reports which claim that Moses married Leah as well as Zipporah.[32] It seems that of the two daughters taken from the Jacob story, Leah remains the less desirable whereas Rachel and Zipporah have been conflated, the name Zipporah retained because of its association with the Moses story.

There is one report, given on the authority of Ibn Isḥāq, that the name of the second daughter was Shurfā.[33] Both al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Kathīr, who give this report, state that the name is also said to be Leah, possibly indicating that in some versions of the report from Ibn Isḥāq the name of the second daughter is not given as Shurfā but as Leah.[34] The name "Shurfā" of "Shirfā" is somewhat of an enigma. The closest Biblical parallel seems to be Shiphra who is mentioned as one of the midwives in Exodus 1:15, and is sent by Pharaoh to kill the male babies born to the Israelites. In the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 1:15, the two midwives are said to be the mother of Moses and either his sister or sister-in-law. Being the name of one of another pair of female characters from the Moses story, but not mentioned in the Quran, Shiphra could have been taken by Muslim exegetes as the name not of Moses' sister but the sister of his wife. It is also possible that the name Shirfā, especially written without points, could be related to the names of the two handmaids, Zilpah and Bilhah, given to Leah and Rachel in Genesis 29:24 and 29.

Also specific to the Jacob story and attributed to the account of Moses in Midian by Muslim exegetes is the account of the speckled sheep. There is a brief account in al-Zamakhsharī.

> Moses' father-in-law said to him: "I give to you from the litter of sheep every one of which is black and white." It was revealed to Moses in a dream: "Hit with your rod the water trough of the sheep." So he did it.

> Then he gave water to the sheep. Only black and white sheep were born so he got them all according to his agreement.[35]

This story is a close parallel to Genesis 30:25–43 in which Jacob makes an agreement with Laban to take only the speckled sheep, and then proceeds to take rods from different trees and place them peeled in the water troughs of the sheep while they are in heat. This particular passage from al-Zamakhsharī is also significant in its use of the phrase "adra'a wa dir'ā'i" to designate the speckled sheep, meaning specifically that the heads of the sheep be black and the thighs or rest of the body be white. The Hebrew of Genesis 30:32, but not of Genesis 30:33, 35, or 39, uses a similar expression specifying that the variegation of the sheep involved a certain color on the head and another color on the rest of the body. In the account by al-Zamakhsharī, the rod of Moses replaces the rods taken from different trees by Jacob in Genesis 30:37.

There are two different versions of a similar episode recorded in Ibn Kathīr. The first, given on the authority of the Prophet Muhammad, includes all of the important elements: the speckled sheep, Moses' striking the sheep with his rod, and the good milk-producing capacities of the sheep. Here, Moses' father-in-law is identified as the prophet Shu'ayb.

> When Moses wanted to depart from Shu'ayb, he ordered his wife to ask her father to give her some sheep off which to live. So he gave her his sheep that would be born in that year not of one color [min qālib lawn].
>
> He said: When a sheep passed, Moses would strike its side with the rod. All of the sheep gave birth to offspring not of one color. Each sheep gave birth to two and three young. None among them had overly large or overly narrow milk-producing capacities, nor too short or too long of teats.[36]

This story is expanded to include a fuller narrative in another report, attributed to the Prophet Muhammad.

> When Moses intended to depart from Shu'ayb, he commanded his wife to ask her father to give her something off which to live from among his sheep. From his sheep he gave to her those that would be born not of one color during that year. His sheep [at that time] were a perfect black.
>
> Then Moses hurried off with his rod. He held it by one end and then put it near the water trough. He caused the sheep to come and gave them water. Moses stood facing the water trough. No sheep came by whose side he did not hit.
>
> All of them mated, their teats enlarged, and they gave birth to speckled young. Except for one or two sheep, there was not among them overly large milk-producing capacities.
>
> Yaḥyā' said: Nor overly narrow milk-producing capacities. Ṣufwān said: Nor overly narrow milk-producing capacities. Abū Zar'ah said: Their backsides were right, neither too narrow of teats or too long nor too short.[37]

Both of these stories parallel the story given in al-Zamakhsharī, although they also mention details about the milk-producing capacities of the sheep which were born speckled. The relationship between the rod of Moses or the rods of the trees in the Jacob story, and between the fertility of the sheep, is an important element used by Muslim exegesis to link the Jacob and Moses stories.

Perhaps more significant for the Muslim exegetes, although missed entirely by Geiger and Speyer, are the traditions linking the two instances of God fighting with Moses and with Jacob. There is an unusual account of this combat in a report preserved by al-Zamakhsharī that links Moses' leaving Midian with his reception of the rod and the fertility of the sheep.

> When Moses prepared to go, Shu'ayb said to him: "When you reach the fork in the road do not go to your right. There is a pasture. There is nothing more in it except a dragon [tanīn] who will frighten you and your sheep. Take the sheep to the right out of the dragon's reach."
>
> The sheep went to the right and he was not able to stop them, so he followed in their tracks and found it to be grassy and fertile unlike anything he had seen. So he slept there. When the dragon arrived the rod fought the dragon until it killed it, and then returned to Moses' side bloody. When Moses saw the blood and the dragon having been killed he was rested.
>
> When he returned to Shu'ayb he touched the sheep. He found them full of abundant milk. Moses told him and he was happy for he knew that there was a certain affinity to Moses and the rod.

There are a number of parallels here to the account of God attacking Moses, found in Exodus 4:24–26. In both, Moses is taking leave of his father-in-law, though it does not seem that Moses is accompanied by his family in the account given by al-Zamakhsharī. In Exodus 4:24–26, Zipporah appears to cut the foreskin from their firstborn son Gershom and rub it on the genitals of Moses. This rubbing of the foreskin, and Zipporah's statement in Exodus 4:26 that Moses is now "a bridegroom of blood," seem to represent a substitute circumcision for Moses who may himself be uncircumcised at this point.[38] In the account of al-Zamakhsharī, it is likewise the rod of Moses, given to him by his wife Zipporah, that saves him from a supernatural threat. Also, the rod itself, which is rich in its symbolic representation of Moses' own fertility, especially when linked to the story of Jacob's rods and the fecundity of speckled sheep, is described in the account of al-Zamakhsharī as bloody, suggesting the circumcision of Moses.

Many modern Bible scholars, following some rabbinic exegesis, generally interpret Exodus 4:24–26 as implying that Moses is attacked because he has not circumcised his son, and in some accounts because he himself has not been circumcised, an obligation enjoined since the time of Abraham.[39] The release of Moses comes only after the circumcision is performed, and there is some debate whether Moses would have been aware of his obligation to circumcise his son, though apparently his wife, not an Israelite, knew that it was required in this

context. Other scholars question the direct link between the attack and circumcision, and instead stress that the circumcision be understood in closer relation to the Abraham story, suggesting that the circumcision is an expiatory substitute for the sacrifice of Moses' son. Such an interpretation is explicitly linked to a conflation of the attack on Moses with the attack of God upon Jacob in Genesis 32:23–32 and the Muslim exegesis of Q 3:93.

In Genesis 32:23–32 Jacob comes to a pass and sends his belongings to one side while he is alone on the other. That night he is attacked, by a being who is later associated with God, and is wounded in the hollow [kaff] of his thigh, also understood to be his genitals.[40] In the story given by al-Zamakhsharī, Moses also takes his sheep to one side, and is attacked during the night by a supernatural being. In al-Zamakhsharī's account, Moses is also warned to keep the sheep away from the reach or the "claw" [kaff] of the dragon, which is the same term used in Genesis 32:26 to indicate the spot where Jacob is injured.

The relationship between circumcision and the fertility of the sheep, evident from the end of al-Zamakhsharī's account, is already suggested in the episode of the speckled sheep in Genesis 30:37–39 where the shaving of the bark off the wooden rods results in the unusual fertility of the female sheep at the watering trough. There is a statement in the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 17:11 which emphasizes the link between circumcision and the pruning of trees mentioned in Leviticus 19:23–25.

> Abraham made the analogy as follows: the text uses the word "foreskin" to refer to a tree [Leviticus 19:23] and to refer to a man [Genesis 17:11]. Just as the foreskin of trees refers to the place where it yields fruit, the foreskin of man must refer to the place where he produces fruit.[41]

This association helps to explain the reasons behind the increased fertility of the sheep when Moses returns to his father-in-law having defeated the dragon. In both the speckled sheep episode from the Jacob story and the story of the dragon from al-Zamakhsharī, the rod of Moses represents fertility. The blood Moses finds on his rod in al-Zamakhsharī also parallels the blood of circumcision that saves Moses in Exodus 4:24–26. The beating of the dragon appears to be analogous to the beating of the sheep with the rod, while they are in heat, causing them to be more fertile.

In the Muslim exegesis of Q 3:93, there are accounts which also report on Jacob's fight with God. According to a report provided in Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī [d. 1272] on the authority of al-Ḍaḥḥāk, the angel attacked Jacob in the first place because Jacob had not fulfilled an earlier vow he had made with God.

> The reason for the angel injuring Jacob was that Jacob had vowed that if God gave him twelve sons and he reached Jerusalem safely, that he would sacrifice the last of his sons. This [injury] was an exemption from his vow.[42]

This may preserve an interpretation of the reasons for the divine attack on Jacob in the Biblical context of Genesis 32, and explain something of the origins of Jacob's prohibition of sinews, the subject of the exegesis of Q 3:93. Although Jacob does not explicitly vow to sacrifice his son in Genesis 28:20–22, he does vow to give God a tithe of everything God gives him if God returns him safely to his father. In the course of Genesis 29–32, Jacob acquires both livestock and sons through the intervention of God, though there is no indication that he tithes any of this to God.

This understanding of the attack is also consistent with some of the rabbinic exegesis of Genesis 32:23–33 which interprets the attack upon Jacob as due to Jacob's not fulfilling his vow to make a tithe to God of his livestock and sons. In the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, the attacking angel stops Jacob and demands that he tithe his livestock and sons. The Targum Yerushalmi on Genesis 32:25 also states that the angel appeared to Jacob in the shape of a man and reminded him that he had promised to tithe what he obtained from God, including his sons.[43] One account in the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer (37) states that Jacob tithed his livestock but upon counting his sons, excluded the firstborn children of the four mothers, and ended up with only eight sons, not enough to require a tithe.[44]

Genesis 32:15–22 and 33:1–11 recount how Jacob does not make a tithe to God as he crosses the river and thus returns safely to the land of his father as he mentioned as part of his vow in Genesis 28:20–22, but instead Jacob gives a gift of his livestock to his brother Esau. In the Midrash Tanḥuma and Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 32:21, it is stressed that Jacob is instead sending to Esau the tithe he should be giving to God. In Genesis 32:19, Jacob refers to Esau as "his lord," though he had promised to call Yahweh his God in Genesis 28:20–22. Ramban [1194–1270] in his exegesis of Genesis 32:21, states that Jacob sent the gift to Esau as a ransom to appease his older brother for when he gained his birthright. This showed that Jacob did not trust God's earlier promises including God's protection in bringing him back safely to his father.[45] The Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer also states specifically that Jacob took a "tithe" of his possessions and sent it to Esau, at which time God rebuked Jacob and modified his promise of Genesis 25:23 that the older Esau would serve the younger Jacob, so that Esau would rule over Jacob until the end of this world.[46]

It is interesting to note that there is some disagreement concerning which son Jacob was supposed to tithe to God. One account in the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, echoing Jubilees 32:3, states that Levi was counted as the tenth son and as such was dedicated to the service of God in the priesthood.[47] Exodus 13:11–16 contains the law of the firstborn, stated again in Exodus 22:28–29 and 34:19–20, mentioning the sacrifice of the firstborn son, though Levi was the third son born to Jacob and Leah.[48] In the account of al-Ḍaḥḥāk, Jacob is said to have promised to tithe the last of his sons which, at that time, would have been Joseph because Rachel had not yet given birth to Benjamin. Although not the first son born to Jacob, Joseph is the firstborn of Rachel for whom Jacob had originally contracted marriage with Laban. As Jon Levenson has pointed out, the well-known story of

Joseph is the loss and return of Jacob's beloved son, analogous to other Israelite rituals that substitute for the literal sacrifice of the first-born son.

> [T]he father's choicest son receives his life anew, and the man who, one way or another, gave him up or should have done so, gets back the offspring who had been marked for death.[49]

The redemption of the beloved son is accomplished, as was that of the son of Abraham, by an expiatory act, in the case of Jacob his injury, and in the case of Moses his circumcision.

It is unlikely, though, that the Muslim exegetes drew upon the parallel between these divine attacks to put Moses in the role of redeeming his son. There are no indications in the Muslim exegesis that any of the sons of Moses needed to be saved or would play an important role in later Israelite history. In some of the exegesis on Q 5:25, there are accounts that Joshua and Caleb, the only two of the original Israelites from Egypt to enter the Holy Land, were related to Moses. In his exegesis on Q 5:25, al-Qurṭubī reports on the authority of al-Zajjāj that Joshua was the son of Moses' brother, and on the authority of Qatādah that Caleb was the son of Moses' brother-in-law.[50] These two were saved from the punishment of wandering forty years in the wilderness, though it is clear from the accounts of their story that it was their own actions that spared them the punishment.

Note also that, in Exodus 4:24–26 and in the account of al-Zamakhsharī, Moses is both unharmed and has no part in his own salvation, or the implied redemption of his son. In addition, it is the Israelites, the people of Moses, rather than his own sons, with whom Moses is most closely associated in Muslim exegesis. It is the Israelites who are counted as the sons of Moses insofar as Moses is conflated with Jacob and thus made out to be Israel. Throughout, Muslim exegetes make the narratives of the Israelites in the Wilderness of Wandering to reflect on the life of Moses before the Exodus. The journey of the Israelites from Egypt to Midian, and God's attacks on them there are understood to parallel the events of Moses in his Midian episode.

Jethro and Shu'ayb

As indicated in some of the above reports, the Islamic exegesis on the character of Moses' father-in-law makes the striking identification of him as the Arab prophet Shu'ayb, mentioned in Q 7:85–93, 11:84–95, and 29:36–37 among other places. This exegetical strategy suggests a link between the Moses of Midian and the Moses of Q 18:60–82 by making parallels among the elements of the two stories.

According to Ibn Kathīr, it is the opinion of Mālik b. Anas that Jethro and Shu'ayb are the same person. This identification of Jethro and Shu'ayb could, in part, be due to the fact that in Q 7:85, 11:84, and 29:36 Shu'ayb is said to have been sent by God to Midian. It is also possible that Jethro's prophethood is related to the epithet of Exodus 2:16 and 3:1, repeated in al-Ṭabarī, and the different stories

associated with Jethro's occupation. Some of the confusion that exists in rabbinic sources over the multiple names assigned to the father-in-law character also seems to be reflected in the discussions over the relationship of Jethro and Shu'ayb. There are a number of reports that identify Jethro with Shu'ayb, but there is one report in two different versions, attributed to Ibn 'Ubaydah, that states that Jethro is the nephew [ibn akhī] of Shu'ayb.[51] Ibn Kathīr also reports that some say that Jethro was not Shu'ayb but was a believer from among the people who followed Shu'ayb.[52] These reports reflect a tradition that takes Jethro and Shu'ayb as distinct people but contemporaries if not related, as reflected, perhaps in the relation of Jethro and Reuel in rabbinic sources.

The mention of the daughters' father as the "priest" of Midian, not found in Q 28:21–28, seems to be specific to Exodus 2:16 and 3:1. Rashi states briefly that the person mentioned in Exodus 2:16 had abandoned the idol-worship to which the people of Midian adhered, so he was banished from their community. In the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 2:16, there is a more developed interpretation, attributed to the sages, which uses the designation of priest to explain why the daughters were doing the shepherding.

> The sages said: Jethro was first a priest to idolatrous worship, but when he saw that there was not truth in it, he despised it and thought of repenting even before Moses came. He summoned his townsmen and said: "Before I ministered unto you, but now I have become old. Choose another priest." He returned to them the insignia of his priesthood. Thus they excommunicated him so that no man should be in his company, work for him, or tend his flock. He asked the shepherds to tend his flock, but they refused, so he had to make his daughters work.

The rabbinic sources, apparently uneasy with the designation "priest" being applied to someone who did not worship the God of Israel, worked to explain this unusual reference. In the Targums, the term "priest" is replaced with "chief" or "lord." Rashi also explains that the term priest should be understood to mean that the person in Exodus 2:16 was chief among the Midianites, although it would remain for him to explain why, after this person had been banished from his position in the community, he is still called "priest" when Moses arrives. The change from priest to chief is reflected in the bulk of the reports given in al-Ṭabarī that call Jethro the chief [ṣāḥib] of Midian.[53]

It is also important to note that, although some Muslim exegetes state that the name of Moses' father-in-law was Jethro, that name does not occur in Exodus 2:15–21. The rabbinic commentaries on Exodus 2:16 identify the name of the father as Jethro on the basis of Exodus 3:1 which states that Moses was pasturing the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. Abraham Ibn Ezra [1089–1164] states that the person in Exodus 2:16 is not Reuel but Jethro despite the fact that Reuel is mentioned in Exodus 2:18 as the father of the daughters. Ramban explains that Jethro, on the basis that it is Jethro who is mentioned in

Numbers 10:29, having changed his name to Ḥobab, is the son of Reuel.[54] More recently, modern scholars have seen the names as evidence of different sources, or have interpreted Jethro not to be a proper name but an honorific title analogous with a similar Akkadian term [watru].[55] It is significant, perhaps, that Q 28:21–28 and the exegesis of those verses only posit the existence of a single character as Moses' father-in-law, although they entertain the existence of this person's relationship to the prophet Shu'ayb.

There is a criticism of the identification of Jethro and Shu'ayb based on the observation that the time period in which Shu'ayb lived was far removed from the time period in which Moses lived. Ibn Kathīr, in his commentary on Q 28:25, explains this interpretation.

> Others say: Shu'ayb was a long time before Moses because he [Shu'ayb] said to his people: "The people of Lot are not far off from you" [Q 11:89]. The people of Lot were destroyed in the time of Abraham, according to the text of the Quran. It is known that the period of time between Abraham and Moses was more than four hundred years.

This tradition, disassociating Jethro and Shu'ayb, is not found in the earliest collections of reports. Ibn Kathīr contends that the chains of transmission are unsound for the reports associating Jethro and Shu'ayb, and also mentions that the association seems to be due to a confusion with information taken from the "books of the Israelites."[56] He states that in the books of the Israelites the name of Moses' father-in-law is Thayrūn, and that Thayrūn is said to be the cousin of Shu'ayb.[57] This "Thayrūn" is probably a metathesized form of Jethro [Yathrūn]. Likewise, the Targum Onkelos of Exodus 3:1 gives the name of Jethro as "Yathrūn," including the "nūn" as does the Arabic spelling of the name.

Despite the fact that many of the exegetes recognized the disparity between the dates of the historical Shu'ayb and Moses, around four hundred years according to Ibn Kathīr, the identification of Jethro as Shu'ayb continued to be made. Ibn Kathīr himself quotes reports on the authority of the Prophet Muhammad that identify Jethro and Shu'ayb. It is possible that some of the exegesis makes this identification on the basis of a close association between Shu'ayb and al-Khiḍr. As was evident from the exegesis on Q 18:60–82, al-Khiḍr is considered to be immortal and is found linked to a number of other prophets, and is specifically mentioned as being active in the time of Abraham, when Abraham is in the vicinity of Midian. The exegetes make a number of close associations between the Moses of Midian and the Moses of Q 18:60–82. In Q 18:66–82, al-Khiḍr challenges Moses' concept of justice just as Jethro challenges Moses' dispensing of justice in Exodus 18. In Q 28:24, Moses takes refuge in the dark or the shade [ẓill]. This parallels Moses' taking refuge in a rock in Q 18:63 and in the interpretation of Q 18:61 that Moses followed the fish through a subterranean passage to find al-Khiḍr. Moses undertakes a journey in both accounts, he must undergo a trial or period of initiation, and both of the stories include numerous associations with fertility.

In both Q 28:21–28 and 18:60–82 Moses undertakes a long journey and ends up at a water source. The commentaries on Q 18:60 interpret Moses' destination, the meeting place of the two waters, as being at the ends of the Earth. The great distance of this journey is paralleled in Moses' journey to Midian which, according to the commentaries on Q 28:21, was of such a distance that the soles of Moses' feet fell off and his stomach was green from starvation or eating leaves. According to several reports attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, when Moses arrives in Midian he is so hungry that his entrails are green.

> When Moses arrived at the water it is said that the greenness of plants appeared in his stomach from emaciation. He said: "My Lord, I am in need of something good," meaning a full portion of food.[58]

In another report, it is said that the reason Moses' stomach is described as being green is because he had no food with him on his flight and had to eat leaves off trees during the trip. That Moses is described as being green is reflective of Khiḍr's name and association with plants and with fertility in general. It is also reminiscent of the related late antique accounts of the hairy anchorites and the ascetic journeys in search of Elijah or another gnostic master. Like the condition of Adam in the garden of Eden, when Moses arrives at Midian, he has no clothing, no money, and no food except for the herbs of wild plants.

The sort of transformation associated with Moses' journey to Midian, and the fertility he brings, is also attributed to Jacob, and as such may have contributed to the exegetes' use of the association of Q 28:21–28 with the Jacob story. For example, in his exegetical homily on the Jacob story, Ambrose also equates Jacob's transformation, from the youth who stole his brother's birthright to Israel the father of the twelve tribes, in terms of Jacob's association with fertility. The loss of Jacob's clothes during his journey to the well is supposed to represent the loss of Jacob's old self, the removal of his past inequity against his brother, and his return to the state of Adam.[59] Other points of comparison include Jacob's threat to Laban's women and sheep, Jacob's ability to multiply Laban's possessions, and the identification of Jacob's well with the water of life.[60] Ambrose specifically compares the almond rods Jacob uses to produce speckled sheep with the rod of Aaron that blossoms and bears almonds in Numbers 17:16–26. Later Christian and rabbinic exegesis often conflate the rod of Aaron with the rod of Moses.[61] Note also that in Exodus 15:22–27 Moses throws some wood into a pool of bitter water making it sweet for the Israelites to drink, closely paralleling the action of Jacob with the water of the sheep.

In both his journey to meet al-Khiḍr and to meet Shu'ayb, Moses is led by divine guidance to a water source. The exegetes point out that the meeting place of the two waters is identified by the unusual loss of the fish in Q 18:61. In the exegesis of Q 28:21, it is reported that Moses was guided by an angel on horseback with a spear, or by a magical lion.[62] Many of the exegetes also parallel the association of water and fertility in both Q 28:21–28 and 18:60–82, drawing

in particular upon the characteristics attributed to al-Khiḍr and the Edenic meeting place of the two waters. In the exegesis of Q 28:21–28 and 18:60–82, several elements associate both a rock and water with fertility.[63] Moses' moving of the rock from the mouth of the well leads to his watering of the sheep just as his striking of the rock in the wilderness produces water for the Israelites. This is also connected, in the exegesis of Q 28:28, to the representation of fertility in Moses' use of the rod to produce speckled sheep while the sheep are drinking water.[64]

The rod itself signifies many of the same elements as does al-Khiḍr in the exegesis of Q 18:60–82. It is explicitly linked to immortality and fertility, both characteristics attributed to al-Khiḍr. In the account, preserved by al-Zamakhsharī, of the dragon's defeat in the Eden-like garden while Moses slept with his flock, the rod is associated with the blood of circumcision. The parallel account of Jacob's fight with God and his being wounded in his genitals is likewise linked with his offspring. In another report preserved in al-Zamakhsharī, the rod is said to have been brought down from the garden of Eden with Adam and passed down to the prophet Shu'ayb.

> It is reported that Shu'ayb had in his possession the rod of the prophets. He said to Moses during the night: "Enter this house and take a rod from among these rods." He took the rod which Adam had taken from the garden of Eden. It continued to be passed down by the prophets until it was placed with Shu'ayb.
>
> He [Shu'ayb] felt the rod, for he was blind, and took it back. He said: "Another one." But seven times only this one was put into his hand, so he knew that there was a certain quality to him [Moses].[65]

In this account, the prophets through whom the rod passed from Adam to Moses are not mentioned. There is another version of the account of the rod being passed directly from Adam to Moses, mentioned in al-Zamakhsharī but first found, in a slightly different form, in al-Ṭabarī.

> It is also said: Gabriel took it after the death of Adam and it was with him until he gave it to Moses during the night.[66]

Other exegesis also indicates that Adam took this rod from the Tree of Life in the garden of Eden, and this parallels similar accounts in Jewish and Christian accounts of the rod.

The rod is also associated with Moses' exercise of power over nature. In the exegesis of Q 2:60 and 5:21–26, Moses produces water out of a rock for the twelve tribes of the Israelites. It is possible that this parallels Exodus 17:1–7 where Moses strikes a rock with his rod to produce water for the Israelites to drink in the wilderness, but may also be related to the later account of the water from the rock in Numbers 20. The rôle of the rod in striking the sheep, causing them to bear speckled young with perfect milk-producing capacities, is also apropos as

is the association of Moses' rod with the well of Midian and Jacob's rods at the water troughs. Throughout the stories of Moses, in Midian, before the Pharaoh, and in the Wilderness of Wandering, the rod is linked to supernatural feats. As a symbol of Moses' authority, the rod is used to defeat enemies a number of times. With the rod, Moses defeats Pharaoh with plagues (Q 7:127–136) and eventually drowns him and his armies in the sea (Q 26:63–68). In his exegesis of Q 5:21–26, al-Ṭabarī reports that Moses used his rod to defeat the giant Og when the Israelites refused to enter the Holy Land. Exodus 17:8–16 also describes how the Israelites were able to defeat the Amalekites as long as Moses held the rod up in the air, and there are related traditions of Moses as king, partly on the basis of Deuteronomy 33:5, but also because of the association of his rod with a royal scepter.[67]

The association of the rod with fertility, and its link to the well of Midian, is closely related to Moses' marriage and offspring. In a number of varying accounts, this is shown explicitly in Moses' obtaining of the rod and Zipporah in marriage. An early account is found in al-Ṭabarī, given on the authority of al-Suddī.

> al-Suddī said: The father of the two women commanded one of his daughters to bring Moses a rod, so she brought him a rod. It was this rod that an angel in the form of a man had put in his [the father's] charge. The girl entered and took the rod and brought it to him. When the old man saw it he said to bring another one. So she returned and took another one but it was the same rod that had been in her hand. So he sent her back again. Each time she returned with the same rod in her hand. When he saw this he took it and sent it out with Moses, and he shepherded with the rod.
>
> Later, the old man regretted this and said that the rod had been entrusted to him. So he went out to meet Moses. When he met him he said: "Give me the rod." Moses said: "It is my rod," and he refused to give it to him. They quarreled and decided to have the matter between them settled by the first man that they met. So an angel came to them, walking. He said: "Put the rod in the ground. Whoever can pull it out, the rod belongs to him." The old man tried but was not able. Moses took it into his hand and lifted it. So the old man left it to him. He shepherded for him for ten years. 'Abdallāh b. 'Abbās said: Moses fulfilled the longer of the two periods of time.[68]

Note that, in this account, Moses obtains the rod before he works the ten years and is allowed to marry Zipporah. The rôle of Zipporah in obtaining the rod for Moses, however, suggests that the rod and the marriage are to be linked. It is Zipporah who brings the rod to Moses despite her father's protests. In addition, the link with the shepherding foreshadows the use of the rod in the production of the speckled sheep with the perfect milk-producing capacities.

The feats and trials Moses must perform and undergo are themselves directly linked to the acquisition of the rod and Zipporah. Moses' moving the rock from the mouth of the well is perhaps the most evident feat of strength, one that eventually leads to his marriage and receipt of the rod. In the late pseudepigraphic *Sefer ha-Yashar*, Moses finds the rod, made out of sapphire, planted in the garden behind the house of his future father-in-law who had imprisoned him in a hole in the ground for ten years. During this time he was kept alive only by Zipporah's sneaking him food from time to time. The rod is inscribed with the name of God, and because Moses is able to read this name, he is able to take the rod from the ground although all the people of Midian had tried previously with no success to pull out the rod so that they would get to marry Zipporah.[69] When Moses removes the rod, he is married to Zipporah.[70] In this and the Muslim exegetical accounts, the rod seems to be associated with the ritual initiation of Moses, one that results in his marriage and eventual role as prophet and leader of the Israelites.[71]

In the *Sefer ha-Yashar*, the role of Zipporah in saving Moses by providing him with food is parallel to her part in providing him the rod. Q 28:24, interpreted by the Muslim exegetes as a parallel to Genesis 28:20–22, describes Moses' request to God to send him a "good thing" which is also understood to be a request for food which the daughters overhear and, as a result, ask their father to hire Moses.[72] Rashi also remarks, in his commentary on Exodus 2:20, and in his commentary on an analogous phrase in Genesis 39:6, that the fathers' statement to call Moses from the well "that he may eat bread" is to be interpreted as extending to Moses the hand of a daughter in marriage. A report, given by al-Ṭabarī, on the authority of Ibn Yazīd, makes a similar connection.

> Ibn Yazīd said: When the father married his daughter to Moses, he said to Moses: "Enter this house and take a rod upon which you can lean." So he entered and when he stood in the door of the house a rod flew toward him and he took it. The father said: "Return it and take another instead." So he returned it and went to take another when the same rod flew toward him. The father said: "Return it." This happened three times and he said: "I am not able to get any other rod today." So the father turned to his daughter and said: "You are the wife of a prophet." The person who said this mentioned that the rod was a sign given to Moses by Gabriel.[73]

In this account, the marriage of Zipporah to Moses coincides with his acquisition of the rod, explicitly connecting Moses' obtaining of the rod with his prophetic status and his marriage to Zipporah. In addition, it is with this rod that Moses is able to produce the speckled sheep and eventually earn his leave from his father-in-law Shu'ayb.

In Q 18:66–82, Moses undergoes a trial period that he ultimately fails, both in not comprehending God's justice and in not abiding by his promise not to question al-Khiḍr. The exegesis of Q 28:21–28 makes Moses' prophethood dependent upon his completion of a trial as well. But his success in these trials is due to the

intervention of the rod, Zipporah, and in one case, an angel. It is Zipporah who gives Moses the rod despite her father's objections. In the *Sefer ha-Yashar*, it is Zipporah who provides Moses with food so that he can survive his imprisonment for ten years. The defeat of the dragon is also by the agency of the rod while Moses slept, and his ability to leave Midian and return to Egypt was accomplished by the rod's production of the speckled sheep. Muslim exegesis conflates Moses with Jacob/Israel and uses the identification of the rod, the well, and Shu'ayb to link the Moses of Midian to the message of Q 18:60–82 and its resonance with Exodus 18.

Conclusions

The Muslim exegetical association of the rod of Moses with the line of prophets originating with Adam in the garden of Eden is consistent with other Jewish and Christian interpretations of this rod. In the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, for example, the transmission of the rod is used to demonstrate the legitimacy of Moses by linking his story to the earlier stories of the patriarchs found in Genesis.[74] The same tradition is used in Christian sources to stress the continuity of Jesus with the narrative of this same line of Biblical prophets. The thirteenth-century *Book of the Bee* traces the rod from the garden of Eden, through the prophets, to the cross on which Jesus was crucified.[75] By identifying Jethro with the prophet Shu'ayb, Muslim exegetes capitalize on the Midianite ambiguity of the Biblical Jethro, and highlight that the rod and prophethood of Moses are bequeathed from a line back to Ishmael, one excluding Isaac and Jacob.

It is significant that by focusing on these details and making these many small parallels between Moses and Jacob on the one hand and Jethro and Shu'ayb on the other, the exegesis of Q 28:21–28 emphasizes the tension between the different prophetic lines that originate with Abraham. Moses is the offspring of Isaac and Jacob with whom he is conflated while Shu'ayb is the Arab prophet to Midian.[76] These associations also draw upon the exegesis of Q 18:60–82 which places the meeting of Moses and al-Khiḍr within the context of the meeting of Moses and Jethro in Exodus 18 with its suggestion of the Arab origins of Moses' prophethood. The passive role played by Moses in the accounts of his encounters with supernatural foes also contrasts with Jacob's combat and injury as a redemption of his son. In Exodus 4:24–26 it is Zipporah, the daughter of Jethro the Midianite, who saves Moses by making his son comply with the covenant of circumcision made by Abraham, just as it is the rod of Shu'ayb that saves Moses from the dragon while he sleeps.

Through Moses and his conflation with Jacob, the Muslim exegetes recall the story of the redemption of Abraham's son whose lineage would include the Prophet Muhammad, and another son whose offspring were to be the Israelites. Moses, as a microcosm of Israel, comes to signify the religion of the Jews while Abraham and his establishment of religion at the sanctuary at Mecca is a forerunner of the Prophet Muhammad and Islam.

3

SANCTUARY AT BEERSHEBA AND MECCA

Chapter 2 focused on the exegesis of the Midian episode in Q 28:21–28 and the conflation of Moses with Jacob and Israel. Through the application of details from the Jacob story of Genesis 28:10–31:21, and the conflation of Jethro and Shu'ayb, the exegetes highlight a distinction between the two prophetic lines issuing from Abraham: the Israelite line of Moses and the Arab line of Muhammad. The motif of a well or water-source has been the focal point in the exegesis of Q 18:60–82 and 28:21–28. In both cases, the exegetes have used the relationship of Moses to water as a means for defining his character and significance in the text of the Quran. Similarly, accounts of Abraham's establishing of a well at Beersheba and the sanctuary at Mecca are connected with the figure of Dhu al-Qarnayn and his relationship to Moses.

Dhu al-Qarnayn's involvement with Abraham at Beersheba and Mecca, within the context of his quest for the water of life, can be found in two different accounts. The first is an episode given on the authority of Ibn Abī Ḥātim.

> Ibn Abī Ḥātim mentioned that he [Abraham] built it [place of the Ka'bah] from five mountains, and that Dhu al-Qarnayn, who was king of the earth then, passed by the two of them [Abraham and Ishmael] while they were building it.
>
> He [Dhu al-Qarnayn] said: "Who ordered you to do this?" Abraham said: "God ordered us to do this." He [Dhu al-Qarnayn said]: "Can you demonstrate to me what you say?" Then five rams witnessed that he had ordered him to do this, so he believed and was faithful.
>
> al-Azraqī mentioned that he [Dhu al-Qarnayn] circumambulated the house with Abraham.[1]

This report of an encounter between Abraham and Dhu al-Qarnayn is puzzling, especially if Dhu al-Qarnayn is to be identified with Alexander the Great or Moses, both of whom were supposed to have lived a long time after Abraham. The mention of the place of the Ka'bah being built from the "five mountains" is also reminiscent of the reports of Adam building the Ka'bah after his expulsion from the garden of Eden.

In another account, reported by al-Ṭabarī, the meeting between Abraham and Dhu al-Qarnayn takes place at Beersheba.

> al-Khiḍr was from the days of Afrīdūn the king, son of Athfīyān according to the opinion of the majority of the people of the first book, before Moses b. 'Imrān. It is said that he was in charge of the vanguard of Dhu al-Qarnayn the great, who was from the days of Abraham, the friend of God.
>
> It was he [Dhu al-Qarnayn] who passed judgment for him [Abraham] at Beersheba. This was a well Abraham had dug for his flocks in the desert of Jordan [al-Urdunn]. The people of Jordan claimed the land on which Abraham had dug his well, so Abraham brought them for judgment before Dhu al-Qarnayn, about whom it is mentioned that al-Khiḍr was in charge of his vanguard during the days of his journeys in the lands, that he [al-Khiḍr] reached the river of life with Dhu al-Qarnayn and drank from its water without knowing. Dhu al-Qarnayn and those with him did not know. He became immortal and lives with them until now.[2]

This account, taking place at Beersheba, seems to place Dhu al-Qarnayn in the role of Abimelech from Genesis 21:22–34, arbitrating between Abraham and the local people over the water of Beersheba. It is striking, though, that this account is attached to the mention of al-Khiḍr drinking from the water of life, associating the well of Beersheba with the water of life for which Dhu al-Qarnayn searches.

The presence of Dhu al-Qarnayn at both Beersheba and Mecca suggests a conflation of the two locations, and of Abraham's activities in both places. The mention of the five rams testifying for Abraham's veracity, given in Ibn Kathīr's account of the encounter between Abraham and Dhu al-Qarnayn in Mecca, recalls the episode of the well of Beersheba. Abraham's gift of seven rams at Beersheba, whether in Genesis 21:27–31 or later rabbinic and Islamic accounts, is usually cited as proof that the water of the well belongs to Abraham. In addition, the close association of Beersheba with Mecca is consistent with Biblical and other extra-Quranic accounts relating Beersheba and Abraham's activities there to the establishment of other shrines and sanctuaries. Other Islamic accounts concerning Beersheba and Mecca also make the connection between the two locations, suggesting that the insertion of Dhu al-Qarnayn and the conflation of Beersheba and Mecca in these reports is part of a conscious exegetical strategy.

The following pages examine the conflation of Beersheba and Mecca in Islamic exegesis, with attention to how they relate to contrasts already noted between Moses and the Prophet Muhammad. The first section reviews the evidence from Biblical and rabbinic interpretation concerning the existence of a sanctuary built by Abraham at Beersheba. The second section centers on additional Islamic accounts of the Beersheba episode which associate Abraham

with Beersheba and Mecca in ways that resonate with Jewish and other late antique traditions and motifs. The third section looks at some of the further competing identifications of Abraham with Mecca, and Moses and Sinai with Jerusalem. This analysis shows how Muslim exegetes were able to draw upon Genesis 21:22–34 to provide a Biblical yet non-Mosaic precedent for the sanctuary of Abraham, and thus the origins of Islam at Mecca.

Genesis 21:22–34

The account of the well at Beersheba in Genesis 21:22–34 is a brief and unusual narrative. For example, the association of Abimelech and the territory around Beersheba with the Philistines seems to be an anachronism.[3] This might also be related to the description of Abraham as a "prophet" [nābî'], an unusual reference as applied to Abraham in the context of Genesis, in the earlier account of a meeting between Abraham and Abimelech.[4] There has also been some speculation about the mixed redaction of this narrative. Some scholars seem to agree on the existence of two distinct but interdependent layers within the account: layer A (verses 22–24, 27, 32) and layer B (25–26, 28–30, 31). Whether or not these layers are supposed to be attributed to an E or J source is unclear.[5] Verse 33 is generally regarded as foreign to the source of the rest of the narrative. Some of these conclusions regarding the different layers of the narrative stem from the apparent confusion in the text over the etiology of the name Beersheba, whether it is to be understood as the well of the "seven" referring to the seven sheep of Abraham, or the well of the "oath" referring to the oath Abraham and Abimelech make.

Genesis 21:22–34 also comes at an awkward place in the larger narrative of the Abraham story. It is not attached directly to the previous narrative of Abraham and Abimelech in Genesis 20, but does seem to parallel closely the story of Abraham and the Pharaoh in Genesis 12:10–20 and the story about the relations between Isaac and Abimelech in Genesis 26. In the Genesis Apocryphon, the account in Genesis 12 is conflated with the account in Genesis 20. It describes the Pharaoh as the king who swears an oath that he did not touch Sarah. He also gives silver and gold to Abraham as reparation for this act, perhaps in consonance with the dowry required for sex with an unbetrothed virgin in Exodus 22:15–17 and Deuteronomy 22:25–29. Such a conflation might indicate an interpretation shared by a number of contemporary scholars, that duplication of accounts in Genesis 12:10–20, Genesis 20, and also Genesis 26, represents either different versions of the same event or a motif that is repeated for narrative emphasis.

The association of Genesis 20 with Genesis 26:1–14 is of particular interest because of the parallels it suggests between the well episodes in Genesis 21:22–34 and 26:15–33. The first part of Genesis 26, verses 1–14, seems to be an ironic replay of the Abraham story in Genesis 20. Although Isaac passes off Rebecca as his sister, just as Abraham had earlier passed off Sarah as his sister, Abimelech does not desire to take Rebecca as a wife but instead sees Isaac and Rebecca in what appears to be incestuous sexual play. Similarly, the story of Abraham's

alliance with Abimelech in Genesis 21:22–34 is reflected in the story of Isaac's alliance with Abimelech in Genesis 26:15–31.[6] It is possible that these allusions to Abraham in Genesis 26 serve to strengthen the otherwise weakly developed character of Isaac.

These parallels between the Abraham and Isaac stories are significant because of the additional material that the Abraham story includes exclusive of the Isaac story. Inserted between the end of the account of Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 20, and Abraham at Beersheba, is the birth of Isaac in Genesis 21:1–7 and the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael in Genesis 21:8–21. A similar juxtaposition of stories occurs inverted with the earlier expulsion of Hagar pregnant with Ishmael in Genesis 16, followed by two accounts of the annunciation of Isaac's birth in Genesis 17 and 18:1–16.[7] In Genesis 17, when Hagar leaves the first time, there is also mention of a well that plays an important rôle in the return of Hagar (and Ishmael) to Abraham. Despite the fact that Ishmael is said to be thirteen years old before the birth of Isaac in Genesis 17:25, and Hagar and Ishmael are not expelled this second time until Isaac is weaned, Ishmael seems to be treated as an infant still in Genesis 21, especially in verses 14–19.[8] In this second story of expulsion, there is also mention of a well, one that seems to appear by divine intervention in verse 19. Although the well is not identified, it is clear from verse 14 that the well is located in the area of Beersheba. Given the insertion of the birth of Isaac and second expulsion story, it seems likely that the story of Abraham at Beersheba in verses 22–34 is intended to identify the earlier origins of the well which then saves Hagar and Ishmael in verse 19.

This close relationship between Hagar and Ishmael's expulsion and the story of Abraham at Beersheba is developed in the later exegetical combination of stories in Genesis 20 and 21. The development of this relationship capitalizes on a small but striking difference between the account of Abraham at Beersheba in Genesis 21 and the account of Isaac in Genesis 26. Genesis 21:33 adds that Abraham planted a tamarisk tree [eshel] at Beersheba and invoked there the name of Yahweh, eternal God [el 'ōlām].[9] The mention of a tamarisk tree also occurs in 1 Samuel 22:6, marking the spot in Gibeah where Saul sits in a position of military authority, spear in hand, surrounded by his staff. 1 Samuel 31:13 also records that the bones of Saul and his sons are buried under the tamarisk tree of Jabesh. In both of these cases connected with Saul, the tamarisk tree seems to be marking a shrine of some type, as it seems to be in Genesis 21:33.

Other elements in Genesis 21 also indicate that the episode of Abraham's well at Beersheba is related to the establishment of a shrine or cult center. Related to verse 33, there is some question about the identity of the "el 'ōlām" mentioned at the end of Genesis 21:33. The Hebrew is normally translated as "eternal God" but the Samaritan has "God of the world" [el ha-'ōlām], followed by the Syriac with "God of the worlds" [alāhā de-'olmē]. Others have taken the name as a reference not to Yahweh, but to another local deity of Beersheba.[10] This latter interpretation is based, in part, on the associations of the tamarisk tree and the well itself with descriptions of fertility shrines. The association of the well at Beersheba with

a fertility shrine is also suggested in the story of Judah and Tamar in Genesis 38:1–30. Judah's reference to the disguised Tamar as a "cult prostitute" [qedēshah] is a claim apparently linked to his meeting with her at the "entrance to the two wells" [fetaḥ 'enayīm].[11]

Interpreting Abraham's planting of the tamarisk tree as the establishment of a shrine would also be consistent with evidence beyond the Abraham story itself. For example, numerous references to the use of trees and wells as markers of shrines are attested, both from archaeological, textual, and ethnographic research. There is also evidence of a cultic shrine to Yahweh later at Beersheba. 2 Kings 23:8 mentions a "high place" at Beersheba that was destroyed by Josiah. The existence of such local shrines to Yahweh is also mentioned in 1 Kings 3:2. Although there is some debate regarding the dating of the ruins at Beersheba,[12] the existence of a later shrine at this spot might have influenced the exegesis of Genesis 21:33, making Abraham to be the original founder of the later shrine to Yahweh at Beersheba.

This description of Abraham, the well, and the tree in Genesis 21 coincides with stories about the establishment of other shrines in the Abraham and Jacob stories. The etiological character of Genesis 21, and by extension Genesis 26, compares to the function of the narratives concerning the shrine at Bethel [Gen. 28:18–19], and at Galeed and Mizpah [Gen. 31:47–49]. In both of these cases, like that of Beersheba, the name seems to commemorate a covenant or oath between the patriarch and God or a third party. The establishment of altars or shrines to Yahweh at the different locations in which Abraham settles seems to punctuate Abraham's wanderings: the oak of Moreh in Shechem [Gen. 12:6–7] and the oak of Mamre in Hebron [Gen. 13:18]. In both of these cases, as in the case of the episode at Beersheba, there is a special tree marking the site of the shrine. At both of these locations, as in Genesis 21:33, Abraham builds an altar to Yahweh, invokes Yahweh, or does both as in the case of his stopping between Bethel and Ai [Gen. 12:8]. These occurrences suggest a pattern in the context of which the episode at Beersheba also could be interpreted to represent Abraham's founding of a shrine to Yahweh.

The mention of Abraham planting a tamarisk in Genesis 21:33, and its association with the establishment of a cultic shrine, is further developed in later exegesis of the Beersheba story. There does seem to be a tradition that eschews the implication that the "tamarisk" of the Masoretic text refers to a cultic shrine. For example, the Targum Onkelos uses a cognate accusative to read "he planted a plant" [neṣib nīṣbā], or "he planted a tree" [neṣīb īlanā].[13] The Peshiṭta also uses the cognate accusative, but adds "Abraham" like the Septuagint, Samaritan, and Vulgate, to read: "Abraham planted a plant" [naṣaba neṣbatā].[14] It is possible, however, that the marker of the plural could have been omitted defectively in the Syriac text, and that the Syriac reflects the understanding given in the Septuagint and Vulgate.

Some later rabbinic exegesis seems to have recognized these attempts to avoid the association of Abraham's actions with the establishment of a shrine at Beersheba. Ramban preserves two solutions to the interpretation of Genesis 21:33.

> It is written that Abraham invoked the name of God who orders time by his strength, or that heaven and earth are being called the world ['ōlām] in the expression used by our rabbis. It informs us by this that Abraham invoked and made known to creation the secret of the ordering of the entire world, that it is in the name of God the mighty in strength, that he is supreme over all.
>
> The Rabbi [Rambam] said in the *Moreh Nebūkhīm* that this refers to the preexistence of the Godhead because Abraham made it known that it existed before time, but Onkelos said that "he invoked" means he prayed.[15]

These two traditions both seem to reflect attempts to avoid the association of the term "el 'ōlām" with a pre-Israelite deity at Beersheba. Rambam [Maimonides, 1135–1205] explains Abraham's invoking the name of Yahweh and the following epithet as a theological statement about the preexistence of God.[16] This would be consistent with the language of the Masoretic text itself. As Ramban also reports, Onkelos reads that Abraham "prayed [ṣalī] there in the name of the Lord, God of the world." This use of "pray" limits the more ambiguous "invoke" [vay-yiqra'], avoiding the possible link between Abraham's actions and his establishment of a shrine.

Both the Septuagint and the Vulgate understand the "tamarisk" [eshel] of the Masoretic text as "grove" or "orchard" of trees. The Septuagint has αρουραν, and the Vulgate has *nemus*. These translations suggest that the Hebrew word "eshel" be understood not as referring to a single "tamarisk" tree, but rather to the planting of a larger plot of land. It is possible that "eshel" is related to the Akkadian *ashlu* meaning "rope" but used in Nuzi texts to designate a strip of arable land.[17] This possible link to the Akkadian is further supported by the usage of the Greek αρουραν as a unit of measurement in Egypt, designating a certain area that is planted with trees.

This understanding of Abraham planting a grove at Beersheba is further amplified in some of the texts of the Palestinian Targums. For example, the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan translates the Masoretic text "eshel" as "garden" or "paradise" [pardesā].

> He planted a garden at the well of the seven young lambs [sheba' ḥūrfan], and established within it food and drink for those passing by and for those coming. Thus he would call out to them there: "Thank and praise in the name of the spoken command [memra] of the Lord, God of the world [elahā 'almā]."

Notice that the phrase in the Masoretic text stating that Abraham "invoked the name of Yahweh, the everlasting God" is also converted here to a statement that Abraham makes not as a consecration of the shrine at Beersheba but as a summons to the people visiting his sanctuary. Similar glosses are found in the Targum Neofiti and other Palestinian Targum manuscripts.

> Abraham planted a garden at Beersheba, and established within it food and drink for people nearby. While eating and drinking, they would try

> to pay a price for what they had eaten and drank, but he was not willing to accept it from them. Our father Abraham would say to them: "[It is] from he who spoke and the world was by his spoken command. Pray before your father who is in heaven because it is from his excess that you eat and drink." They did not move from their place until he converted them and taught them the way of the world. Abraham prayed there in the name of the spoken command of the Lord, God of the world.[18]

This fuller version corresponds with that found in the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, but also more adequately explains the reference to "God of the world." Here, Abraham's use of this unusual epithet as a reference to Yahweh seems to be related to his teaching about God as the creator of the world. The Palestinian Targums thus also eschew the possible Masoretic text reference to a pre-Israelite deity associated with Beersheba, replacing this reference to the notion of an eternal God with a creator God who provides the food and drink of the earth.

The motif of God as creator and provider of food and drink coincides with the idea that Abraham established a sanctuary in Beersheba. Using the term "garden" or "paradise" [pardesā], the Palestinian Targums make allusion to the garden of Eden. God provides for all of the needs of Adam and Eve, including clothing but especially food which they are not required to cultivate until after they are expelled in Genesis 3:18–19. Note also, that in Genesis 3:21 Adam and Eve are clothed for the first time in skins. In the longer recensions of the Beersheba story associated with the Targum Neofiti, Abraham gives people food and drink, claiming, however, that the food and drink is not from him but from God, whom they must thank and praise. The Palestinian Targums place Abraham in the rôle of gardener and creator of the sanctuary at Beersheba. In the sanctuary at Beersheba, like that at Eden, the earthly needs of the inhabitants are satisfied within the gardens themselves without reference to the requirements of the outside world.

Other rabbinic traditions develop this notion of the sanctuary at Beersheba providing all the needs of those who resided there. For example, in the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 21:33, the term "eshel" is interpreted as meaning either a garden or an inn.

> R. Judah said: eshel means a garden, the word meaning "ask" [she'al] for whatever you wish: figs, grapes, or pomegranates.
>
> R. Nehemiah said: eshel means an inn. The word means "ask" whatever you desire: meat, wine, or eggs.[19]

These opinions seem to derive from parallel interpretations of "eshel" found in Sotah 10a of the Babylonian Talmud and repeated in Rashi's commentary on Genesis 21:33.

> Rab and Samuel [disagree]. One of them said: [it is] a garden from which to supply fruit for guests at their meal. The other said: [it is] an inn for lodging. In it were all kinds of fruit.[20]

All of these interpretations agree that the "eshel" that Abraham established, whether a garden or an inn, provided for all the needs of the people who stayed there as guests. Note, however, that only in the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis, in the opinion attributed to R. Nehemiah, are the food offerings described as prepared foods. In the other opinions, the food is produce from the garden, including the fruit offered at the inn in the opinion attributed to Samuel by Rashi. The tradition of the inn could be derived secondarily from the tradition of Abraham planting a garden or establishing a natural sanctuary at Beersheba, emphasizing the lesson Abraham was able to teach about God as creator of the world, by providing for the guests' needs.

The Midrash Rabbah on Genesis also preserves another interpretation of the "eshel" established by Abraham, associating it with the "eshel" mentioned in 1 Samuel 22:6.

> R. Judah said: eshel means a court of law, as in the verse: "Now Saul was sitting in Gibeah, under the eshel in Ramah."[21]

This opinion alludes to the interpretation of the scene described in 1 Samuel 22:6–18 as Saul's holding a session of a court of law. The "eshel" in 1 Samuel 22:6 is taken as a reference to this court of law, and equated with the "eshel" in Genesis 21:33, ignoring the problematic reference to an "eshel" as marker of a burial site in 1 Samuel 31:13.

This also could be a reference to the establishment of a court of law by Moses in the wilderness at Massah and Meribah in Exodus 17:7. The Mekhilta de Rabbi Shimon b. Yoḥai preserves an interpretation that makes this connection.

> R. Joshua says: Moses called it Massah and Meribah. R. Eliezer ha-Moda'ī said: God called the place Massah and Meribah, because we read: "he called the name of the place..." From this [it is established that] God [called] the great court of law ["the place"].[22]

The tenuous association between the naming of Massah and Meribah, and the calling of the great court of law "the place" could be based on the contention that takes place between the Israelites and Yahweh in Exodus 17:7.[23] "Massah" means "trial" and "Meribah" means "contention." The disagreement over whether it is Moses or Yahweh who "invokes" [vay-yiqra'] the name Massah and Meribah at this spot, and the etiological significance of Exodus 17:7, roughly correspond to Abraham's invoking of God and the etiological character of Genesis 21:22–34. Most significant, however, is the parallel between the two wells: The water of Moses at Massah and Meribah and the well of Abraham at Beersheba.

The evidence for the conflation of Beersheba and the wells of Moses in the Wilderness of Wandering is provided in rabbinic exegesis of Exodus 17:7 and Numbers 20:1–11. Both Exodus 17:7 and Numbers 20:1–11 give accounts of the Israelites' grumbling and Moses producing water for them at Meribah.

In Numbers 20:5, the Israelites make their complaint in terms of the land's lack of produce.

> It [Meribah] is a place unfit for sowing. It has no figs, no grapes, no pomegranates, and there is not even water to drink!

Concerning this grumbling, the Midrash Rabbah and Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael on Exodus 17:7 preserve explanations that closely parallel the complaints of the Israelites found in Numbers 20:5.

> R. Nehemiah said: If he [Yahweh or Moses] will provide us with sufficient food like a king who dwells in a city without its inhabitants having constant recourse to him, then we will serve him; but if not, we will rebel against him.[24]
>
> R. Eliezer said: They said: If he supplies all our needs we will serve him.[25]

Both of these opinions, coinciding with the comment in Numbers 20:13, interpret the Israelites' grumbling as a challenge to Moses, or to Yahweh through Moses. If Yahweh can provide water and fruit for the Israelites then they agree to follow him. That the demands of the Israelites, and what Moses produces with his rod, parallel the sanctuary of Abraham at Beersheba, seems to be the basis for the rabbinic conflation of the wells at Meribah and Beersheba.

The exegesis of the Meribah episode makes two references to the story of Abraham's sanctuary at Beersheba. On the one hand, the mention of the lack of fruit and water directly corresponds to what Abraham is able to offer to the guests in his sanctuary at Beersheba. The specification of figs, grapes, and pomegranates listed in Numbers 20:5 is identical to the list of fruits mentioned by R. Judah in the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 21:33 as being offered to Abraham's guests. On the other hand, the exegesis of both the Meribah and Beersheba episodes stresses the issue of God's universality. In both the Midrash Rabbah and the Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael on Exodus 17:7, the Israelites' challenge to Yahweh is interpreted as a challenge to his status as God.

> R. Joshua said: The Israelites said: If he is master over all works as he is master over us, we will serve him, but if he is not, we will not serve him.[26]

The Israelites will serve God if he proves to be more than a tribal deity, a God of creation. The proof of his status as a creator God is his ability to provide a sanctuary in the wilderness for the Israelites. This same argument, although inverted, seems to be used by Abraham with the guests at the sanctuary in Beersheba. The fact that God provides fruit and water in the midst of the wilderness at Beersheba is proof that he is the creator of the world.

The association of a wilderness sanctuary as a testament to monotheism is not limited to the well at Meribah and the well at Beersheba. Rabbinic exegesis also links the well at Meribah, and its associations with the well at Beersheba, with a number of diverse traditions regarding the so-called "well of Miriam" not found mentioned as such but derived from a reference to Miriam's death at Meribah in Numbers 20:1. In the Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael, the well at Meribah is said to have disappeared at the death of Miriam.[27] Pseudo-Philo states that the well of the water of Marah was given to the Israelites for the sake of Miriam.[28] There exists another obvious parallel in the account of the water at Marah and at Elim in Exodus 15:22–27. In the Marah and Elim account, it is Moses who challenges the Israelites to recognize Yahweh as their God, in return for which Yahweh will protect the Israelites from pestilence. The exchange of the Israelites' loyalty for Yahweh's fertility parallels the exchange made at Massah and Meribah, and between Abraham and his guests at Beersheba. In Exodus 15:27, following this challenge, the Israelites arrive at the sanctuary of Elim with twelve springs and seventy palm trees corresponding to the twelve tribes and seventy elders of Israel.

The waters of Elim and the well of Miriam are also conflated in rabbinic accounts of when the various water sources were created. For example, in the Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael on Exodus 15:27, it is mentioned that the Israelites always encamped near water, and that these waters were created for this purpose on the day of creation.[29] There is a similar tradition in the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer that of the ten things created in twilight on the eve of the Sabbath, the "well" was the second.[30] It is unclear which of the various Biblical wells is to be identified with the "well" mentioned in the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer. The account of the well does parallel the description given of the waters of Elim in the Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael on Exodus 15:27, but it is also possible that the various wells were considered to represent a single water source. In the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, there is an account that seems to conflate a number of different wells.

> R. Akiba said: Every place our forefathers went, the well went in front of them. They dug three times and found it before them. Abraham dug three times and found it before him, as it is said, "and Isaac dug again the wells of water, which they had dug in the days of Abraham" [Gen. 26:18]. Isaac dug in the land four times, and found it before him, as it is said: "Isaac's servants dug in the valley" [Gen. 26:19]. It is written about Jerusalem, "it shall come to pass in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem" [Zech. 14:8]. This refers to the well which will arise in Jerusalem in the future, and will water all of its surroundings. Because they found the well seven times, he called it "seven" [shib'ah].[31]

This account, building upon the Biblical conflation of wells at Beersheba, and the association of the Beersheba well with the waters of Jerusalem, posits that the

well preceded Abraham and Isaac, accompanying them on their wanderings. Similar traditions state that the well of Miriam, associated with the waters both at Marah and Elim, and at Massah and Meribah, followed the Israelites in their wanderings as did the cloud and the pillar of fire.[32] The well of Miriam, like that at Beersheba, is supposed to have supported a vast garden with every type of plant and tree bearing fresh fruits daily, nor was there need for beds because of the soft grass that grew on account of the well's water.[33]

Beersheba and Mecca

In the early Islamic exegesis of the Abraham story, there is mention of an episode not found in the Quran, but closely paralleling Genesis 21:22–34, concerning the well at Beersheba.[34] One of the earliest Islamic versions of the story of Abraham at Beersheba is found in al-Ṭabarī. The story is reported without a chain of authorities.

> It is said, God knows best, that Sarah was very sad when this happened [Ishmael born to Hagar] because her time of childbearing was over. Abraham had left Egypt for Syria. He was afraid of that king who was there [in Egypt], anxious about the evil he had done before.
>
> He settled in Beersheba [al-Sab'] in the land of Palestine, in the desert of Syria. Lot settled in al-Mu'tafikah, less than a day and a night's journey from Beersheba. God sent him as a prophet. Abraham stayed there, it was mentioned to me, in Beersheba, dug a well there, and established a *masjid*. The water of that well was pure and flowing. His flocks drank from there.
>
> Then, the people of Beersheba harmed him somehow, so he left there until he settled in another part of Palestine between al-Ramlah and Jerusalem, in a city called Qaṭṭ or Qiṭṭ. When he left from their midst, the water dried up and left.
>
> The people of Beersheba followed after him until they found him, regretting what they had done. They said: "We drove out a sincere man from among us." They asked him to return to them. He said: "I will not return to a city from which I was driven out." They said to him: "The water which you used to drink, that we drank with you, it has dried up and gone."
>
> So he gave them seven goats from his flocks and said: "Take them with you. If you take them to drink from the well, the water will appear, flowing and pure like it was. Drink from it, but do not let a menstruating women scoop water from it."
>
> They took the goats and when they stopped at the well, the water appeared there. They were again drinking from it because of this until a menstruating woman came. She scooped water from the well, and the water of the well withdrew. It remains that way until today.[35]

An almost identical account of this episode is found in al-Tha'labī.[36] Another account is also found in Ibn al-Athīr [1160–1233], although omitting most of the dialogue and slightly altering the order of the narrative. Ibn Sa'd [784–845] also mentions this episode, but does not include the menstruating woman. He does state that Abraham dug a well, built a *masjid* and was wronged by the local inhabitants so he moved to a place between al-Ramlah and Jerusalem.[37]

The Islamic Beersheba episode closely parallels the various accounts of Abraham's establishment of the sanctuary at Mecca.[38] These parallels should also be interpreted in light of the similarities between Genesis 21:1–21 and verses 22–34, indicating that the Beersheba and the Mecca episodes both refer back to the story associated with Genesis 21. Note, also, that none of the known Beersheba accounts are reported with a chain of transmission. The accounts of al-Tha'labī and Ibn al-Athīr seem to be based on the account found in al-Ṭabarī. Ibn Sa'd's brief mention of this episode also seems to be derived from the same source as al-Ṭabarī's account. The version given by Mujīr al-Dīn [d. 1521], although it differs slightly in content, describes the same basic story of Abraham and the dispute with the locals apparently over resource usage. Mujīr al-Dīn also does not provide a chain of transmission, but his account seems to correspond more closely to the details of Isaac's Beersheba episode, especially Genesis 26:12–14.[39] Compared with the multiple versions and sources of the account of Abraham in Mecca, the Beersheba episode would seem to be an anomalous version of a more general motif of Abraham's establishment of a sanctuary linked with the account in Genesis 21.

The rabbinic conflation of the various wells, especially the association of the wells of the patriarchs with the wells of Moses and the Israelites, highlights important parallels to the description of Abraham's well at Beersheba in Islamic exegesis. The description of Abraham's well at Beersheba, found in al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Athīr, stresses that the Beersheba episode occurs immediately following Abraham's departure from Egypt. This could be related to the account of Abraham and Sarah leaving Egypt found in Genesis 12:10–20. Genesis 12:10–20 does parallel the account of Abraham and Abimelech in Genesis 20, immediately preceding the Beersheba episode also between Abraham and Abimelech in Genesis 21:22–34. The conflation of these two accounts is also evident from the Genesis Apocryphon. By placing the Beersheba episode following the encounter with the Pharaoh, Islamic exegesis emphasizes the links between Abraham and Moses. The Pharaoh's expulsion of Abraham and Sarah is analogous to Moses' call upon Pharaoh to let Yahweh's people, the "bride" of Yahweh, go free. In both accounts, the Pharaoh's possession of Sarah and the Israelites results in plagues. The Pharaoh also gives both the Israelites, and Sarah and Abraham, great wealth upon their exodus from Egypt.

Both al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Athīr stress that Abraham left Egypt in fear of Pharaoh. This is an unusual comment, apparently unrelated to Moses and the exodus or Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 12:10–20. In neither of these Biblical precedents does Moses or Abraham leave Egypt in fear. On the contrary, they

leave Egypt with the blessing of the Pharaoh, in the case of the Exodus to be surprised later by the Pharaoh's change of heart and eventual death. Abraham's fear might allude to another episode, however, in which Moses flees from Egypt to Midian out of fear that the Pharaoh is seeking to kill him. This allusion is further supported by the close parallels found in the descriptions of Abraham at the well of Beersheba and Moses at the well of Midian. In the Abōt de Rabbi Nathan, the well of Midian is said to have overflowed at Moses' approach.[40] This is also closely paralleled to descriptions of Jacob's well, with which the well of Midian is conflated in both rabbinic and Islamic exegesis.[41] Both accounts, if linked to the Beersheba episode, would help to explain the unusual description of the water flowing from the well of Beersheba at the approach of Abraham or his goats, two elements that are not found in Genesis 21:22–34 or the rabbinic exegesis of these verses.

The relationship between the well of Abraham at Beersheba and the well of Moses at Midian raises an issue of geography. It should be recognized, though, that it is difficult to determine geographical locations with much precision from the textual references alone, nor is it certain that either the rabbinic or Islamic exegetes agreed on these locations. There seems to be some confusion or conflation concerning the location of the well of Moses, mentioned in Exodus 2:15 as located in Midian. From other sources, it is normally assumed that the area of Midian lies along the Northwest coast of the Arabian peninsula. Exodus 3:12 is taken by some to indicate, however, that the episode of the burning bush took place at Sinai. This suggestion is followed in rabbinic exegesis, and to some extent in Islamic exegesis of the revelation at Mount Sinai. Note, also, that in Exodus 3:1, the burning bush episode is said to take place at Horeb. Horeb is later identified, in Exodus 17:6, as the place of the rock from which Moses draws water. These identifications indicate that there seems to be some degree of identification of the well at Midian and the wells of Massah and Meribah, and of Marah and Elim in the Sinai wilderness.

These wells of the Sinai or Midianite wilderness are similarly associated with the location of wells near Beersheba. The accounts of Abraham and Isaac's wells in Genesis 21 and 26 clearly identify the location of both as Beersheba. Presumably this refers to the site recognized as such in southern Palestine.[42] Genesis 21:8–21 places Hagar and Ishmael, and the well found by them, in the area of Beersheba, although verse 21 states Ishmael made his home in the desert of Paran and took a wife from Egypt. The well of Hagar also is to be located in Beersheba according to Genesis 21:14–19 and rabbinic exegesis of these verses. The Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer states that the well which appears to Hagar, saving Ishmael from dying, is to be identified with the well that was created at twilight, and thus understood to be that which accompanied both the patriarchs and the Israelites.[43] From the account of al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Athīr, Beersheba seems to be located somewhere between Egypt and the hills of central Palestine around Jerusalem, to which Abraham continues on after Beersheba to settle. The area of Ishmael's home, as well as the route taken by Abraham, would appear to correspond roughly to

the area in which are located the wells of Meribah and Massah or Marah and Elim.

Perhaps most unusual in the Beersheba account of al-Ṭabarī is the mention of the menstruating woman stopping the flow of the water. While this element does not seem to parallel the Beersheba episode in Genesis 21, the association of menstruation with a sanctuary or shrine, and specifically with a tree and a well at this sanctuary, occurs in a number of Islamic exegetical contexts. For example, the exegesis of Q 19, especially verses 16–34, includes these same elements in the story of the nativity of Jesus.[44] Although the exegesis of the various verses in the Quran that mention the nativity of Jesus and/or Mary are difficult to harmonize, Muslim exegesis evinces a tradition associating the location of both the annunciation and the birth of Jesus with a sanctuary-like location. Following al-Ṭabarī, the exegesis of Q 19:16–17 states that the annunciation takes place when Mary is purifying herself from menstruation. The report, given on the authority of al-Suddī, states that Mary left her place in the temple [miḥrāb] and went east because she was menstruating.[45] It is unclear from the exegesis of these verses if Mary's purification was thought to involve separation from the temple where she lived for a period of time until her menstruation stopped, or the ritual washing prescribed by Islamic law. Other traditions associate the annunciation with a water source, suggesting that a ritual washing is behind this exegetical comment. This purification might also be due to the understanding of God's purification of Mary mentioned in Q 3:42 although there is no evidence of this in Muslim exegesis.[46]

It is also possible that the mention of Mary purifying herself from menstruation is related to Christian stories of Mary being sent out from the temple in Jerusalem when she reaches puberty. Such an incident is recorded in the "Protoevangelium" or "Book of James."[47] In this source, Mary is sent out of the temple upon reaching the age of twelve, and is given to Joseph in marriage but remains a virgin.[48] The annunciation takes place at a nearby watersource.[49] In the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew and the Gospel of the Birth of Mary, both apparently derived from the Protoevangelium, Mary's leave from the temple is described as part of a seemingly regular ceremony held for virgins upon reaching adolescence. In these later sources, there is no mention of the priests' fear that she will defile the temple because of her age. The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew also describes the ceremony, designed to arrange the marriage of virgins by lottery, as having been in effect since the time of Solomon.[50] If both the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew and the Gospel of the Birth of Mary are later adaptations of the Protoevangelium, then it is possible that the exclusion of the priests' fear and the addition of the Solomonic ceremony are designed to downplay the implication that Mary is menstruating. The Biblical law prohibiting sex during menstruation [Lev. 18:19] has been interpreted as restricting sex to periods when it is most likely that a woman would get pregnant, and it is possible that later Christian authors, attempting to emphasize the virgin birth of Jesus, were concerned with this allusion to Mary's menstruation as an indication of the miraculous nature of Jesus' birth.

Of note also in the Protoevangelium and the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew is a test administered by the priests to determine whether or not Joseph and Mary are lying about Mary being pregnant yet still a virgin. In the Protoevangelium, Joseph and Mary separately are made to drink the "bitter water" and sent into the wilderness.[51] This would seem to be a reference to the cereal offering mentioned in Numbers 5:11–31, although there only the woman under suspicion for illicit sex is made to perform the ceremony by drinking the water.[52] This test of the bitter water, especially according to the details mentioned in Numbers 5:11–31, is designed to determine whether the woman is pure or impure. If impure, the woman drinking the bitter water is supposed to experience the shrinking of her reproductive organs and the destruction of her ability to bear children. If pure, the woman bears children. Perhaps most unusual about the test as described in the Protoevangelium is the mention that Joseph and Mary are sent into the wilderness after drinking the bitter water.[53] In the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, Joseph and Mary are made rather to circumambulate the temple altar seven times before their innocence is proved.[54] Neither practice is described in Numbers 5:11–31, but being sent away from the temple and into the wilderness could be another reference to the priests' fear that the temple court might be defiled by the presence of Mary as a non-virgin.[55] It could also be a reference to a period of seclusion prescribed for menstruating women. In either case, the function of the bitter water seems to parallel the symbolism of the water fountain at which Mary receives the annunciation: both waters are sources of fertility to the pure woman.

The Islamic accounts of Jesus' nativity, perhaps because of the rich variety of accounts contained in the exegesis of the different verses in the Quran, seem to conflate the description of the location of several different events, including the annunciation and the birth of Jesus. Q 23:50 describes the "elevated place" which God prepared for Mary and Jesus. The exegesis of this verse makes several references to the location of the annunciation and the birth in Q 3:35–41 and 19:16–34. This description of the "elevated place" [rabwah] is the description of a sanctuary. In the exegesis of Q 19:17, the "screen" [ḥijāb] mentioned is taken to be a reference to God shading Mary with the sun, or protecting her from the view of other people in a secluded location.[56] The secluded location might also be a reference to the "miḥrāb" in which Mary lived as a child, described in al-Ṭabarī as the most important place of meeting and prayer, presumably a reference to the temple in Jerusalem.[57] Q 3:39 provides a similar reference to Zechariah receiving the annunciation of John the Baptist while in the "miḥrāb." In Luke 1:11, the annunciation takes place when Zechariah is standing aside the altar of the temple in Jerusalem, suggesting that the "miḥrāb" be understood as a reference to a chamber in the Jerusalem temple.[58] A report, given on the authority of al-Suddī, also explicitly links the "miḥrāb" with the location in the east to which Mary was secluded.

There are other references in the exegesis of Q 19:16–17 that depict the location of Mary's annunciation and birth as a sanctuary. In al-Ṭabarī, it is reported that the Christians pray toward the east because Mary had gone there in seclusion.[59]

This indicates that the place in the east was understood as a sanctuary analogous to the temple in Jerusalem to which the Jews prayed or the Ka'bah in Mecca toward which Muslims prayed. Ibn 'Abbās further states that God created the place to which Mary went and toward which the Christians pray, suggesting a special location. Another report, also attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, associates the place in the east with the location where the sun rises.[60] This interpretation suggests that Mary's destination was at the ends of the Earth, where the sun rises in the east. Such an understanding would parallel other traditions which place the garden of Eden and other sanctuaries in the extreme east or west.[61]

The meadows and flowing springs of Q 23:50 also parallel the various mentions of water in both the annunciation and birth stories of Jesus. This reference can be taken as a reference to the water at which Mary purified herself from menstruation, mentioned in the exegesis of Q 19:16. The same watersource might be conflated with the mention of the fountain at which Mary received the annunciation in the Protoevangelium and Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew. There is a parallel story, attributed to Ibn Isḥāq, and attached to the commentary on Q 3:42 in al-Ṭabarī.

> Ibn Ḥamīd reported, on the authority of Salamah, on the authority of Ibn Isḥāq: Mary was a server in the church [kanīsah]. With her in the church was a boy named Joseph. His mother and father had dedicated him as a server. They were in the church together. Once, when Mary was fetching her water and Joseph his water, they took their pitchers and went into the wilderness in which was the water from which they drew. They filled their pitchers and then returned to the church. The angel met Mary and said: "Mary, God has chosen you and purified you, chosen you from among the women of the worlds." When Zechariah heard this he said: "To the daughter of 'Imrān is something."[62]

It might also be reflected in the relationship between the bitter water test and Mary's being sent into the wilderness, into seclusion. The flowing springs of Q 23:50 coincide with the description of the location of Jesus' birth found in Q 19:23–26 where water is caused to flow from beneath the palm tree mentioned in Q 19:22, and fruit to drop and feed Mary.[63]

There are reports preserved in al-Ṭabarī which interpret the "meadows" of Q 23:50 as referring to fruit groves, said to be located in Jerusalem or the temple in Jerusalem [bayt al-maqdis].[64] This would further support the interpretation of the location in Q 23:50 as being a sanctuary in which the food and drink required by Mary and Jesus are provided by God. The association of the fruit with the temple could be an allusion to the food that Mary is said to have been fed while secluded in the temple as a child, mentioned in Q 3:37. Most of the exegesis on this verse states that the food was miraculous fruit, either grapes or other fruits fresh out of season.[65] The exegesis on Q 3:38 further elaborates on the miraculous character of this fruit, associating it with the conception of John the

Baptist. In some of the exegesis, it is the sight of the off-season fruit that causes Zechariah to pray for a son, but in other exegesis it is Zechariah's actually eating some of this fruit that leads to the conception of John the Baptist.[66]

The relationship between menstruation and annunciation is also found in the Islamic and rabbinic exegesis of the annunciation of Isaac's birth to Sarah, in Genesis 18:1–15, Q 11:69–76, and Q 51:24–30. Although some rabbinic and Islamic accounts agree that Sarah menstruated during this annunciation, it is unlikely that this episode is related to the story of the menstruating woman at the well. Sarah and the annunciation of Isaac are closely related to the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael but the reports of her menstruation are not tied to the defilement of a sanctuary. Islamic sources link Sarah's menstruation with her laughing, reported in Q 11:71, although her menstruating is only one of several comments linked to her laughter.[67] Rabbinic exegesis interprets Sarah's menstruation as an attempt to deceive the angels giving the annunciation. This is specifically related in the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer where the mention of Sarah's menstruation is inserted in the commentary on the story of how Rachel faked menstruation in order to avoid being caught for stealing her father's idols in Genesis 31:33–35.[68]

As mentioned earlier, the Islamic account of the Beersheba episode and the establishment of the sanctuary at Mecca seem to be different traditions linked with Genesis 21, both describing Abraham's establishment of a sanctuary and the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael.[69] The Beersheba episode, at least in the details of the name of the well and its etiology, seems to correspond more closely to Genesis 21:22–34 but seems to provide no account of Hagar and Ishmael at the well of Beersheba. Yāqūt does states that the wilderness of "Paran," cited as the home of Ishmael in Genesis 21:21, is to be understood as one of the names of Mecca mentioned in the Torah.[70] The chronology of the narrative in Genesis 21 is also worth considering. If Genesis 21:22–34 is supposed to have taken place before the events described in Genesis 21:1–21, then it would serve as a backdrop for Hagar's discovery of the well of Beersheba, previously dug by Abraham. This order would also correspond with the idea that Hagar and Ishmael found not only the well but the sanctuary Abraham had previously established at Beersheba. If Genesis 21:22–34 is supposed to have taken place after the events described in Genesis 21:1–21, then it is puzzling that Abraham does not meet up with Hagar and Ishmael when he resides in the vicinity of Beersheba as he is said to do in Genesis 21:34.

The early Islamic accounts also seem to leave the chronology of the two episodes unsettled. In one report, attributed to 'Alī, Abraham establishes the sanctuary with the help of a "boy" identified only as his son.[71] Other reports mention Ishmael, though apparently not as an infant, helping Abraham establish the sanctuary.[72] Still other reports describe Hagar and Ishmael's expulsion without mention of the sanctuary,[73] or Abraham is sent to build but Ishmael is only an infant.[74] In these reports, it is assumed or made explicit that Ishmael comes with Abraham to Mecca, but in others Abraham is said to meet Ishmael, already living in Mecca, at the site of the future sanctuary.[75] Presumably, in those cases where Ishmael is already in Mecca, the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael is thought to have taken

place earlier. This is evident from an account, attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, which begins with the expulsion, has the meeting with the Jurhum, Abraham's visit commenting on Ishmael's wives, and culminates with the establishment of the sanctuary and the call for the pilgrimage mentioned in Q 22:26.[76] This last account is used by Ibn Kathīr to explain why, in Q 14:37, when Abraham leaves Hagar and Ishmael in Mecca, the sanctuary seems to have been established already.[77] It is possible that the extant reports preserve and combine a number of different traditions involving both the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael, and the establishment of the sanctuary at Mecca. The fuller account attributed to Ibn 'Abbās seems to best incorporate both traditions.

The expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael, whether mentioned alone or in combination with the establishment of the sanctuary at Mecca, also exists in a number of accounts. The bulk of these accounts, each slightly different, are attributed to Ibn 'Abbās and closely correspond to Genesis 21:8–21.[78] With the empty waterskin, Hagar searches for water, climbing al-Ṣafā' and al-Marwah seven times until she hears the angel. The angel shows her the place of Zamzam and a spring of water gushes up from the ground. At the end of the accounts, it is stated that because Hagar scooped up the water to fill her waterskin the flowing of the water stopped.[79] The detail given to Hagar's search for water, especially her running between al-Ṣafā' and al-Marwah, is not paralleled in the Biblical accounts of Hagar and Ishmael's expulsion, although in Genesis 21:16 Hagar is distressed because she has run out of water, and in Genesis 16:7, the angel meets Hagar at a spring.

It is also important to recognize that, in several of the versions of the account of the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael, including this one attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, Ishmael is portrayed as an infant. Ibn 'Abbās specifies that Hagar was nursing Ishmael. Ibn Kathīr also mentions that when Hagar ran out of water her milk stopped and Ishmael became thirsty.[80] This detail is significant because it might indicate that these accounts attributed to Ibn 'Abbās recognize the problem of Ishmael's age in Genesis 21:8–21 and its possible conflation with the expulsion account in Genesis 16. By emphasizing that Ishmael was an infant when he and Hagar are expelled to Mecca, the Ibn 'Abbās account is consistent with the references to Ishmael as an infant in Genesis 21:14 and verse 18.[81] This emphasis would also underline the promise of Ishmael's descendants carrying on the name of Abraham. The longer account of the prophecy concerning Ishmael's descendants and Hagar's direct vision of Yahweh in Genesis 16 is replaced in Genesis 21:12–13 with the statement that Ishmael would be a great nation but Isaac would be the heir of Abraham's promise. Such emphasis could also be related to the conflict of opinions in the Islamic exegesis of Q 37:99–113 over the identity of the son Abraham was to sacrifice.[82]

That the Beersheba episode and the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael are parallel accounts, both associated with the accounts in Genesis 21:8–21 and 22–34, is also demonstrated by the conflation of the well at Beersheba and the water of Zamzam in Mecca. The descriptions of the well at Beersheba and the water of

Zamzam both correspond to the mention of the well at Beersheba in Genesis 21:19, 30–31, and the spring in Genesis 16:7. In some of the accounts, an angel is responsible for uncovering the well that saves Ishmael.[83] In other accounts, Ishmael uncovers the well himself.[84] The water of Zamzam here corresponds to the spring of Genesis 16:7 but also to the revealed well mentioned in Genesis 21:19. Another point worth considering is the repetition of the number "seven" in relation both to the well of Beersheba and Zamzam. Although the etiology for "Beersheba" is said to be the oath made between Abraham and Abimelech in Genesis 21:31, it is evident from the mention of the seven goats in Genesis 21–30 and in the Islamic Beersheba episode, that a tradition exists understanding Beersheba as the well of the "seven." In many of the accounts of Hagar's search for water, which ends in the miraculous appearance of Zamzam, it is specified that she runs between al-Ṣafā' and al-Marwah seven times before the water appears.[85]

Curiously, both the Beersheba episode and the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael in Islamic accounts contain references to water that is stopped up because of a woman. Although both of these stories agree on this element, it does not seem to have a Biblical precedent outside of the references to Mary and menstruation as a defilement to the temple in Jerusalem. It is possible that the stopping up of the water is related to a rabbinic comment preserved in the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 21:19 that Hagar's filling of her container with water proves that she was lacking in faith. This interpretation is presumably derived from the notion that Hagar should have trusted that the water of the well, provided by God, would provide for her and Ishmael's needs. It also provides a neat parallel to the deceptions of Sarah and Rachel. Sarah laughs and then lies about laughing because she lacks faith that God can give her a child. According to the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, Rachel stole her father's idols, resulting in the deception of her father, because she lacked faith in God believing that the idols would tell her father of Jacob's escape.[86] In both of these cases, as in the case of the menstruating women stopping the flow of water at Beersheba, menstruation is mentioned, although in the case of Sarah and Rachel the menstruation seems to be a ruse.

The stopping of the flow of the water of Zamzam by Hagar could be related to her menstruation, as is the stopping of the flow of the water at Beersheba. In several of the accounts, the running out of water coincides with the stopping of Hagar's flow of milk. These references could be taken as an indication that Hagar had started menstruating. The link between weaning a child and menstruating is recognized in Q 2:233, and it might be expected that Hagar would begin menstruating again once she had stopped nursing Ishmael. It has also been noted that, in some accounts, the word used to describe Hagar's stopping up of the water of Zamzam is "ḥāḍat" which could be taken to mean "she collected water" or "she menstruated" depending upon what is taken as the middle radical of the verb's root.[87] According to a report given on the authority of Mujāhid, Hagar does not stop up the water of Zamzam but makes it "swampy" perhaps also referring to her menstruation. This might also be related to the ritual proscriptions against

menstruating women entering the sanctuary in Mecca, or the notion brought up in the context of the stories of Mary's annunciation of a menstruating woman defiling the sanctuary in Jerusalem. The connection here between menstruation and infertility would also be represented by the link between the drying up of the water in the waterskin and the drying up of Hagar's milk.

There are a number of enigmatic references in the various accounts of Hagar and Ishmael's expulsion which might also be related to Hagar's menstruation. For example, in one of the accounts attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, Hagar is said to be the first Arab woman "to defecate, dragging the train [of her dress] to cover her marks."[88] The second part of this statement has been understood as meaning that Hagar used the train of her dress to hide her footprints from Sarah. This could be related to reports that Hagar was the first woman to wear a girdle, to be circumcised, or have her ears pierced.[89] Wearing a girdle and the different bodily mutilations could parallel rabbinic accounts that Abraham tied a water barrel or veil around Hagar's waist to show that she was a bondswoman.[90] In these cases, Sarah's actions do see to coincide with Abraham marking Hagar, but to see how this applies to Hagar defecating is difficult. Such an interpretation would also need to explain why Hagar would seek to hide her tracks if both Abraham and Ishmael were also accompanying her.[91] The term used for "defecate" [aḥdatha] does not primarily signify defecation, but only secondarily as an example of an act which voids a person's state of ritual purity. Menstruation would also be an example of an act that would void a woman's state of ritual impurity.

The exegetes also mention defecation as reason for expulsion from the garden of Eden and Paradise. In a report preserved by al-Ṭabarī, it is stated that eating from the forbidden tree in the garden of Eden caused Adam and Eve to defecate and thus be expelled.

> Eve ate first from the tree. Then she commanded Adam to eat from it. It was a tree which made whoever ate from it defecate. But there must be no feces in the garden. "Satan caused them to slip from the garden and drove both of them out of that in which they were" [Q 2:36]. So he drove Adam out of the garden.[92]

Exegesis concerning the origins of Zamzam in the time of Adam and Eve likewise states that the well sprung up so that Eve could purify herself from her menstruation and enter the sanctuary at Mecca, her menstruation being the curse put upon her as a result of eating from the forbidden tree. In a related account, it is said that Nimrod was thrown out of heaven because he defecated.

> When Nimrod saw that this method [using eagles to fly to heaven] would accomplish nothing, he began building the tower. He built it taller and taller until, when it reached heaven, he went to the top to look, in his pride, at the God of Abraham. Then he defecated though he had not done so [previously]. God seized his building by its foundations and the roof

> fell down upon them. "Doom came upon them from where they did not know" [Q 16:26] from their place of safety.
>
> He took them from the foundations of the building, and it was demolished. Then it fell, and on that day the languages of humanity became confused out of fear. Humanity began to speak seventy-three languages. Before that the only language had been Syriac. It was thus called Babel.[93]

Nimrod's expulsion from heaven, his sin of pride, and the invention of the different languages parallel the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden. Note also that, according to the exegesis of Q 7:22, it was in Mecca that Adam invented and dispersed the tools and technologies of earthly civilization.

The mention of Hagar stopping up the water of Zamzam, and its relation to the more widespread motif of menstruation defiling a sanctuary, is also evident in a story concerning the black cornerstone of the Ka'bah at Mecca. In a report attributed to Ibn Isḥāq, al-Azraqī explains that the cornerstone was blackened by a fire started by a woman. He also states that its blackness is due to impure people coming into contact with the stone.[94] This explanation parallels Hagar's stopping of the water of Zamzam. Both the cornerstone and the water of Zamzam originate from the hand of an angel or other divine intervention. Likewise, attributed to the cornerstone is a light that reaches to the ends of the Earth. Other accounts claim that the cornerstone has or had the power to absolve people of their sins or to heal diseases. In the accounts involving the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael, the water of Zamzam is also closely linked with fertility, life, and especially expiation. Other accounts attribute the blackening of the stone to the absorption of people's sins.[95] In al-Ṭabarī's exegesis of Q 2:127, it is reported that the blackening of the cornerstone was due specifically to its contact with menstruating women.[96]

Sinai and Mecca

The motif of stopping up the water and its association with the water of life are also closely tied to eschatological traditions linking the sanctuary of Abraham with Jerusalem and Mecca. This seems to be the case with the description of Hagar's stopping up of the water. Although it is clearly stated in several accounts that Hagar stopped up the water of Zamzam, it is also evident that the water continued to flow after this incident. Later accounts of the sanctuary at Mecca mention the water of Zamzam and commend drinking from the water as a supererogatory rite during the pilgrimage.[97] A report given on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās also indicates that the water was present immediately after Hagar's stopping it.

> That day the Jurhum were in a valley near Mecca. Some birds stayed close to the valley when they saw the water. When the Jurhum saw the

> birds stay close to the valley, they said: "They would not stay unless in the valley is water," so they went to Hagar.[98]

This account not only mentions the continued existence of water but indicates that its presence was enough to attract birds that otherwise would not stay in the area. The unusual appearance of the water is also emphasized by the Jurhum's surprise at the existence of water in the valley near Mecca. The Jurhum eventually agree to stay as long as the water belongs to Hagar which ends up being until Ishmael grows up and Hagar dies.

Other reports, mentioning the comment of the Prophet Muhammad that Hagar had made a mistake by stopping the flow of the water, also indicate that the water continued to flow. One of the reports of the Prophet Muhammad's comment is in a report attributed to Ibn 'Abbās.

> The angel took her until he came to the place of Zamzam. He pounded his foot and a spring gushed up. She hurried to fill her waterskin. The Prophet said: "May God have mercy on the mother of Ishmael. Had she not hurried, Zamzam would be a flowing spring."
>
> The angel said to her: "Do not be afraid for the thirst of the people of this town. This spring is that from which the guests of God are to drink." He said: "The father of this boy will come and he will build a house for God on this site."[99]

Note that the Prophet Muhammad's statement presupposes that Zamzam is no longer a flowing spring, but the existence of the water of Zamzam during the time of the Prophet Muhammad and later suggests that it did still exist. It is possible that what is being described is the transformation of Zamzam from a spring into a well. When the water first came out of the ground it was a gushing spring, but after Hagar stopped its flow the water remained but as a well not a flowing spring. The change from a spring to a well parallels the stopping up of the water in the Beersheba episode in Muslim accounts, and it coincides with the different descriptions of the water source found by Hagar in Genesis 16:7 and again in Genesis 21:19.

Note also that the angel's description of the water closely corresponds to the descriptions, given in Jewish sources, of the sanctuary of Abraham at Beersheba. The water there is supposed to be provided by God for the guests of the town, yet at the time of the discovery of the water only Hagar and Ishmael were in the area of Mecca. It is possible that the guests to which the angel refers are the Jurhum who show up on account of the birds circling the water. It is also possible, given the angel's other reference to Abraham building the Ka'bah, that the "guests of God" is a reference to the pilgrims who are supposed to visit the sanctuary at Mecca at a later time. The notion that Zamzam is supposed to supply the water for guests of the sanctuary is also emphasized in other comments made about the consequences of Hagar's action.

> Then she drew water from it [Zamzam] into her waterskin to keep it for Ishmael. Had she not done that, the waters of Zamzam would have gone on flowing to the surface forever.[100]
>
> The spring Zamzam had begun to flow, and she began scraping the ground away from the water with her hand. Wherever some water collected on the ground she scooped it up in her cup and poured it into her waterskin. The Prophet said: "May God have mercy on her. Had she let it be, it would have remained a flowing spring until the Day of Resurrection."[101]

In both of these accounts, the spring of Zamzam, before it is affected by Hagar, is connected with eschatological times. It is said that the waters would have continued to flow forever, or until the Day of Resurrection. These claims are significant, as well, because they indicate an explanation for why there is no garden-like sanctuary at Mecca in Islamic times. The menstruating woman's stopping of the water, whether Hagar or the woman at Beersheba, accounts for the fact that the sanctuary established by Abraham was not maintained as a cultivated garden paradise. Only on the Day of Resurrection would the sanctuary be returned to its paradise-like condition.

As mentioned earlier, the Islamic sources for the Beersheba episode all agree that Abraham dug the well of Beersheba and established a "masjid" there. It is possible that these sources envision Abraham as building a "mosque" at Beersheba, although it is likely that the term "masjid" is used in a broader sense to designate a place of worship. In comparison, much of the early exegesis of Q 17:1 interprets the "al-masjid al-aqṣā" not as a "mosque" per se but as a place of worship parallel to the Ka'bah in Mecca, identified as the "al-masjid al-ḥarām" in the same verse.[102] There is also evidence that the term "al-masjid al-aqṣā" was used in reference to the ḥaram al-sharīf in Jerusalem as the term "bayt al-maqdis," referring to the temple sanctuary, was applied as a name of Jerusalem.[103] This understanding would make the report of Abraham establishing a "masjid" correspond to the notion that Genesis 21:33 is to be interpreted as indicating that Abraham established a shrine in Beersheba.[104] The planting of the tamarisk, understood in some later exegesis as the establishment of a sanctuary at Beersheba, seems to be indicated in the Islamic account by the "masjid" which could also be understood as a sanctuary like that in Jerusalem or Mecca.

These and other details suggest the possibility that the Beersheba account in Muslim sources, understood as focusing on Abraham's digging of the well and establishment of a sanctuary, is not to be taken in addition to but as a variant of the account of Abraham's establishment of a sanctuary at Mecca. Rabbinic exegesis of the Abraham stories closely associates Abraham with the eventual establishment of the sanctuary in Jerusalem, and links this with the origins of the sanctuary in Sinai. Mount Moriah is identified with Horeb and Sinai, the locations at which God appears to Moses, from which the waters flow at Meribah, and the lodging of Elijah in 1 Kings 19:8–9.[105] There are also to be found numerous links

between Beersheba and the temple in Jerusalem. For example, the story of the binding of Isaac in Genesis 22, immediately following the Beersheba episode in Genesis 21:22–34, is supposed to take place in the "land of Moriah," identified with the site of David's altar in the exegesis of 2 Samuel 24:18–25 and the future site of Solomon's temple in 2 Chronicles 3:1.[106] Earlier sections have shown how various rabbinic sources associate the wells of Isaac, Jacob, Moses at Midian, the well of Miriam, the water from the rock in the Wilderness of Wandering, the well created at the beginning of time, numerous water sources in the terrestrial Jerusalem, and the eschatological waters.[107]

The descriptions of Zamzam as flowing forever or until the end of time also parallel descriptions given in rabbinic sources of the different wells conflated with the wells of Beersheba and Miriam, and the waters that are supposed to flow out from under Jerusalem. In the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer the waters from the well of Miriam flood the area around the temple in Jerusalem creating a garden-like paradise.[108] The flood of waters is supposed to cause the surrounding fields and vineyards, previously barren, to yield produce.[109] Upon the banks of the water will grow every kind of tree.[110] The waters will cover the Dead Sea and "heal" its waters just as all sick people will be healed by contact with the waters.[111] Fish found in the waters are supposed to taste sweet like manna.[112] According to the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, these waters are the same waters from the wells of Beersheba, the waters in the Wilderness of Wandering, the well of Jacob, and the well of Moses at Midian. It is possible that a similar flood of water is conceived associated with Zamzam at Mecca. During especially severe rains, for example, the area around the elevated place of the Ka'bah, including most of the valley of Mecca, is flooded.[113] Such floods might help account for an eschatological vision of a fertile sanctuary, unlike that of Q 14:37 and normally associated with the site in the Islamic period.[114]

There are other descriptions of the eschatological sanctuary in Jerusalem that explicitly identify these waters as the water of life. Psalm 36:6b–9 depicts the temple as the sanctuary of God, supporting both people and animals, in which God gives refuge, food, and drink from the water of life.

> Yahweh, you support both man and beast; how precious, God, is your faithful love.
>
> So the children of Adam take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
>
> They feast on the bounty of your temple, and you give them drink from the stream of your delights.
>
> For with you is the fountain of life; by your light do we see the light.[115]

Note the parallels between the description of God's eschatological sanctuary in Jerusalem and the descriptions of Abraham's sanctuaries. God provides shelter, food, the light of day, and gives water from the water of life for drink. This description also parallels the descriptions of the garden of Eden with its four

rivers, abundant fruit, and God as provider of all the needs of Adam and Eve.[116] It has also been noted that the word for "your delights" ['adānē-ka] in verse 8 is the plural of "Eden," alluding to the location of the stream in Eden or a garden-like sanctuary.[117] In this context, it is also significant that the river of Gihon in Genesis 2:13 is identified as a spring located in Jerusalem.[118] Islamic sources identify with the rivers of paradise, both Zamzam and the spring of Silwān in Jerusalem, mentioned in connection with David's victory in 2 Samuel 5:8 and possibly associated with the Gihon of Jerusalem.[119]

Of particular note, in relation to the description of the eschatological waters of Jerusalem, is the mention of "sweet water" as a description given to the water of Zamzam by Gabriel.

> The boy scraped the ground with his finger and the spring of Zamzam welled up. She began to dam up the water, but Gabriel said: "Leave it! it is sweet water."[120]

This mention of sweet water seems to have special significance. It might be related to the fish of the eschatological waters, described in the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer as "sweet" tasting. Other rabbinic traditions explicitly link "sweet" water with the water of life that is supposed to flow from the garden of Eden.[121] In the Babylonian Talmud, Tamīd 32a–32b, it is the sweetness of the water which allows Alexander to identify a well as being fed by water from the garden of Eden.[122] The water of life, the water which makes the fish taste sweet, is explicitly identified in the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer's exegesis of Ezekiel 47:10. Like the water of life, the eschatological waters of Jerusalem are also purported to have healing powers and be associated with extraordinary fertility of produce, being identified as the source of life in the sanctuary.

Given these detailed associations, it is likely that the conflation of Abraham's activities at Beersheba and Mecca in Muslim sources is intended to provide an alternative to the Jewish and Christian linkage of Beersheba and Sinai to Jerusalem. Preserved in some Islamic sources are early identifications of the sanctuary at Mecca, and the pilgrimage there, with the Sinai and the Israelites in the Wilderness of Wandering. Wensinck notes that in pre-Islamic times Muzdalifah was considered the place of the deity Quzaḥ who, like Yahweh on Sinai, reveals himself in fire burning on top of the mountain. The "Standing" [wuqūf] at 'Arafāt is also compared, in several accounts, to the standing of the Israelites at the foot of Sinai when Moses received the Torah. According to another report, the Ka'bah was originally called the 'Arīsh, the name given in some Islamic exegesis to the booth of Moses in the Wilderness of Wandering.[123] Another report, given on the authority of the Prophet Muhammad, states that Adam's Ka'bah was a "tent" like the Tabernacle in Sinai.[124] Some scholars identify the location in which Moses receives his revelation, called "Ṭuwwā" in Q 20:12 and 79:16, as a valley just to the west of Mecca.[125] Traditions associating Mecca with the center of the world, the first mountain on earth, and the

source of all waters are all consistent with parallel traditions associated with Jerusalem.

Islamic exegesis appropriates many of the key passages, used in rabbinic and Christian exegesis of the Bible as references to Jerusalem and Jesus, to be references to the sanctuary at Mecca. According to Ibn Ẓafar [1104–1170], Biblical accounts of the eschatological and desert "Zion" [Ṣahyūn] are references to Mecca.[126] This identification competes with the identification of Zion with the Church in Christian exegesis. Galatians 4:22–31 contrasts the terrestrial Jerusalem, its associations with Sinai, "a mountain in Arabia," and Hagar, with the celestial Jerusalem represented by the Church. Other Muslim exegesis identifies the "precious cornerstone" of the new Jerusalem mentioned in Isaiah 28:16 as the cornerstone of the Ka'bah.[127] Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah [1292–1350] states that this interpretation is taken from the People of the Book, although earlier Christian exegesis identifies the cornerstone with Jesus.[128] Mention of the wild animals lying down together in Isaiah 65:25 is also interpreted as reference to the "safe sanctuary" of Mecca mentioned in Q 28:57, 29:67, and 106:3–4.[129]

Of particular interest is the Muslim exegetes' use of the identification, traced to Genesis 22:4, of Abraham's "place" with Zion and the sanctuary in Jerusalem. Rabbinic tradition takes the "maqōm" of Genesis 22:4, where Abraham is to sacrifice his son, to be the site of the altar in the future temple of Jerusalem. In earlier Jewish tradition, the temple itself is called the "House of Abraham" perhaps related to this same identification. This can be found in Jubilees 22:24.

> This house I have built for myself so that I might cause my name to dwell upon it in the land. It has been given to you and to your seed forever. And it will be called the *House of Abraham* and will be given to you and to your seed forever because you will build my house, and you will raise up my name before God forever. Your seed and your name will remain in all the earth's generations.[130]

Drawing upon this identification, and upon the conflation of Beersheba and Mecca in other contexts, Muslim exegetes use Q 2:125 to appropriate the "House of Abraham" to the Ka'bah in Mecca.

> When we made the House [bayt] a place of refuge for the people, and a place of safety. Take the Place of Abraham [maqām Ibrāhīm] as a place of prayer ...

Although the term "house" is usually paired with "God" [bayt allāh], a continuation of the ancient Semitic terminology for a temple, Muslim tradition certainly associates Abraham with the building of the Ka'bah and the surrounding sanctuary.[131]

The Muslim understanding of the term "maqām Ibrāhīm" or "Place of Abraham" is not uncomplicated. The Arabic word "maqām" is, unlike the more common

"makān," also used to designate a "place," directly related to the Hebrew word "maqōm" used in Genesis 22:4. Muslim exegetes also include the revelation of this verse, in particular the phrase mentioning the Place of Abraham, as one of many revelations which were closely associated with 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.[132] Later tradition and practice identifies the Place of Abraham with a specific spot within the area of the mosque in Mecca, a stone which is included in the visitation of the Ka'bah. But earlier exegesis agrees that the Place of Abraham is to be taken as a reference to the whole of the Meccan sanctuary, or the area covered by the pilgrimage rites.[133] In this light, the command to take the Place of Abraham as a place of prayer would be a reference to Abraham's establishing of the sanctuary at Mecca, an interpretation supported by the following verse, Q 2:126, in which Abraham asks God to make Mecca a sanctuary for its people.

Also closely related to the identification of the sanctuary at Mecca with the Place of Abraham is the account of the rediscovery of the well of Zamzam by the Prophet Muhammad's grandfather 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib.[134] One of the earliest versions of this story is given on the authority of Ibn Isḥāq, providing the account of the origins of the well at the time of Hagar and Ishmael. A longer version, given by Ibn Hishām, reports that 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib also uncovered implements buried beside or within the well.

> He ['Abd al-Muṭṭalib] continued digging until the top of the well appeared to him. He praised God because he knew that he had been right [about its buried location]. When he continued digging he found in it two gazelles of gold. These were the two gazelles which the Jurhum had buried in the well when they left from Mecca. He also found in it swords and armor from Qal'ah.[135]

Different versions of this account are also to be found in al-Azraqī, Ibn Sa'd, and al-Fākihi, and in al-Ṭabarī who refers to the "Treasury of the Ka'bah" [khizānat al-Ka'bah] as the pit where the implements were discovered. There are various identifications of the origins and significance of these objects in Muslim tradition, usually that they were the accoutrements of the time of the Jurhum which were buried when Zamzam dried up.[136] Another possibility which is consistent with the association of Mecca and Zion, is that the story is related to the hiding of the Jerusalem temple implements at the time of its destruction.[137]

There is a well-known account in 2 Maccabees 2:4–8 which describes how the prophet Jeremiah hid the Tent and the Ark of the Covenant on a mountain located outside of the land in which the Israelites settled.

> The same document also describes how the prophet [Jeremiah], warned by an oracle, gave orders for the Tent and the Ark to go with him, when he set out for the mountain which Moses had climbed to survey God's heritage. On his arrival, Jeremiah found a cave-dwelling into which he put the Tent, the Ark, and the Altar of incense, afterwards blocking up

> the entrance. Some of his companions went back later to mark out the path but were unable to find it. When Jeremiah learned this, he reproached them: "The place is to remain unknown," he said, "until God gathers his people together again and shows them his mercy. Then the Lord will bring these things once more to light, and the glory of the Lord will be seen, and so will the Cloud as it was revealed in the time of Moses and when Solomon prayed that the holy place might be gloriously hallowed.[138]

It is significant that Jeremiah is ordered to bury the Tent and the Ark of the Covenant, both originating with Moses in the Wilderness of Wandering, representing the vital aspects of the temple, the Tabernacle and the presence of God. Jeremiah buries these temple implements on a mountain which is also the purported origin of the swords and armor found in the pit of the Ka'bah by 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib. Note also that the appearance of the "Cloud" a reference to the cloud which accompanied the Israelites in the wilderness, later understood as the "presence" of God [Shekhī-nah], features prominently in the account of Abraham's establishing of the sanctuary at Mecca. In Muslim sources, it is the "Sakīnah" which appears over the location of the sanctuary, guiding Abraham to the place where he should rebuild the house.

Later sources also confirm that the temple and its implements are not to be uncovered until they are restored by another prophet at the end of time.[139] Rabbinic sources, agreeing with and expanding on earlier Hellenistic sources, state that it is Elijah who will restore the objects to the temple in Jerusalem at the end of time.[140] Not only does the account of the recovery of the temple implements give eschatological significance to the uncovering of Zamzam on the eve of the Prophet Muhammad's birth, making Mecca to be the eschatological Jerusalem, but at the same time it underlines that the terrestrial Jerusalem has lost its once privileged status. With the reclamation of Abraham's well and sanctuary in Mecca, and the revival of his religion by the Prophet Muhammad, the old cultic center and religion of the Israelites is defunct.

Conclusions

Islamic legal exegesis understands the Abrahamic identification of the Meccan sanctuary within the context of the Prophet Muhammad's changing of the direction of prayer [qiblah] in a dispute with the Jews of Medina. In his commentary on Q 2:115, Ibn al-Jawzī cites a number of reports that the Prophet Muhammad had decided to face Jerusalem in prayer on his own or under the influence of the Jews, but that when God revealed Q 2:150, the Prophet Muhammad directed his prayers toward Mecca instead.[141] In a number of different reports, Ibn 'Abbās is reported to have said that God ordered the Prophet Muhammad to turn from Jerusalem [bayt al-maqdis] and face an "ancient house" [bayt 'atīq], the sanctuary in Mecca.[142] Jerusalem is home to a sanctuary, but it is a more recent one,

predated by the original "House of God" built by Abraham at a site founded by Adam. These various reports again point to an underlying attempt on the part of the Muslim exegetes to stress that the identification of Beersheba and Mecca is to be understood in light of Jewish claims concerning the continued primacy of Jerusalem.

In their accounts of Abraham at Beersheba and Mecca, the Muslim exegetes were able to draw upon Biblical and rabbinic tradition to support their own claims for the authority of the Prophet Muhammad. The existence of Jewish traditions concerning Abraham's establishing of a sanctuary at Beersheba, an Eden-like sanctuary which was a place of pilgrimage and refuge, supplied the Muslim exegetes with a rich milieu into which to situate the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad. The link between Beersheba and Mecca was consistent with but distinct from the Jewish link between Beersheba, Sinai, and Jerusalem. By inserting Dhu al-Qarnayn into the episode of Abraham's establishing the well at Beersheba and sanctuary at Mecca, the Muslim exegetes highlight this distinction. But the link between Abraham and Mecca is not to excise the alternate connection between Moses and Zion. The Muslim exegetes confirm that Moses led the Israelites through the Wilderness of Wandering, entered the land of Palestine and established the sanctuary at Jerusalem. It is the significance of this more recent sanctuary in Jerusalem and the character of the Israelite religion based there about which Muslim exegetes show the Prophet Muhammad differed with the Jews.

4

CITIES AT THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

Chapter 3 showed how Muslim exegetes conflated Abraham's sanctuaries at Beersheba and Mecca, drawing upon existing Biblical and rabbinic traditions, to highlight a distinction between Moses and the Prophet Muhammad. The presence of the character Dhu al-Qarnayn in these accounts suggests further associations with Moses in the exegesis of Q 18:60–82 and 28:21–28. By comparing the linkage of Abraham and Mecca to that of Moses and Zion, the exegetes impugn Jewish claims to the privileged status of Jerusalem and the Israelites.

The Muslim claim that the Israelites lost their chosen status is found in the exegesis of a number of passages in the Quran, but is closely tied to the unusual tradition concerning the "followers of Moses" taken from Q 7:159. In one account, the geographer Yāqūt locates the "Children of Moses" [Awlād Mūsā] in the mysterious city of Jābars.

> The Jews say: The Children of Moses fled there [Jābars] during the war of Ṭālūt or the war of Bukht-Naṣar. God took them there and deposited them in that place. No one joins them there, and they are the remnants of the Muslims. The earth was folded for them [ṭuwwayat]. The night and the day were made equal for them until they ended up at Jābars where they settled. No one but God knows their number. When one of the Jews went to them, they killed him. They would say: "You may not join us for you have corrupted your customs [sunnah]." Therefore they considered it lawful to shed his blood for this.[1]

This account contains a number of interesting details related to the exegesis of key Quran passages regarding Moses and the Israelites. Some of the exegesis on Q 2:246–251, the story of Ṭālūt the first king of the Israelites, mentions that after God removed the people of faith from the midst of the Israelites, all of the tribe of Levi was missing except for one woman who eventually gave birth to Samuel. The mention of Jābars, as well as the details regarding the folding of the earth and the division of the night and day, are allusions to the journeys of Dhu al-Qarnayn, and the Prophet Muhammad during his Night Journey [al-Isrā'], in the exegesis of Q 17:1, to the cities at the ends of the Earth.

In his commentary on Q 7:159, al-Ṭabarī reports, on the authority of Ibn Jurayj, an account concerning the separation between the Israelites and the followers of Moses.

> [Q 7:159] This refers to the Israelites when they killed their prophets and disbelieved. They were twelve tribes. One of the tribes was absolved from what the others did, and they were excused [from punishment]. They asked God to make a division between themselves and the others. God opened a tunnel [nafaq] for them in the earth and they traveled in it until they came out beyond China [Ṣīn]. There they were pre-Islamic Muslims [ḥunafā' al-muslimūn] who prayed toward our Qiblah.[2]

Note here that the followers of Moses, identified as one of the twelve tribes, are removed from the midst of the Israelites, or "Children of Israel" [Banū Isrā'īl]. In the account given by Yāqūt, this separation is evident from the comment that the Children of Moses felt justified in killing Jews, whom they accused of corrupting their religion. The report of al-Ṭabarī also refers to these followers of Moses not as Jews but as Muslims, or as followers of the religion of Abraham [ḥunafā'].

The following pages examine these accounts relating to the exegesis of Q 7:159 and the followers of Moses as they are used by the Muslim exegetes to highlight the comparison between the condemned status of the Israelites and the privileged status of the Muslims. The first section investigates selected traditions associated with the two cities at the ends of the Earth, and the significance of the recorded journeys to these places. It shows how the conflation of the journeys of Dhu al-Qarnayn and the Prophet Muhammad allowed the exegetes to appropriate a number of extra-Quranic motifs specifically to their exegesis of Q 17:1–8. The second section on 'Ād, Thamūd, and the Israelites, analyzes how Muslim exegetes used traditions relating to the inhabitants of the two cities to contrast the followers of Moses from Q 7:159 with the Israelites following Moses in the Wilderness of Wandering and eventually into Jerusalem. The Muslim exegetes compare the Israelites, the revelation of the Torah, and the destruction of Jerusalem with the punishments meted out to the sinful peoples of 'Ād and Thamūd. The third section shows how this is related to what Muslim exegetes claim were contexts of polemics between the Prophet Muhammad and the Jews of Medina over the status of Moses, the Torah, and the Israelites vis-à-vis the claims of the Muslims. For the exegetes, this distinction between the Children of Israel and the Children of Moses is ultimately the division between the Jews and the followers of the Prophet Muhammad.

Jābars and Jābalq

Previous scholarship has examined some of the traditions related to the Prophet Muhammad's "Night Journey" [al-Isrā'] and "Ascension" [al-Mi'rāj], though little has been said about the connections between these traditions and the stories of Alexander the Great's journeys and attempts to enter Paradise. There is an

unusual version of the Night Journey preserved in the *Ta'rīkh* of al-Ṭabarī. This account is set in the context of al-Ṭabarī's discussion of the creation of night and day, and is loosely linked to the exegesis of Q 11:73.

> Then the Prophet said, wondering at the creation of God: How wonderful is the power concerning that than which we have not seen anything more wonderful. This is the word of Gabriel to Sarah: "Do you wonder about the command of God?" [Q 11:73]. This is that God created two cities: one of them in the east and the other in the west. The people of the city in the east are from the remnants of ʿĀd, the descendants of those from among them who believed. The people of the city in the west are from the remnants of Thamūd, the descendants of those who believed in Ṣāliḥ. The name of the one in the east, in Syriac is Marqīsīyā, and Jābalq in Arabic. The name of the one in the west, in Syriac is Barjīsīyā, and Jābars in Arabic. Both of the cities have ten thousand gates, a parsang being between every two gates. Each day, ten thousand men from the guards, armed with weapons, take turns guarding each of the gates of these two cities, [there being so many guards that each set of ten thousand men] takes only one turn until the day of the blowing of the Trumpet. By him in whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, if there were not so many of those people and their voices were not so loud, then the people of this world would hear the crash of the setting of the sun when it rises and when it sets. Behind them are three nations: Mansak, Tāfīl, and Tārīs; and before them are Gog [Yajūj] and Magog [Majūj].
>
> Gabriel took me to them during my Night Journey from the Sacred Mosque [al-masjid al-ḥarām] to the Farthest Mosque [al-masjid al-aqṣā], and I called upon Gog and Magog to worship God but they refused to heed me. Then he took me to the people of the two cities, and I called them to the religion of God, and to his worship. They consented and turned toward God. They are our brothers in religion. He who is good among them is like he who does good among you, and he who is evil among them are with those of you who are evil. Then he took me to the three nations, and I called them to the religion of God, to worship him, but they denied that to which I had called them. They disbelieved in God and considered his messengers to be liars. They are, together with Gog and Magog, and the rest who disobeyed God, in the Fire.[3]

The link between the two cities in the east and west, and the remark attributed to Gabriel speaking to Sarah in Q 11:73 appear to be unrelated to the account of the Night Journey. In his commentary on this verse, al-Ṭabarī relates Gabriel's comment to his annunciation to Abraham and Sarah of the birth of Isaac. Q 11:69–73 closely parallels Genesis 18, including the wording of Sarah's remark in verse 72 where the unusual Arabic but common Hebrew term "ba'al" is used to designate Abraham as "husband" or "lord" of Sarah.[4]

Unlike most of the other accounts of the Night Journey and Ascension, this version suggests some obvious comparisons with the account of Dhu al-Qarnayn found in Q 18:83–101. In Q 18:94–96, Dhu al-Qarnayn builds a barrier holding back Gog and Magog until the end of time, the day on which the Trumpet is blown [Q 18:99].[5] Like the Prophet Muhammad on his Night Journey, Dhu al-Qarnayn also visits and attempts to convert different peoples located at the ends of the earth. The name "Dhu al-Qarnayn" or "He of the two qarns" is itself reported to be derived from Dhu al-Qarnayn's journey to the ends of the Earth, to the extreme east where the tip [qarn] of the sun rises, and the extreme west where the tip [qarn] of the sun sets.[6]

The identification of the two cities mentioned in al-Ṭabarī's account of the Night Journey, and the meaning of their names, is unclear though later sources associate them with the journeys of Alexander to the ends of the Earth. On the basis of the exegesis of Q 18:83–101 which takes Dhu al-Qarnayn as Alexander, Persian accounts of Alexander's journeys link the city of "Jābalqā" with the mountain called "Qāf." In the anonymous *Iskandarnāmah*, Alexander is said to have told his army that he was going to Jābalqā, on the mountain of Qāf, when he first set out to find the water of life in the land of darkness.[7] When Alexander arrives at the mountain of Qāf he sees the angel Isrāfīl standing on the mountain waiting to blow the Trumpet on the Day of Judgment.[8] In a number of other Persian accounts of Alexander's journeys, including the *Shāhnāmah* of Firdawsī,[9] the *Dārābnāmah* of Abū Ṭāhir Muhammad Ṭarsūsī [fl. 1100s],[10] and the *Khiradnāmah-yi Iskandarī* of Jāmī,[11] Alexander is also said to have reached the mountain of Qāf at the ends of the Earth and there talked with the angel Isrāfīl.

The mountain of Qāf is usually defined as the "world-mountain" or the mountain which surrounds the inhabited parts of the earth, and from which all other mountains originate.[12] A description of it is provided by Yāqūt.

> [Qāf is] a mountain which encompasses the earth and encloses it. Qāf is mentioned in the Quran. The exegetes say that it is a mountain surrounding the earth. They say that it is made out of green crystal and that the green of the sky is from its green. They say its base is a green rock and it is on top of it, that Mount Qāf is a tributary of it. They say the bases of all mountains are tributaries of Mount Qāf. Some of them mention that between it and between the heavens is the distance of a man standing. It is said that the heavens are resting upon it. Some of them allege that behind it are worlds and creations about which God alone knows. Among them are those who allege that what is beyond are those of the next world and its jurisdiction, that the sun sets in it and rises from it. It [the sun] screens them from the earth. The ancients called it al-Burz.[13]

Yāqūt's account helps, in part, to explain the apparent discrepancy regarding whether the city of Jābalq and the mountain of Qāf is to be located in the extreme

east or extreme west. According to al-Ṭabarī, Jābalq is in the east, but Yāqūt transposes it with Jābars and places Jābalq in the extreme west instead. In the *Iskandarnāmah*, the kingdom of Shāhmalik is said to stretch from the rising-place of the sun to the city of Jābalsā, suggesting that Jābalsā is in the west and Jābalq is in the east. Later, in the same account, Alexander is ordered by an angel to go to the city of Jābalsā to see the signs of God as far as the place between the two mountains [bayna al-saddayn].[14] The place "between the two mountains" is taken directly from Q 18:93, and refers to the mountain pass which Dhu al-Qarnayn blocked to hold back Gog and Magog. This pass and the location of Gog and Magog is usually identified with Khazarān in the east or north.[15]

A similar confusion seems to exist in the earlier Greek and Syriac accounts of Alexander's journeys to the ends of the Earth. In II.44 of the Greek Pseudo-Callisthenes account of Alexander's journeys, it is reported that Alexander reached the "country of the sun" and the "city of the sun" after having first passed through the land of darkness.[16] In another account, found in III.28, Alexander first comes upon the city of the sun situated on an island, surrounded by twelve towers of gold and emerald, and then moves on to the land of darkness where he climbs a tall mountain at the top of which he talks with a Greek-speaking bird. The association of this mountain and the speaking bird with Qāf and the angel Isrāfīl is captured in some of the Ethiopic recensions of the Pseudo-Callisthenes.[17]

By nature of its surrounding the earth, Qāf is located both in the extreme east and extreme west. This is reflected in Yāqūt's mention that some scholars claim that the sun both sets and rises from Qāf. In the account of the Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey and Ascension in al-Ṭabarī, the Prophet Muhammad is shown both the rising and the setting of the sun when he visits Jābalq and Jābars. In this same account, the Prophet Muhammad states that the voices of the inhabitants of both cities drown out the crashing of the sun as it rises and sets each day. Although the location of Gog and Magog is usually in the east, there are also reports that the gate built by Dhu al-Qarnayn, mentioned in Q 18:94–97, is located beyond al-Andalus in the extreme west.[18] Given the account of Dhu al-Qarnayn in Q 18:83–101, it is likely that the link between Jābalq and Qāf, and the location of the cities in either the extreme east or west, is meant to indicate further that the journey undertaken is to the ends of the Earth.

Yāqūt's description of Qāf also emphasizes the close connection between this mountain and the garden of Eden. Other accounts also state that Qāf is emerald. According to al-Qurṭubī, all emeralds which people posses come from Qāf.[19] The colour green is also associated with fertility and immortality. The colour of the sky is also said to be a reflection of the green of Qāf, further suggesting that Qāf is to be understood as a mirror of the heavens, or the heavens as a mirror of Qāf.[20] Yāqūt also states that the top of the mountain reaches almost into the heavens, and that some scholars say that the heavens rest on Qāf. According to Ibn Kathīr, Qāf not only symbolizes Paradise on earth, but it is a physical link between the earth and heaven.

> Beyond this earth God created a sea surrounding it. Then he created, beyond that sea, a mountain which is called Qāf; the heavens of this world are supported by it. Then, beyond that mountain, he created an earth like this earth, seven times. He created, beyond that earth, a sea which surrounds it, and he created beyond that a mountain called Qāf supporting the second heaven, until the number of earths, seas, mountain, and heavens reached seven. This is the word of God: "and the sea stretched behind it for seven seas" [Q 31:27].[21]

Qāf is the mountain that links each of the earths to each of the heavens.

The journey of Alexander to the mountain of Qāf is first found in the account of Dhu al-Qarnayn from Wahb b. Munabbih. According to Wahb b. Munabbih, Dhu al-Qarnayn visits Qāf and has a conversation with the mountain.

> Dhu al-Qarnayn was on the brink of Mount Qāf and he saw under it a smaller mountain. He said: "What are you?" It said: "I am Qāf." He said: "What are these mountains surrounding you?" It said: "They are my tributaries, and there is no city which does not have one of my tributaries in it. When God wants to shake a city, he commands me and I move that particular tributary, then that tributary makes the earth shake."[22]

A similar tradition is attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, in which he reports that Qāf is placed on the rock upon which the earth is set, and when God wants to shake a particular area he orders the mountain to shake the tributary which attaches to that area.[23]

The idea, mentioned by Yāqūt, that the distance between the top of Qāf and the heavens is the height of a standing man also recalls some of the traditions concerning the mountain of Adam. In his *Ta'rīkh*, al-Ṭabarī records that when Adam was first sent down from the garden of Eden to the earth, he was sent down onto the mountain of Nūdh.[24] Islamic sources usually locate this mountain in Sri Lanka which is consistent with the account in Genesis 4:16 placing the land of Nod, to which Cain was banished for killing Abel, east of the garden of Eden.[25] It is also reported that Adam's children, except for Cain, continued to live on the mountain of Nūdh until after the time of Adam's death.[26] These traditions make an association between the mountain of Nūdh and the garden of Eden as being the earthly location which is closest to heaven, the top of the mountain itself being in heaven while its base is on earth.[27]

> It has been mentioned that the top of the mountain to which Adam fell is the closest to heaven of the mountains on the earth. When Adam fell on it, his feet were on the mountain and his head was in heaven. He heard the prayers and praises of the angels, and Adam became knowledgeable of that and the angels feared him. So the size of Adam was reduced.[28]

In other accounts, it is reported that when Adam could not longer hear the sounds of heaven because his size had been reduced, God told Adam to journey to Mecca and build there the sanctuary as an earthly substitute for the garden of Eden.[29]

There is also mention in the *Dārābnāmah* of Ṭarsūsī that Alexander made a pilgrimage to the tomb of Adam. At Adam's tomb, Alexander is met by the descendants of Adam, apparently distinguished from ordinary humans, recalling the tradition that the descendants of Adam lived on the mountain of Nūdh until after Adam's death.[30] In his *Ta'rīkh*, al-Ṭabarī also reports two different traditions locating the tomb of Adam on the mountain of Nūdh.[31] In Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Muqaddasī [d. 988], the mountain of Adam in Sri Lanka is called "al-Rahūn." The mountain of al-Rahūn has rubies on top of it, and every night a light can be seen on top.[32] The mountain of Adam is also sometimes associated with the mountain of Abū Qubays near Mecca. Various traditions report that Abū Qubays is the mountain from which Adam first acquired fire,[33] where Adam, Eve, and Seth are buried,[34] and where the black cornerstone of the Ka'bah was kept to protect it from the destruction of the flood in the time of Noah.[35] The conflation of the world mountain with Mecca, and the burial of Adam at Abū Qubays, are explained by the pilgrimage made by Adam from Sri Lanka to Mecca after he is reduced in size to only 30 cubits.[36] According to al-Muqaddasī the mountain of Adam in Sri Lanka has on one of its sides a giant footprint sunk 70 cubits into the ground. The next footprint is a day and a night's journey away in the floor of the sea.[37]

It is important to consider that the names of the two cities at the ends of the Earth might themselves be significant, though previous attempts to explain these names on etymological grounds have been unsatisfactory.[38] The close association of "Jābalq" with "Qāf," in the accounts of Alexander's journeys and other traditions, suggests that Jābalq is to be read as two words, as "Jabal Qāf" or "Mount Qāf." There is further support for this reading in the exegesis of Q 50:1, the first verse of Sūrah Qāf. Several exegetes cite, on the authority of Ibn Zayd, 'Ikrimah, Mujāhid and al-Ḍaḥḥāk, the tradition that the letter "qāf" appearing at the beginning of Q 50, from which the sūrah derives its name, is meant as a reference to Mount Qāf.[39] There are other explanations for the "qāf" which are consistent with the interpretations of many of the other mysterious letters that occur at the beginning of certain sūrahs in the Quran, though the identification of other letters with mountains or places is uncommon.[40] The "qāf" in Q 50:1 is also, most likely, the reference to Mount Qāf in the Quran mentioned by Yāqūt.[41]

This reading of Jābalq suggests that the name of "Jābars" can also be understood as two words. There are a number of variants for the spelling of this name, including "Jābals" in the Persian accounts of Alexander's journeys, substituting the "lām" for the "rā" thus making "Jabal Sīn" parallel to "Jabal Qāf." This suggests another of the most famous mountains in Muslim exegetical tradition, "Jabal Sīnā" or "Mount Sinai." It may also be significant that some of the Arabic geographers identify the name of the city as "Jābalsā" adding the "alif" at the end,

suggesting a reading of "Jabal Sīn-ā."[42] Mount Sinai is mentioned as one of the five mountains out of which God builds the spot for the Ka'bah in Mecca, or out of which the Ka'bah itself is built.[43] The association of Sinai with Mecca is a part of the more general attribution of prophetic and Israelite sites to the location of the Prophet Muhammad's mission.

The name Sinai occurs once in Q 23:20 as "Ṭūr Sīnā'" and again in Q 95:2 as "Ṭūr Sīnīn,"[44] though often the name is spelled without the final hamzah, related to the Hebrew "Ṭūr Sīnay" mentioned fifteen times in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers.[45] Sinai is featured, along with the alternate Horeb, in the so-called "Sinai-complex" usually identified with Exodus 18–40 and Numbers 1–10, although a number of different source-critical analyses exist along with varied proposals for mapping the sequence of the Israelites' movements from Egypt to the Holy Land.[46] The name itself seems to be derived from the name of the "Wilderness of Sīn" [midbar sīn] in which the Israelites are wandering. "Sinai" is understood as "Sīn-ay" or "Sīn-ite [place]" referring to the mountain in the Wilderness of Sin.[47] The "Sīn" could signify the wilderness of the Israelites' wandering or the mountain in that wilderness on which the Torah was revealed.

In some versions of the Night Journey, the Prophet Muhammad is taken on a tour of some of the important sites associated with the prophets of the Quran, including a visit to Sinai. For example, al-Nasā'ī records a tradition, on the authority of Anas b. Mālik, that the Prophet Muhammad passed Medina, Mount Sinai, and Bethlehem on his way to Jerusalem.[48] According to Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī [994–1066], on his way to Jerusalem, the Prophet Muhammad visited the burning bush [shajarah Mūsā] in Midian, which is, in some traditions, said to be the location of Mount Sinai.[49] In other accounts, the Prophet Muhammad stops at the grave of Moses at the "red mound" [al-kathīb al-aḥmar].[50] These accounts appear to be related to other traditions in which the Prophet Muhammad meets Abraham, Moses, and Jesus on the way to Jerusalem,[51] or finds them assembled with other prophets in Jerusalem where he leads them in prayer.[52] Other accounts place visits with these same prophets and others during the Prophet Muhammad's ascent through the seven heavens, making the Ascension parallel the earthly geography of the Night Journey.[53]

Yāqūt's account identifying the inhabitants of Jābars with the Children of Moses also links the city with Mount Sinai and the wanderings of the Israelites in the Wilderness of Sīn.[54] In this account, Yāqūt mentions that the night and the day were made equal for the Children of Moses in the journey to Jābars where they settled. This could be a reference to the cloud and the pillar of fire that guided the Israelites in the wilderness, also found in the accounts of Dhu al-Qarnayn's journeys.

> It is reported, on the authority of the Amīr al-Mu'minīm ['Alī b. Abī Ṭālib], that he was asked about Dhu al-Qarnayn. He said: he was given clouds, ways were leveled for him, and the light was spread out for him. It was said to him ['Alī]: how was it spread out for him in the light? He said: the light of the night was just like the light of the day.[55]

In Exodus 13:21–22, God provides the Israelites with a pillar of cloud to give them shelter in the day and a pillar of fire to provide light at night, guiding them to Sinai. Throughout Exodus and Numbers, God appears to Moses and the Israelites in a cloud, and it is this cloud which covers the Tent and Ark of the Covenant day and night, symbolizing the presence [shekhīnah] of God.[56] Yāqūt may also be making an association with Sinai in his mention of the "folding of the earth" [ṭuwwayt], a possible allusion to the valley of Ṭuwwā in Q 20:12 and 79:16 where Moses is said to have received the Torah.

Some accounts of the city of Jābars have a variant spelling for the name of the city, using a "ṣād" instead of a "sīn" at the end of the word.[57] This could suggest a comparison between the "qāf" at the head of Q 50 and the "ṣād" at the head of Q 38. In his exegesis on Q 50:1, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī points out a number of connections between the two sūrahs.[58] Both sūrahs begin with an independent letter (qāf, ṣād), an oath by the Quran (38:1, 50:1), and include the word "bal" (38:2, 50:2) and a form of the word "'ajiba" (38:4, 50:2). The beginnings and endings of these two sūrahs also resemble one another, each mentioning the same theme at the end as at the beginning of the sūrah. Q 38, especially verses 5–6 in the beginning and then verses 65–66 at the end, turns attention to the foundational principle of the faith, namely the unity of God. Q 50, especially verse 3 at the beginning and verse 44 at the end, indicates the last principle of the faith, namely the Assembly of the Dead at the end of the world. In this sense, sūrah Ṣād represents the origins of the world with the creation of Adam (38:71), and sūrah Qāf represents the end of the world with the Day of Judgment.

There are a number of traditions in the exegesis of Q 7:159 which also associate the location of Jābars/Jābals and the followers of Moses with the letter ṣād. In his exegesis of Q 7:159, al-Qurṭubī mentions that God took the Prophet Muhammad, during the night of his Ascension, to the followers of Moses.

> These [mentioned in Q 7:159] are the people beyond China [Ṣīn], beyond the river of sand, who worship God in truth and justice, who believe in Muhammad, renounce the Sabbath, and face our Qiblah. No one of them has come to us, and none of us to them. It is related that when the conflict took place after Moses, there was a group of them [Israelites] who followed the truth. They were not able to remain in the midst of the Israelites, so God took them out to an edge of his earth, in seclusion from creation. He made for them a subterranean passage [sarb] in the earth and they walked in it for a year and a half until they came out beyond China. They follow the truth until now. Between humanity and them is a sea because of which people cannot reach them.[59]

Note that if the letter "ṣād" is read as "ṣīn" in analogy with "sīn" in the name Jābars/Jābals, then it could refer to China as the location is identified in this exegesis.[60] The mention of these followers of Moses being cut off from the rest of creation also parallels the information given in the account of Yāqūt.[61]

ʿĀd, Thamūd, and Israelites

In al-Ṭabarī's account, the two cities of Jābalq and Jābars are inhabited by the remnants of the people of ʿĀd and Thamūd, the remnants being those who followed the prophets Hūd or Ṣāliḥ and thus escaped the destruction of their peoples by God. Hūd is the first of the so-called "Arab" prophets, coming after Noah and before Ṣāliḥ.[62] The story of Hūd and the people of ʿĀd, to whom he was sent as a prophet, is repeated three times in Q 7:65–72, 11:50–60, 26:123–140 with brief references in Q 41:15–16, 46:21–25, 51:41–42, 53:50, 54:18–22, 69:4–8, and 89:6–8.[63] Some Islamic exegesis also identifies Q 23:31–41 as referring to Hūd and the ʿĀd.[64] According to the early exegesis of the Hūd/ʿĀd verses, God sends a three-year drought when the ʿĀd reject Hūd's message, and they send a delegation to Mecca to pray for rain. One of the delegation, identified as Qayl b. ʿAnz in much of the exegesis, is given the choice of three clouds: one yellow, one red, and one black. He chooses the black cloud from which a storm comes that destroys all the ʿĀd except for Hūd and his followers. In some accounts, it is stated that Hūd and his followers settle in Mecca or stay in their homeland, but there are no indications that they traveled or were taken to the city of Jābalq.[65]

The story of Ṣāliḥ and the people of Thamūd, to whom he was sent as a prophet, is found in Q 7:73–79, 11:61–68, 26:141–159 immediately following the account of Hūd and the ʿĀd. There are additional references to Ṣāliḥ and the Thamūd in Q 14:8–9, 15:80–84, 17:59, 27:45–53, 41:17–18, 51:43–45, 53:51, 54:23–32, 69:4–5, 89:9, and 91:11–15.[66] In the exegesis on these verses, Ṣāliḥ is sent to the people of Thamūd warning them to accept God. The people of Thamūd ask for a sign, and Ṣāliḥ produces the she-camel. Although the people are warned to stay away from the she-camel, a group of them, led by a man named Quḍār b. Sālif, kills the she-camel and God destroys the people of Thamūd with a violent storm of fire.[67] Ṣāliḥ and his followers who are left pack up, gathering the bones of the she-camel, and go to Palestine where Ṣāliḥ is said to be buried.[68] Kaʿb al-Aḥbār reports that the remnants of the people of Thamūd then split into two groups, one going to Aden and the other to the Ḥaḍramawt.[69]

In the exegesis related to the stories of Hūd and Ṣāliḥ emphasis is placed on the interpretation that the ʿĀd and Thamūd were both destroyed because they refused to acknowledge God as their provider. Both the ʿĀd and Thamūd lived in special buildings. Q 89:6–13 compares the buildings of ʿĀd created unlike any others in the land, the buildings of Thamūd hewed out of rocks, and the city-building of the Pharaoh. Q 26:128–129 accuses the people of Thamūd of using their buildings to guarantee their immortality through their fame.

> **26:128** Do you build on every high place a sign to entertain? **129** and make artifices so that you might be immortal?[70]

Yāqūt reports an opinion that the city of Iram dhāt al-ʿImād, mentioned in Q 89:6 in connection with the ʿĀd, was built between the Ḥadramawt and Ṣanʿā in

imitation of Paradise by one of the descendants of ʿĀd until God destroyed the city on account of its builder's pride.[71] The people of Thamūd are said to have been made invulnerable by God, and given special skills to hew their houses out of the sides of mountains.[72] Many exegetes take the mention of the houses of Thamūd in Q 89:9, 7:74, 26:149, and 29:38 as references to the ruins located at al-Ḥijr, also called the "cities of Ṣāliḥ" [Madā'in Ṣāliḥ], Nabataean ruins by which the Prophet Muhammad passed on his way to the raid on Tabūk.[73]

Both the people of ʿĀd and Thamūd are also said to have enjoyed extraordinary prosperity because of God, whose provision they denied. According to Ibn Kathīr, the abundance or magnitude [baṣṭah] which God adds to the people of ʿĀd over and above what is given to the rest of creation in Q 7:69, is to be understood in relation to the ʿĀd being made prosperous [tufliḥūn] at the end of the verse.[74] In Q 11:52 God sends rain to add numbers to the strength [qūwah] of ʿĀd, and in Q 41:15–16 the ʿĀd themselves claim to be superior to all others in their strength [qūwah]. According to Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Nuwayrī [1279–1333], the people of Thamūd had been blessed with agricultural prosperity, in that their fruits ripened twice a year instead of once, and they had good cattle.[75] Q 26:147–148 describes the living conditions of the people of Thamūd in terms appropriate for the garden of Eden, making reference to the gardens, springs, fields of produce, and palm trees given by God to the people of Thamūd.[76] Both Ibn Kathīr and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī apply Q 23:31–41 to the peoples of ʿĀd and Thamūd because both peoples attributed their greatness to themselves and held their own positions to be equal with or higher than that of God who was represented by the prophets Hūd and Ṣāliḥ.[77]

The punishments of the peoples of ʿĀd and Thamūd are also parallel in the Quran and its exegesis. In his *Ta'rīkh*, al-Ṭabarī reports, on the authority of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, that as a punishment the people of Thamūd turned red one day, yellow the day after that, and black on the third day.[78] This parallels the choice of the three clouds, red, yellow, and black, given to the delegation of the people of ʿĀd when they went to Mecca to pray for rain.[79] Both the ʿĀd and Thamūd suffer punishments which also relate to their claims of immortality with regard to their extraordinary fertility. The people of ʿĀd are said to have become the opposite of what they claimed their own glory to be. Q 51:41–42 says that the ʿĀd were reduced to decay and disrepair [ramīm], and both Q 54:20 and Q 69:7 describe how God extracted the people of ʿĀd from the earth as if they were the roots of palm trees torn from the ground. Following the "single scream" [ṣayḥah wāḥidah] in Q 54:31, the Thamūd are said to have been made like dried stalks, like the straw used for cattle pens. According to al-Nuwayrī, when the Thamūd first rejected Ṣāliḥ, God made their women sterile, their trees to dry up, their cows not to calve, and the ewes not to lamb.[80]

Exegesis of these verses emphasizes that the punishments suffered by the people of ʿĀd and Thamūd correspond to the privileges and blessings which they refused to recognize God provided them. According to the exegesis of Q 46:25 in Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, that God left only the ruins of the dwellings of the ʿĀd after

their destruction was a testament to their refusal to recognize God's providence.[81] In some accounts, the wind or black birds carry away the people of ʿĀd from their houses, dropping them in the sea and leaving their houses as a sign of the artifices upon which they pinned their false hopes of immortality.[82] The houses are left standing but their treasury and their bodies are swept away by a noisy, roaring wind [ṣarṣar].[83] The people of Thamūd, secure in their houses against invaders and storms, are destroyed by the sound of the "scream" [ṣayḥah].[84] The ruins of the people of Thamūd are called "al-Ḥijr" in the time of the Prophet Muhammad, referring to their status as a place that is interdicted or forbidden [ḥijr], a monument not to the immortality but to the infamy of the people of Thamūd.[85] This theme of God destroying a people but leaving behind their cities and monuments as a sign for future generations is common throughout the Quran and the stories of the prophets related to its exegesis.[86] The Pharaoh in particular, based on the exegesis of Q 89:10, is an example of an unbeliever who attempted to ensure his immortality through buildings which are left as a reminder of his fate.[87]

Many of the themes present in the stories of Hūd/ʿĀd and Ṣāliḥ/Thamūd parallel themes found not only in the stories of Pharaoh, but also in the account of the Israelites wandering in the wilderness near Sinai. This would seem to be appropriate given the association of the followers of Moses mentioned in Q 7:159 with the inhabitants of the two cities at the ends of the Earth. The use of water to symbolize God's providence, and the loss of this providence as a punishment, is integral to a number of narratives of the relationship between God and Israel.[88] Jeremiah 14:1–9 equates drought with the people's rejection of God. Justin Martyr [130–165], in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, perhaps drawing upon the imagery of Jeremiah 2:13, compares the living water of Jesus with the empty cisterns of the Israelites.[89] A similar idea is expressed in Deuteronomy 6:10–12, where Moses warns the Israelites to remember that it is God who has brought them into a land with cities already built, houses already furnished, wells already dug, and vineyards and olives already planted and growing.

In his exegesis of Q 26:129, al-Qurṭubī mentions the opinions of several exegetes that the "artifices" [maṣāniʿ] built by the people of ʿĀd to ensure their immortality were containers for water.[90] According to al-Jawharī, the artifices were pools designed to collect rain water, and according to Qatādah the artifices were for water under the earth.[91] According to al-Kisāʾī, it was the same rain which the people of ʿĀd attempted to control that was their damnation when God destroyed them with the storm from the black cloud chosen by the ʿĀd in Mecca.[92] The symbolic significance of water also appears in the accounts of the Prophet Muhammad's passing by al-Ḥijr on his way to Tabūk, where he tells his followers not to drink of the water of the city.[93] In both cases, the people rejected God by refusing to acknowledge that he was their provider and source of sustenance.

Like the peoples of the ʿĀd and Thamūd, the Israelites wandering in the wilderness around Sinai also refused to acknowledge that God was their provider. A reference to the tradition of the Israelites murmuring in the wilderness, known as the Wilderness of Wandering, is found in Q 2:47–61. According to Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī

b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī [d. 939], the Israelites began murmuring to Moses after they had crossed the Red Sea and found themselves in the desert.

> When Moses had taken the Israelites across the sea and they alighted in the desert, they said: Moses, you will cause us to perish, and kill us, taking us out of civilization into the desert with no shade, nor trees, nor water. So a cloud used to go along with them and shade them from the sun. In the night manna would fall, settling on the plants, trees, and rocks, and they would eat it. In the evening a roasted quail would come to them, settling on their tables. When they had eaten and were filled, it would fly away. Moses had with him a rock which he put in the middle of the camp. Then he struck it with his rod and twelve springs gushed forth, just as God related. Each tribe came with its bags, for there were twelve tribes.[94]

This account is consistent with the narratives in Exodus 16:1–35 and Numbers 11:4–34 which locate the Israelites' rebellion after the crossing of the sea but before reaching Sinai.[95] According to al-Ṭabarsī, the events mentioned in Q 2:57 take place after Sinai and the episode of the golden calf mentioned already in verses 51–54.

> The occasion for the sending down of the manna and the quail to the Israelites is when God tested them in the Wilderness of Wandering. They said to Moses: "You and your Lord go and the two of you fight. We will be sitting here" [Q 5:24]. They were commanded to travel to Jerusalem and fight the Amalekites. The word of God: "Enter the Holy Land" [Q 5:21]. Instead they found themselves wandering in the Wilderness of Wandering. They would wander for five or six parsangs, waking up and walking for two days, and then be in the place from which they had started. This lasted until the generation died, for forty years. In the Wilderness of Wandering, Moses and Aaron died.[96]

This account seems to locate the Israelites' rebellion in Q 2:57 with the account in Numbers 14, after the reconnaissance of Canaan in Numbers 13, and Numbers 20:1–13 where the Israelites challenge Moses to provide them food and fresh water in the wilderness of Ṣīn.[97]

The "test" mentioned by al-Ṭabarsī seems to refer to the command of God in Q 5:21 that the Israelites enter the Holy Land. According to al-Ṭabarī, in his *Ta'rīkh* and exegesis of Q 5:20–26, the Israelites encountered the giants [al-jabbārīn] when they arrived at Jericho and doubted that God could take them into the land.[98] Instead of pleading on behalf of the Israelites, Moses claims his innocence [Q 5:25], and God condemns the Israelites to wander for forty years [Q 5:26].[99] In Numbers 14:32–35, God damns the Israelites to wander in the wilderness for forty years until all the people of the current generation are dead.[100] Exodus 32:26–29

states that the Levites killed the worshippers of the golden calf so that later rabbinic traditions suggest that only the Levites survived the golden calf episode.[101] According to al-Qurṭubī, in his exegesis of Q 5:20–26, of all the Israelites who left Egypt, only Joshua b. Nun and Caleb b. Jephunneh, and their descendants, remained.[102] In Numbers 20:12–13 Moses and Aaron are also condemned not to enter the Holy Land, perhaps because of Moses' consent to abandon the campaign against Canaan as suggested in Deuteronomy 1:34–38.

According to this exegesis of Q 2:57, linked with Q 5:20–26, God's testing of the Israelites with his command to enter the land is juxtaposed to his providing of food and shelter to the Israelites during their wandering. Q 2:57 specifically mentions that God provided for the Israelites the shade of clouds, manna, and quails. Both the manna [al-mann] and the quails [al-salwā] are associated with honey, on the authority of Ibn 'Aṭīyah, al-Jawharī, Mujāhid, and al-Zajjāj.[103] In his account of the Israelites in the Wilderness of Wandering, al-Kisā'ī also explains that the manna was like honey, and that the Israelites were supplied honey by God.[104] These interpretations are suggestive of the "honey" which the Israelites were supposed to have found, as promised by God in Exodus 3:17, flowing from the trees in the Holy Land.[105] There are also numerous traditions, based on the exegesis of Q 47:15, which associate honey with the garden of Eden.[106] On the authority of 'Ikrimah, Ibn Kathīr reports that the quail given to the Israelites were like the birds of the garden of Eden.[107]

The shelter and clothing given to the Israelites in the wilderness also parallels what God provides in the garden of Eden. Numerous traditions, some explicitly linked with the descriptions of the two cities at the ends of the Earth, describe Paradise as a land without or beyond the sun, moon, and stars of this world.[108] In the exegesis of Q 7:159, several accounts mention that the followers of Moses were led to Jābars/Jābals by a cloud which covered them from the sun during the day, and a pillar of fire which provided them light during the night. Also like the inhabitants in the garden of Eden, the Israelites in the wilderness did not require clothing. Ibn Kathīr reports, on the authority of al-Suddī, Ibn 'Abbās and others, that although Q 7:159 does not specifically mention clothing, God provided it to the Israelites.

> [The Israelites asked]: Where are the clothes? Their clothes used to grow with them just as youths grow. The clothes did not tear...
>
> Wahb b. Munabbih and 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Zayd b. Aslam said something like what al-Suddī said.
>
> Sunayd said, on the authority of Ḥajjāj, on the authority of Ibn Jurayj, that Ibn 'Abbās said: In the Wilderness of Wandering, God created clothes for them which did not tear nor wear.[109]

Before eating of the tree in the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were provided special clothes by God, said to be like fingernails that grew on their bodies.[110]

It is also important to note that the food provided by God for the Israelites in the wilderness was such that the Israelites had to continue to rely upon God for daily sustenance. A number of Muslim exegetes relate that the manna was only good for the same day on which God sent it down to the Israelites.[111] Ibn Kathīr reports, on the authority of Ibn Jurayj, that the food would spoil after the day on which it was sent down, echoing the account of Exodus 16:19–21.[112] Other exegesis on Q 2:57 mentions the notion, found in Exodus 16:5, that on Friday a double dose of manna was sent down so that God could test the Israelites to see if they would prepare their food in advance for the Sabbath.[113] By receiving food that could not be stored or hoarded, the Israelites were made to be dependent upon God, and were being conditioned for life in the Holy Land.[114] The sojourn of the Israelites in the Wilderness of Wandering is a temporary return to the conditions of the garden of Eden, God providing for the every need of the people, and the people expected to obey God's commands.[115] That the sojourn in the wilderness was considered a test or conditioning period for the Israelites, is also found in other traditions linking both the wilderness and God's providence to a trial of the people.[116]

These same implications are evident in the several accounts of a special Night Journey taken by the Prophet Muhammad to visit the followers of Moses living in the city of Jābars/Jābals. In these accounts, the inhabitants of Jābars/Jābals lead an Edenic existence analogous to that of the Israelites in the Wilderness of Wandering, and explicitly acknowledge the prophethood and religion of Muhammad. According to al-Qazwīnī, the Prophet Muhammad asked Gabriel to take him to visit the followers of Moses mentioned in Q 7:159.

> Gabriel said: "Between you and between them is a journey of six years going and six years returning. Between you and them is a river of sand which flows like arrows, and it stops only on the Sabbath. But, ask your Lord."
>
> So the Prophet called upon God and Gabriel protected him. God revealed to Gabriel to give him what he asked. So he rode on Buraq and went step by step. When he was before the people, he greeted them and they asked: "Who are you?" He replied: "I am the Ummī prophet." They said: "Yes, you are the one about whom Moses spoke, that your community, had they not sinned, would have reached the angels."
>
> The Prophet said: I saw their graves at the doors of their houses and I asked them: "Why is this?" They said: "So that we will be reminded of death in the morning and evening. If we did not do this, then we would only be reminded from time to time."
>
> The Prophet said: "Why are all you buildings equal?" They said: "So that we would not honor some over others, so that some of us would not block the air of others."

> The Prophet said: "Why do I not see among you any authority or judges?" They said: "Should we divide some of us over others of us? We give the truth ourselves, so there is no need for one of us to enforce justice among us."
>
> The Prophet said: "Why are your shops empty?" They said: "We grow everything and harvest everything. Each man takes what is sufficient and gives what remains to his brother."
>
> The Prophet said: "Why did I see some of your community laughing?" They said: "Because one of them has died." He said: "So why are they laughing?" They said: "Out of joy because he was taken by God's unity." The Prophet said: "What are those people crying about?" They said: "A child was born to them and they do not know which religion it will take."
>
> He said: "When a male child is born to you, what do you do?" They said: "We fast for God for a month out of thanks." He said: "And if a female child is born to you?" They said: "We fast for God for two months out of thanks because Moses told us that the perseverance of a female is a greater reward than the perseverance of a male."
>
> The Prophet said: "Do any of you commit fornication?" They said: "Would one do that except the sky would rain down upon him from above, and the ground sink from under him." The Prophet said: "Do you practice usury?" They said: "The one who practices usury is the one who does not trust in the sustenance of God." The Prophet said: "Do you get sick?" They said: "We do not sin and do not get sick. If your community gets sick, then it is an expiation for their sins."
>
> The Prophet said: "Do you have predatory animals?" They said: "Yes, they pass us by and we pass by them but they do not harm us."[117]

A number of parallels are made here between the followers of Moses, the garden of Eden, and the Israelites in the wilderness. The depiction of the wild animals not attacking the people appears to be a reference to an Edenic existence, also related to eschatological traditions about wild animals living in peace such as the situation on God's mountain described in Isaiah 11:6–9.[118] Several related accounts also mention the separation of the male and female inhabitants, that all the inhabitants are male, or that there is no gender distinction among the inhabitants.[119] In his exegesis of Q 7:159, Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī [1903–1982] reports a tradition from al-Sha'bī in which the Edenic existence of the inhabitants of Jābars/Jābals is also emphasized.

> al-Sha'bī said: The servants of God were beyond al-Andalus the same distance it is between us and al-Andalus…Their pebbles are pearls and sapphires, their mountains are gold and silver. They do not grow food, harvest, nor know how to work. They have a tree outside of their doors on which are broad leaves which are their clothing, and a tree at their doors on which is fruit from which they eat.[120]

Genesis 2:12 mentions precious stones in the vicinity of Eden, and the mention of gems growing on the plants in Paradise is a common theme, especially in the Persian recensions of the Alexander Romance. The people rely on God for their food and clothing, both of which is taken from trees, as in the garden of Eden.[121]

In other ways, al-Qazwīnī's description of the inhabitants of Jābars and Jābalq highlights their juxtaposition to the Israelites in the wilderness and the lost peoples of 'Ād and Thamūd. The inhabitants do not sin, particularly do they not fornicate nor practice usury. Both of these sins are attributed to the Jews in the time of the Prophet Muhammad, especially in relation to the exegesis of Q 3:130. In his exegesis of Q 7:159, al-Qurṭubī mentions a similar question the Prophet Muhammad asks the inhabitants.

> He [Prophet Muhammad] said: "Do any of you lie in your reports [ḥadīth]?" They said: "If one of us were to do this, a raging fire would take him. A fire would descend and burn him."[122]

This could be related to the claim, found in the exegesis of Q 7:159 and 17:2–8, that the Israelites were punished because they killed the prophets of God and altered the text of the revelation given to them by God.[123] In other exegesis of Q 7:159, it is stated explicitly that these followers of Moses did not substitute anything from the Torah nor did they participate in the killing of the prophets of God.[124] The inhabitants of the city visited by the Prophet Muhammad require no authority because no one of them is unjust or sins.[125] Everything needed by any inhabitant of the city is available and is shared freely. Perhaps related to the false claims of immortality among the peoples of 'Ād and Thamūd before their destruction, all the inhabitants of Jābars are also said to have houses and buildings of the same size.[126]

In the exegesis of Q 17:1 and the accounts of the Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey, Jerusalem itself is described in terms appropriate not to the Israelites but to the inhabitants of the cities at the ends of the Earth. Related to the exegesis of the description of the "farthest mosque" [al-masjid al-aqṣā], whose surroundings were blessed by God [bārak-nā ḥawla-hu] in Q 17:1 are traditions concerning the "virtues of Jerusalem" [faḍā'il bayt al-maqdis]. In al-Zamakhsharī and Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Shawkānī [d. 1834], it is reported that this blessing refers to the prophets of God who were worshipped there from the time of Moses, and that Jerusalem is surrounded by sunlight and bordered by fruit trees.[127] This tradition is in stark contrast to the traditions, associated both with Q 17:2–8 and 2:246–251, that the Israelites killed the prophets of God after Moses, but might refer instead to the eschatological and celestial Jerusalem or to the followers of Moses inhabiting one of the two cities at the ends of the Earth.

The Jerusalem of the exegesis of Q 17:1 is the eschatological or celestial Jerusalem, closely associated with Eden and Mecca. The cities of Jābalq and Jābars are also said to have the same dimensions as this eschatological Jerusalem, perfectly square, being 12,000 by 12,000 parsangs on each side according to al-Bal'amī's recension of al-Ṭabarī's *Ta'rīkh*.[128] The conflation of these various sites

is also reflected in the traditions identifying different locations as the destinations of the journeys to the ends of the Earth. In a number of accounts, the Prophet Muhammad journeys to terrestrial sites associated with prophets such as Sinai, Bethlehem, the tomb of Moses, Jābalq and Jābars, and Jerusalem. Some of these accounts combine visits to a number of locations, but others recount journeys only to Jābars, or Jerusalem. Similarly, some scholars contend that the Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey from Mecca to Jerusalem is distinct from his Ascension into Paradise, or that the Ascension is simply a celestial version of the terrestrial journey, possibly the result of an attempt to untangle the established exegetical conflation of Jerusalem, Sinai, and Jābalq and Jābars with the garden of Eden.[129] That the Prophet Muhammad ascended into Paradise from earth also suggests that the ascent might have been understood to have taken place from Qāf, the world-mountain, the mountain on which Adam stood putting his head into the heavens to hear and smell the garden of Eden.[130] Alexander is also said to have visited Jerusalem, and to have attempted to enter the garden of Eden.[131] Dhu al-Qarnayn is also said to have visited Jerusalem, the well of Beersheba, Mecca, and the two cities at the ends of the Earth.

Followers of Moses and the Jews of Medina

In early Muslim exegetical scholarship a similar historical context is provided for the accounts of both the Prophet Muhammad and Dhu al-Qarnayn's journeys to the ends of the Earth. According to Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-Nīsābūrī [d. 972], on the authority of Qatādah, Q 18:83–101 was revealed because the Jews asked the Prophet Muhammad about Dhu al-Qarnayn.[132] Perhaps concerned about the placement of Q 18:83–101 in a Medinan context, Ibn Kathīr reports that it was a group of Meccan pagans who went to the People of the Book, asking them for a question to stump the Prophet Muhammad, and that the People of the Book told the pagans to ask him about the man who went to the ends of the Earth.[133] The story of the Prophet Muhammad's journey to see the followers of Moses at Jābars, mentioned in Q 7:159, is also set in the context of the Prophet Muhammad's confrontation with the Jews. Beginning with Q 7:152, immediately preceding verse 159, is the account of the Israelites worshipping the golden calf. Immediately following verse 159 is an account of the Israelites in the Wilderness of Wandering, followed by the account in verse 163–166 of the people who broke the Sabbath and were turned into apes.[134]

Other exegetical and historical sources also appear to link the accounts of the Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey and Ascension to a polemical context with the Jews of Medina. According to Ibn Isḥāq, after his Night Journey, the Prophet Muhammad related his experience to the people of Mecca, most of whom disbelieved.[135] On the authority of Umm Hāni', Ibn Ishāq reports that the Prophet Muhammad proved his story to the Meccans by describing a caravan he saw on his journey some miles outside of Mecca.[136] In other accounts, though, the Prophet Muhammad attempts to convince the Meccans of his journey by describing

Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, or what Jerusalem looked like.[137] That the pagan Meccans were unfamiliar with these prophets and the description of Jerusalem is suggested by the account in which al-Ḥasan b. Abū al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī claims he was lifted up so that he could see Jerusalem and relate to Abū Bakr the veracity of the Prophet Muhammad's description.[138] The exegesis of Q 17:2–8, emphasizing that the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem was the result of the Israelites' disobedience, their worship of the golden calf and killing of the prophets, is linked to the story of the righteous followers of Moses mentioned in Q 7:159. Juxtaposing this exegesis to Q 17:1, Muslim exegetes implicitly deny the Jews' claim to Jerusalem as the current site of the temple or presence of God. This context is also suggested in the use of the name "Children of Israel" [Banī Isrā'īl] for Q 17 as a whole.[139]

The polemical context of these accounts is evident in the focus on the temple in Jerusalem. The exegesis of Q 17:2–8 emphasizes a number of themes prevalent in apocalyptic traditions, such as the taking away of the people of faith, the disappearance of the revealed law of God, and the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem.[140] The destruction and return of the temple in Jerusalem, as an eschatological as well as historical event, is of particular relevance to the Night Journey of the Prophet Muhammad in Q 17:1. A number of sources identify the location mentioned in Q 17:1 not only as Jerusalem but specifically as Zion [Ṣahyūn] and the site of the temple.[141] Much exegesis understands the mention of the "farthest prayer-place" [al-masjid al-aqṣā] in Q 17:1 as a reference to Jerusalem though the term used for Jerusalem itself [bayt al-maqdis] is literally a reference to the "sacred temple" of Jerusalem.[142] Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī is careful to note that the "Masjid al-Aqṣā" first built in Jerusalem under 'Abd al-Mālik [r.685–705] or al-Walīd [r.705–715], and later identified with Q 17:1, was not present at the time of the Prophet Muhammad's visit, suggesting that the location in Q 17:1 is to be understood as the celestial or eschatological Jerusalem.[143] The apocalyptic setting of the Prophet Muhammad's journey to Jābalq and Jābars is also found in al-Ṭabarī's account, attached to which is the Prophet Muhammad's description of the temporal end of the world.[144] When God's law has disappeared from the earth, the sun and the moon will rise from the west, black and rolled up like sacks, and then the Day of Judgment has arrived.[145]

There are numerous Biblical and rabbinic references to apocalyptic contexts in which the "righteous" or "people of faith" are taken from the earth or hidden by God, representing the saved remnant. For example, in the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 18:32 there is discussion of the necessity of there being more than eight righteous people to save the world. Genesis 8:18 indicates that there were only eight people who boarded the Ark, and in Genesis 18:32, God promises Abraham he will not destroy Sodom if only ten righteous people can be found in it.[146] The Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 18:18 uses gematria to argue that the numerical value of the name "Abraham" means that there will always be thirty righteous men like Abraham alive in the world. Isaiah 30:18 is interpreted likewise, the numerical value of "him" in the verse being 36, taken to support the view that there are always thirty-six righteous men [tzaddīqīm] in the world.[147]

The motif of the righteous being removed from the world before the punishment of the sinners is also found in a number of eschatological settings. The so-called "History of the Rechabites," which in its present form seems to date from the sixth or later centuries, recounts the journey of Zosimus to visit the "Sons of Rechab" who were miraculously transported from Jerusalem to the edges of the earth in the time of Jeremiah.[148] Zosimus, like the Prophet Muhammad in the account of the Night Journey in al-Ṭabarī, is escorted by an angel and an unusual animal to this remnant who escaped Jerusalem before it was destroyed on account of the sins of the Israelites.[149] The Sons of Rechab are clothed with the same garments [Syr., eṣṭal] worn by Adam and Eve in Eden before the Fall (12:3), they eat manna (13:2), are never sick (14:1), and rejoice at the death of their members (14:2–5).[150] A similar account of the "Lost Tribes" is found in the third-century Christian Latin poet Commodian and in the Acts of St. Matthew.[151] In these sources, the Lost Tribes live in the east, there is no sickness, they fulfill the Law, they have no money, eat manna, drink from the water of life, have no sex, nor do they eat meat.[152]

Rabbinic references to the Lost Tribes and the "Sons of Moses" make explicit reference to the return of these peoples at the end of time. The Jerusalem Talmud, Sanhedrin 10:5, mentions the three places of exile of the ten Lost Tribes and their return to a rebuilt Jerusalem. Berakōt 7a explains, on the basis of Deuteronomy 9:14 and 1 Chronicles 23:15–17, that the "Sons of Moses" [Bnai Mōshe] multiplied on account of God's promise to make a separate people out of his descendants. Drawing upon Hosea 8:8, Zechariah 14:4, and Isaiah 49:21, the Midrash Pesiqta Rabbati 31 describes how God will cause the Lost Tribes to tunnel underground and emerge from under the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem at the end of time.[153] The eleventh or twelfth century *Sefer ha-Zichrōnōt* preserves a full account of the Sons of Moses tradition.

> When the night came on a cloud covered them [Children of Moses], together with their wives, and sons, and daughters, and the Lord gave them light by a pillar of fire, which showed them the way the whole night until the dawn of day, and brought them to the seashore. When the sun rose the cloud departed as well as the pillar of fire.
>
> And the Lord extended the length of the river Sabbatianus, so that it surrounded them completely. It hems them in so that no one can cross over to them, and he extended it all round to a distance of nine months' journey. The river surrounds them from three sides, and on the fourth is the sea. The depth of the river is 200 cubits, and it is full of sand and stones. The noise is that of an earthquake, and reaches the distance of half a day's journey, and causes the sand and stones to roll all the six days of the week. But on the Sabbath it rests, and immediately a fire bursts forth from the western side, which lasts from the eve of Sabbath until the end. Its flames shoot out in every direction, so that no one can approach nearer the river than a distance of thirty-four miles, and this fire burns all around and consumes everything.

> There is not seen among them any unclean animal or bird, and no creeping thing, but only their flocks and herds. There are six fountains, which gather together and form one pool. From these they water the land and obtain in abundance all kinds of clean fishes, and all kinds of birds and fruits. They sow one seed and reap a hundred-fold. They are men of faith, students of the Law, the Scripture, Mishnah and Aggadah. They are pious and pure and never swear falsely. They attain the ripe old age of 120 years, nor does a son or daughter die in the lifetime of their father. They see three successive generations and build for themselves houses; they sow and plough themselves, because they have no manservants or maidservants. They do not close their houses in the night-time, and a young child walks fearlessly with the cattle for many a day, without having any fear either of robbers or of any possible injury, because they are holy and remained in the holiness of Moses our teacher.
>
> Therefore God gave them all this and chose them. They do not see any man, nor do any of the sons of men see them, except the four tribes, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher, all of whom dwell on the other side of the rivers of Kush, with the Sabbatyon between them, and there they will remain until the end of the world.[154]

A closely related account of this can also be found in the *Agadata de-Bnai Mōshe* published by Jellinek, also incorporating many of the accounts from diverse rabbinic sources.[155]

Many of these accounts have parallels with details in the Muslim exegesis of Q 7:159. The History of the Rechabites has numerous details in common with the accounts of the Prophet Muhammad's journeys to the people at the edges of the earth, as does the account found in the *Sefer ha-Zichrōnōt*.[156] Several of the Jewish accounts mention a river of sand and its flowing or not flowing on the Sabbath.[157] Though the origins of this river seem to be related to comments found in Josephus of a "Sabbatikon" river,[158] such a river is also widespread in Muslim exegesis of Q 7:159 and related Jewish accounts of the Lost Tribes and Sons of Moses. That these traditions were current in the early Islamic period, and familiar to both Muslims and Jews, is also illustrated by the messianic movements which drew upon the apocalyptism of the Lost Tribes and Sons of Moses traditions.[159]

Muslim exegesis focused on Q 17:1–8 appropriates many of these apocalyptic traditions, closely related to the destruction of Jerusalem, to the origins of Islam. The eschatological traditions familiar from Jewish and Christian contexts are to be understood as having been "realized" in the time of the Prophet Muhammad. That such an apocalyptic interpretation of the Prophet Muhammad and Islam was current is evident from a number of sources, such as the "Secrets of Rabbi Shimon ben Yōḥai" and other references to Jewish messianism in the early Islamic period.[160] Such apocalyptic and eschatological expectations were, however, inverted in the Muslim exegesis of Q 17:1–8. The eschaton at hand was not to be a redemption of the Jews but rather a renewal of the Abrahamic religion

antedating Moses and the Torah, and a confirmation of the final punishment, stipulated in Q 2:47–48, of the Israelites and their followers.[161]

These various accounts of the removal of the righteous people and the destruction of Jerusalem have implications for the assignment of privileged status. In the exegesis following Q 7:159, it is only after the followers of Moses are removed, that the sinful Israelite remnant is punished by God, punished by the wandering in the wilderness, the revelation of the Torah, and the eventual destruction of Jerusalem. Q 2:48, perhaps echoing Exodus 32:33–35, states that the final punishment of these Israelites will come on the Day of Judgment and cannot be mediated by any intercession. This is also consistent with how Christian exegetes interpret the Israelites' sin in the wilderness, especially the golden calf episode, as the point at which the status of "chosen people" was transferred to the Christians.[162] Romans 11:1–10 mentions the "remnant" of Israel which was set aside from the sin of killing the prophets and is to be spared punishment. According to some Christian exegesis, such as the view reflected in the Epistle of Barnabas, the Torah was to be disregarded altogether because it was imposed only as a punishment for the Israelites' worship of the golden calf.[163] The destruction of Jerusalem, and the temple, in particular, is singled out as the punishment symbolizing the transference of privileged status from Israel to the Church.[164]

Muslim exegesis, tying together Q 7:159 and 17:1–8, also uses the accounts of the destruction of Jerusalem to signify that the Israelites had lost their status as the elect of God. The war of Bukht-Naṣar, mentioned in the accounts of the followers of Moses, refers to the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem by Nebudchadnezzar.[165] This destruction is discussed in the exegesis of Q 17:2–8 as well as Q 2:91 and 4:155, and is explained as God's punishment of the Israelites because they had killed the prophets of God.[166] Echoing the depiction of Nebudchadnezzar as an instrument for God's punishment of the Israelites in Daniel and Jeremiah, Muslim exegesis portrays Bukht-Naṣar as fulfilling the promise God made to destroy them.[167] According to Muslim exegetes, the war of Ṭālūt also mentioned in the exegesis of Q 2:246–251 refers to when the Israelites' rejected Ezekiel, Elijah, and Elisha culminating in the loss of the Ark of the Covenant and the destruction of Jerusalem. According to Ibn 'Abbās, the Israelites were compelled to ask God for a king to lead them because the People of Faith [ahl al-īmān] had been removed from the midst of the Israelites.[168] The third destruction of Jerusalem, by the Romans, is interpreted by Muslim exegetes as the final loss of the city to the Israelites and the Jews.[169]

In the case of each of these three destructions, Muslim exegesis cites the ruin of Jerusalem as a punishment for the Israelites' rejection and killing of the prophets sent to them. Unlike the other peoples and cities mentioned in the Quran, the Israelites and Jerusalem are sent numerous prophets. The relation between the destruction of the city and the sins of the Israelites against their prophets is made explicit in some of the reports. In some reports, given on the authority of al-Suddī and Ibn 'Abbās, the destruction of Jerusalem by Bukht-Naṣar was in response to when the Israelites killed the prophet John the Baptist, son of

Zechariah.[170] Echoing Christian responses to the destruction of Jerusalem, Muslim exegetes also report that Jesus the "Seal of the Israelite Prophets" was the last prophet sent to the Israelites, and their last chance to redeem their former status. It is with his rejection at the hands of the Israelites that Jerusalem was destroyed its third and final time under the Romans.

Given the Jewish polemical context and apocalyptic overtones of these traditions, it is also possible that the accounts of the Prophet Muhammad and Dhu al-Qarnayn's journeys are to be understood in relation to Ezekiel's vision of the eschatological Jerusalem. The most evident indication of this relationship is the mention of Gog and Magog, both in the Prophet Muhammad's journey, and in Q 18:94–99 as a people who will pour forth in the last days. This parallels the discussion of Gog and Magog, immediately preceding the vision of the restored temple, in Ezekiel 38–39.[171] Gog and Magog are juxtaposed to the Assyrian armies which destroyed Israel, the armies of Sennacherib which destroyed Judah, and of Nebudchadnezzar which destroyed the temple.[172] A similar interpretation is given by the Apocalypse of John 20:7–10, immediately preceding the description of the celestial Jerusalem, in which Gog and Magog are destroyed by God when attempting to destroy Jerusalem. The armies of Gog and Magog, led by the anti-Christ Dajjāl are also supposed to threaten Mecca and Jerusalem but not be allowed to enter.[173] In Ezekiel 38–39, the destruction of Gog and Magog is a punishment and a sign to the peoples who had previously destroyed Israel.

Ezekiel's description of the eschatological Jerusalem also corresponds to the Eden-like conditions of the two cities of Jābalq and Jābars at the ends of the Earth. In Ezekiel 40:2, Ezekiel is transported, in a nocturnal vision, from Babylon to Jerusalem located on a "very high mountain" in the land of Israel.[174] Ezekiel 38:12 refers to Jerusalem in Edenic terms, either as the "high plateau" or "navel" of the earth, depending on how the term "ṭabbūr ha-areṣ" is understood.[175] As "navel" of the earth, the identification of Jerusalem in Ezekiel 38:12 follows wide-spread traditions associating the mountain at the center of the earth with Paradise and the link to the garden of Eden.[176] As "high plateau" of the land, Jerusalem, and Zion in particular, is described in terms synonymous with the understanding of the garden of Eden being situated on a high plateau or steppe ['edin].[177] In either case, the notion of Zion and the garden of Eden being located on a mountain agrees with the descriptions associating Jābalq and Jābars with Qāf and the garden of Eden. The traditions associating Qāf and the two cities at the ends of the Earth with precious gems and the water of life are also paralleled in Ezekiel's vision of Zion. Ezekiel 28:13 explicitly conflates the garden of Eden, mentioning the gems and gold in reference to Genesis 2:12, with the "holy mountain of God" at Zion.[178] Ezekiel 47 describes the spring in the temple, perhaps a reference to Gihon said to be in both Eden (Gen. 2:6–7) and in Jerusalem (1 Kgs. 1:33 and 38).

The visionary journeys of the Prophet Muhammad and Ezekiel also share a critique of Moses and the experience of the Israelites in the wilderness.[179] Ezekiel 20:32–44 describes a new Exodus with Yahweh leading in the stead of Moses,

and to Zion instead of Sinai. Ezekiel 40–42 provides a vision of the new temple which replaces the Tabernacle revealed to Moses and built in the wilderness by the Israelites. During his vision, Ezekiel also receives a new Torah abrogating that given to Moses. Ezekiel 45:18–25 and 46:1–15 stipulates the liturgical calendar and the sacrifices (Num. 28–29), Ezekiel 47:13–48:29 gives the regulations for allocating the land (Num. 32, 33:50–56), Ezekiel 47:13–20 outlines the boundaries of the land (Num. 34:1–5), Ezekiel 45:1–6 and 48:13–14 are the rules for the Levites (Num. 35), and Ezekiel 46:16–18 revises the laws of inheritance (Num. 36).[180] The criticism of the old Torah and the Israelites' practice is made explicit in Ezekiel 20:25–26.

> Moreover, I [God] gave them statues that were no good and ordinances by which they could not attain life. I caused them to be defiled by their ritual gifts, making them pass their first-born [through fire] in order that I might horrify them.[181]

This statement follows a long indictment of the Israelites in the wilderness, accusing them of not following the laws given them by God, with the implication that the old Torah revealed to the Israelites included certain laws as a punishment for their disobedience.

That the Torah was revealed as a punishment for the disobedience of the Israelites is also emphasized in the exegesis of Q 4:18, 4:160, 6:146 and other verses.[182] Just as a new Torah was revealed to Ezekiel during his visionary journey to Jerusalem, with the explicit purpose of impugning and abrogating the old Torah of Moses, so the old Torah of Moses is said to have been replaced by the new Torah revealed to Muhammad.[183] Several traditions claim that it was the Prophet Muhammad's journey which initiated the revelation of the Quran, emphasizing Muhammad's prominence over the other prophets and the definition of Jerusalem within the new Islamic context.[184] Other traditions, identifying Q 96: 1–2 as the first revelation, though likewise record that the Prophet Muhammad was told by Waraqah b. Nawfal that the revelation he received was to replace the Torah which God had previously revealed to Moses.[185] The claim that the Quran abrogates the Torah is at the heart of the exegesis which places the revelation of certain verses, such as Q 17:1–8 and 18:83–101, in polemical contexts between the Prophet Muhammad and the Jews.

Conclusions

Muslim exegetes maintain that the verses of the Quran related to the wilderness wanderings are directed at the Jews in the time of the Prophet Muhammad, descendants of the sinful Israelites now living with the knowledge that Jerusalem had been destroyed and the Holy Land lost. Q 2:47–48 refers to the sins of the Israelites in the wilderness and promises a final punishment on the Day of Judgment.[186] A lengthy excursus on these verses in the exegesis of al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī

focuses on the pronouncement in verse 48 that no intercession will be accepted for the Israelites on that day of punishment.[187] Given that these verses were revealed to refute the challenges of the Jews [mihan al-yahūd], the day of reckoning for the Israelites is deemed to have arrived with the Prophet Muhammad. Deuteronomy 9:4–6 itself states that God did not cause the Israelites to take the Holy Land as a reward, but rather only as a punishment for the inhabitants living there. This theme is echoed in rabbinic literature which refers to the manna and quail in Sinai as a reward, not for the Israelites' behavior, but for the faithfulness of Abraham.[188]

As does Ezekiel's vision, the account of the Prophet Muhammad's visionary journey provides a critique of Moses and the Torah which legitimizes Muhammad's rôle as prophet and the revelation of the Quran. The Children of Moses mentioned in Q 7:159 are not the Lost Tribes or righteous followers of the Torah, but rather they are Muslims. They were removed to the ends of the Earth before the revelation of the Torah, the rejection of the prophets and the destruction of Jerusalem. The Israelites left behind were those condemned to die in the Wilderness of Wandering, to receive the curse of the law in the Torah, to be used by God against the giants of the land, and to witness the destruction of Jerusalem, three times. As a visit both to the ends of the Earth and to Jerusalem, the Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey not only demonstrates his prophethood but also underlines the loss of the Israelites and Jews.

Unlike Moses who is denied entrance into the Holy Land and to Jerusalem, the Prophet Muhammad visits Jerusalem and ascends to enter the garden of Eden where he meets the prophets who came before him. For the exegetes, the destroyed Jerusalem of the Israelites and the Jews is a symbol of a defunct and abrogated religion. It is a symbol of the Israelites' loss of a once-held chosen status. The contrast between the terrestrial Jerusalem and Paradise, whether it is the cities at the ends of the Earth, the celestial Jerusalem, or the garden of Eden, underlines the distance between Moses and Muhammad.[189] Like Alexander who tries and fails again and again to gain immortality on his own, Moses is denied entrance into Eden. This is emphasized in those traditions in which the Prophet Muhammad meets Moses not in Jerusalem or heaven, but still in his grave. According to Muslim exegesis of Q 5:25, Moses is not allowed to enter because he refuses to take upon himself the responsibility for the Israelites' refusal to trust God and enter the land. In contrast, because of the Prophet Muhammad, future generations might be allowed to enter the garden of Eden, as a gift on account of the Prophet Muhammad's intercession [shafā'ah] with God on their behalf.

CONCLUSION

Prophet Muhammad and the water of life

As recorded in the *Sīrah al-nabawīyah* of Ibn Hishām, Ibn Isḥāq mentions a report concerning the washing of the Prophet Muhammad's heart. Similar accounts are repeated in Ibn Sa'd, in al-Ṭabarī in a more expanded version, and are also found according to different reports in the authoritative collection of Muslim.[1]

> A group of the Prophet Muhammad's followers said to the Prophet of God: "Prophet of God, will you tell us about yourself?" He said: "Yes, I am that for which Abraham prayed, the good news of Jesus. When my mother was pregnant with me, she saw that a light came out from her which illuminated for her the castles of Syria. I was nursed among the Banū Sa'd b. Bakr.
>
> "When I was with a brother of mine, behind our houses, shepherding a flock of ours, two men in white clothes came upon me with a basin made out of gold, filled with snow. They took me and opened my torso and removed my heart. They opened it and removed from it a black blemish, and discarded it. Then they washed my heart and my torso in that snow until it was clean.
>
> "One of them said to the other: 'Weigh him against ten of his own community.' So he weighed me with them, and I outweighed them. Then he said: 'Weigh him against a hundred of his own community.' So he weighed me with them, and I outweighed them. He then said: 'Weigh him against a thousand of his own community.' He weighed me, and I outweighed them. He then said: 'Leave him be, for, by God, if you were to weigh him against his whole community, he would outweigh them.' "

There are three motifs here familiar from exegetical traditions already examined earlier, all of which are related by Muslim exegetes to the Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey and his position as Seal of the Prophets. Muslim exegetes take this report to link the notion of the Prophet Muhammad as fulfillment of the Torah and Gospel with the motif of weighing the Prophet Muhammad against all the people of his community. Although it is an unusual motif, the concept of weighing the

Prophet Muhammad here seems to indicate his worthiness among his people, and relates to his place and role among his people on the Day of Judgment.[2] Reports do mention the weighing of peoples' hearts on the Day of Judgment, that the purest of hearts will weigh less than a feather.[3]

In this report of Ibn Isḥāq, the washing of the heart seems to take place during the Prophet Muhammad's childhood, though in later contexts it is almost always linked to his Night Journey.[4] Though Western scholars are divided over the origins of the heart washing motif, it is evident that many early Muslim scholars saw it as linked to the Prophet's Night Journey and Ascension.[5] This link to the Night Journey allows Muslim exegetes to make a number of associations with other exegetical contexts. Many of these accounts specify that the water in which the Prophet Muhammad's heart is washed comes from the water of Zamzam or is connected with the waters of Eden, recalling the exegesis of Q 18:60–65 and the building of the sanctuary at Mecca. Set within the context of the challenge from the Jews of Medina, the accounts of the Night Journey also relate to the polemic over the Prophet Muhammad's abrogation of Moses and the Torah. The prophecies about the coming of the Prophet Muhammad, the washing of the heart, and the weighing are all understood to be signs signaling both the initiation of Muhammad into prophethood and thus the authority of Muhammad and his successors' prophetic claim.[6]

Prophet Muhammad and the water of life

In the *Muwaṭṭa'* of Mālik b. Anas there is another report, given on the authority of Abū Hurayrah, which associates the Prophet Muhammad with the initiation of the believers into Paradise on the Day of Judgment.

> The Prophet went out to a graveyard and said: "Peace upon you, dwelling of a people who are believers. We, God willing, will be joined to you. I wish that I had seen our brothers." They [the people with the Prophet] said: "Prophet, are we not your brothers?" He said: "No, you are my companions. Our brothers are those who have not yet come. I will precede them ["precede you" in Muslim] to the Pool [ḥawḍ]." They asked: "Prophet, how will you know those of your community who come after you?" He said: "Do you think that a man with horses having white legs and white marks on their heads would not know his own horses?" They said: "Of course, Prophet." He said: "Those who come on the Day of Resurrection will have white marks on the places of their ablution [forehead, hands and feet] from the ablution [wuḍū'], and I will precede them to the Pool. But some will be held back from my Pool just as straying camels are held back, and I will be calling to them: 'Will you come? will you come? will you come?' and one will say: 'They substituted things after you,' and I will say: 'Away, away, away!' "[7]

There are a number of points in this report that warrant further attention including the mention and linkage of the Prophet Muhammad's "Pool" [ḥawḍ] and the "white marks" on the believers where they performed their ablutions [wuḍū']. Note that the white marks from the ablution do not necessarily grant entrance into Paradise, but serve to identify certain people to the Prophet Muhammad who then allows them access to his Pool.

The initiatory aspect of ablution, and its expiatory effects are also evident from other contexts which parallel the widespread notion linking washing and atonement especially in the late antique Near East.[8] Some of these parallels are found in other reports cited by Mālik b. Anas such as that given on the authority of Abū Huraryrah concerning the washing away of sins.

> The Prophet said: "When a Muslim or believing servant performs the ablution and washes his face, every sin he has seen with his eyes goes from his face with the water, or with the last drop of the water. When he washes his hands, every wrong action he has done with his hands goes with the water, or with the last drop of the water. When he washes his feet, every sin to which his feet have walked goes with the water, or with the last drop of the water, to the extent that he comes away clean from the sins."[9]

In several of the accounts of the washing of the Prophet Muhammad's heart, it is specified that what was removed from the heart was akin to sin, a "black spot" or "clot of blood" said to be the "lot of Satan."[10] As a consequence of the opening of his heart, the Prophet Muhammad is said to have received a bodily mark of his prophethood, sometimes described as the scar like stitches on his chest, and sometimes described as a "seal" [khatam] between his shoulders resembling a bird.[11]

Washing and its relation to the entering of Paradise is an integral part of several of the Muslim exegetical accounts regarding menstruating women and their being barred from certain locations. The exegesis on Q 19:16–17 focuses on Mary's removal from the temple in Jerusalem because of her menstruation. In the stories related to Abraham's establishment of the sanctuary at Mecca, there is the account of the anonymous menstruating woman who dries up the well of Beersheba, and the account of Hagar's stopping up of Zamzam. The first appearance of Zamzam, according to Muslim exegesis, is when Eve attempts to enter the sanctuary at Mecca without first washing herself from menstruation. Both Jerusalem and Mecca are considered to be earthly substitutes for or representations of the garden of Eden. The water of Zamzam is necessary to cleanse Eve of menstruation which signifies the "mark" she received as a result of the original sin in Eden.

This same idea is closely related to the notion of "sin" barring entry into Paradise, especially in the stories associated with the exegesis of Q 18:60–82 and 83–101. The Alexander stories, linked with Moses and Dhu al-Qarnayn, emphasize

the futility of the human attempt to earn immortality. Such a point is especially obvious from the stories focusing on Alexander's attempt to enter the garden of Eden, and the gift of the heavy eyeball or stone which is supposed to symbolize his insatiable arrogance. This parallels other accounts of figures such as Nimrod and his failure to enter Paradise on account of his defecation and human impurity. The exegetical link of Alexander and Dhu al-Qarnayn to Moses is also appropriate to this idea. Moses and the Israelites, because of their sin in the Wilderness of Wandering, are barred from entering into the Holy Land, and are condemned to wander for forty years and die in the wilderness.

Although the removal of the "black spot" from the Prophet Muhammad's heart has commonly been understood in relation to the developing doctrine of the prophets' immunity from error and sin ['iṣma],[12] it also appears to be an account of the removal of original sin. The various accounts of being barred from Paradise and the heart washing of the Prophet Muhammad highlight that it is only through "grace" that humans can gain access to Paradise and immortality.[13] In the case of the Night Journey, it is clear that the Prophet Muhammad's entrance into Paradise was not something he earned but was granted to him, a mere human, by God, through the washing of his heart.

The initiation of the heart washing and the account of the Night Journey are closely related to the Prophet Muhammad's rôle as intercessor and guardian of Paradise. Exegesis on Q 108:1 indicates that the waters of Paradise were given to the Prophet Muhammad.

> Abū Ḥamīd reported, on the authority of Jarīr, on the authority of 'Aṭā', on the authority of Muẓārib b. Dahār al-Bālahī, on the authority of Ibn 'Umar, concerning the word of God "we gave *al-Kawthar* to you" [Q 108:1] He said: "It is a river in paradise the banks of which are gold. It flows with pearls and gems. Its water is whiter than snow and sweeter than honey. Its mist is perfumed with musk."[14]

The mention of the gold, pearls, and gems parallels the descriptions of Paradise found in other ancient Near Eastern sources including the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Alexander stories.[15] Other descriptions of the waters of Paradise mention that they are as white as milk, comparing the waters' color and taste to milk and honey, both attributes of the food and drink in Eden, the Wilderness of Wandering, and the Holy Land.[16] This description is similar to the account of the four rivers of Paradise given in Q 47:15, each flowing with a different liquid: water, milk, honey, and wine. In other accounts of the Night Journey, the Prophet Muhammad encounters the four rivers of Paradise and is handed three containers, holding milk, honey, and wine.[17]

The relationship between the four rivers in Q 47:15, the three liquids in the account of the Night Journey, and the river identified as al-Kawthar, is difficult to ascertain. It could be that a number of different traditions occur in these accounts. The description of the four rivers mentioned in the accounts of

the Night Journey and Q 47:15 also parallels the description of the rivers in the garden of Eden in Genesis 2:8–15. According to the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 2:9, the first of these rivers is supposed to stream out from the roots of the Tree of Life.[18] In a number of reports, the Prophet Muhammad's description of his Pool corresponds to the descriptions of the other waters of Paradise.

> The Prophet Muhammad said: "My Pool is a month's distance [across]. Its water is whiter than milk, its smell is more aromatic than musk, and its treasures are like the stars in the sky. Whoever drinks from it will never thirst again."[19]

In other reports, the Pool is specifically identified with al-Kawthar and its being given to the Prophet Muhammad as a gift in Q 108:1.[20]

The claim of the Prophet Muhammad here is that the Pool is the water of life, closely echoing the statement of Jesus about the water of the well of Jacob in the Gospel of John 4:13–14. In John 4:7–9, Jesus asks the Samaritan woman to give him water, paralleling the scene at which Isaac's wife is found at the well in Genesis 24:12–21. Muslim and Jewish exegesis conflate the well of Jacob with a number of water sources, including the water of Midian and the waters of life that flow out from the eschatological sanctuary in Jerusalem. Note also that in John 4:31–38 Jesus compares the harvesting of food to the rewards of immortality. Placed between the references to water and food, in John 4:21–24, Jesus makes reference to a new sanctuary superseding that in Jerusalem and on Mount Gerizim.[21] Later Christian exegesis has understood this coming eschatological sanctuary to be the immortality offered by Jesus to his disciples, thus making John 4:1–42 to be a description of Jesus as the predecessor and keeper of this new sanctuary.

The Muslim image of the Prophet Muhammad tending the water of life in Paradise corresponds to the well-developed motif of the prophet as keeper of the sanctuary of God. In numerous reports, the Prophet Muhammad is said to await the believers at his Pool, allowing them to drink from or wash in the waters of life and enter Paradise.[22] Other reports portray the Prophet Muhammad as the gardener of Paradise, holding the keys to the garden of Eden.[23] This image clearly parallels that of Abraham in the accounts of his offering food and water to his guests at the sanctuary of Beersheba in Biblical and rabbinic sources. The water of Zamzam in the sanctuary at Mecca, linked by Muslim exegetes to the water of life and the Prophet Muhammad's Pool,[24] is also regarded as a special source of sustenance for the believers entering the sanctuary.[25] Abraham's sanctuary at Mecca is regarded as an earthly representation of the garden of Eden, a temporary terrestrial substitute for the garden in Paradise to which the believing children of Adam will return after the Day of Resurrection. Abraham calls upon God in Q 2:126 to establish Mecca as a sanctuary with sustenance for its inhabitants who are believers. With his prayer in Q 2:126 and 129, Abraham keeper of the sanctuary in Mecca foreshadows the coming of the Prophet Muhammad, keeper of the Pool in the original and eschatological sanctuary of Eden.

A prophet unlike Moses

In his thoughtful and nuanced study of child sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity, Jon Levenson makes an astute observation about the Christian reliance upon the Torah in the attempt to demonstrate how the "Old Testament" had been superseded by the New.

> Their [the Christians'] very effort to dispossess the community of the Torah bears eloquent and enduring witness to the indispensability of the Torah to the early Church and to the thoroughly intertextual, indeed midrashic character of the most basic elements of the Christian message – a point with which most Christians, even most New Testament scholars, have failed to reckon.[26]

Levenson underlines the irony at the root of how Christians defined the authority of the Gospel and the Church vis-à-vis the Jews. Christians relied upon the Torah to make the argument that it had been abrogated. This same observation holds mutatis mutandis for an examination of Muslim exegetical efforts to demonstrate the abrogation of the Torah and the supersession of Islam in the place of Israel.

The Muslim exegetical use of the Torah, Gospel, and other non-Quranic sources does not appear to be a confused or haphazard "borrowing" of Jewish and Christian ideas. On the contrary, Muslim exegesis of Q 18:60–82 and related passages evinces an informed and intentional attempt to appropriate certain ideas to a well-defined and coherent interpretive agenda. Muslim exegesis is familiar not only with the Torah and Gospel but also with what Jewish and Christian exegetes singled out and highlighted in support of their own positions and in polemics. The exegesis examined here shows the isolation of certain textual elements (lost fish, Genesis 21:33), the forging of links with widespread motifs and narratives (Alexander, Gilgamesh), the introduction of new elements into established narratives (al-Khiḍr), and the combination of elements from different contexts (speckled sheep with Moses at Midian, Dhu al-Qarnayn with Abraham at Mecca). These various interpretive strategies enabled Muslim exegetes to draw upon elements both prominent and integral to Jewish and Christian arguments for their own authority, and to contextualize these elements in the Quran and the circumstances surrounding its revelation.

In their critique of Moses and the Israelites, the Muslim exegetes capitalize on a striking disparity between Exodus 32:30–35 and Q 5:25 regarding the image of Moses and his intercession on behalf of the Israelites. Exodus 32:30–35 describes how Moses pleads that God might allow him to take the blame and to forgive the Israelites for their worship of the golden calf. A similar intercession is made by Moses in Deuteronomy 9 and Numbers 14 on account of the golden calf and the Israelites' refusal to take possession of the land. In Q 5:25, after the Israelites refuse to enter the Holy Land as commanded in verse 21, Moses asks God to separate and distinguish him and his brother Aaron from the rebellious

Israelites. Commenting on this verse, al-Ṭabarī reports on the authority of al-Suddī that Moses was angry with the Israelites, and that it was the haste with which Moses prayed to God, not interceding but instead asking not to be held accountable, that brought about the punishment of wandering in the wilderness.[27] In his exegesis of Q 5:25, al-Ṭabarsī reports, on the authority of al-Jabā'ī, that Moses asked God to separate him and his brother from the Israelites on the Day of Judgment, sending the Israelites to Hell, Moses and Aaron to Paradise.[28]

This notion that Moses is to blame for the sins and punishment of the Israelites is also found in the rabbinic exegesis of Numbers 20:1–13. In Numbers 20:12, God tells Moses and Aaron that they will not lead the Israelites into the land because of something they said or did when drawing water from the rock in verses 9–11.[29] Rashi, in his exegesis of Numbers 20:12, explains that although Moses sinned other times, this sin was made in public before the congregation of Israel. Ramban concludes that the sin of Moses and Aaron, barring them from entering the Holy Land, is that they said "we" rather than "God" will give water from the rock. By doing this, Moses and Aaron did not acknowledge God but instead claimed the feat for themselves before the Israelites.[30] Note also that the Israelites are not here rebelling against God but are challenging Moses' leadership of them. This interpretation is not unlike Moses' failure to acknowledge God in the exegesis of Q 18:60–82 and its link to Moses' actions in Exodus 18.

Much of the rabbinic exegesis on Numbers 20:1–13 coincides with the Muslim exegesis of Q 5:25, that the sin of Moses was his anger toward the Israelites.[31] Ibn Ezra comments that Moses hit the rock instead of speaking to it as commanded by God in verse 8 because he was preoccupied with rebuking the Israelites. In his exegesis of the verses, Ramban points out the parallel with Deuteronomy 1:29–40 where all the Israelites save Caleb are punished for abandoning God's order to inhabit the land. Deuteronomy 1:37 records Moses' statement that God was angry with him because of the Israelites' failure. Rambam, in his exegesis of Numbers 20:10, explains that Moses sinned when he gave up on the Israelites, calling them "rebels."

The failure of Moses to intercede on behalf of the Israelites is also indicated in the connection of the death of Miriam and the disappearance of the water in the wilderness. According to Rashi, the mention of Miriam's death at the end of the description of the sacrifice of the red cow is meant to show that both the sacrifice and the death of the righteous Miriam make atonement.[32] The sacrifice of the red cow detailed in Numbers 19:17–22 closely parallels the punishment for the golden calf in Exodus 32:20, the burnt remains mixed with the water purifying the Israelites.[33] There also appears to be a link with the red cow sacrifice in Deuteronomy 21:1–9 in which an atonement is made for communal guilt in the case of murder when no single perpetrator can be identified. These various traditions seem to be conflated in the sacrifice of the cow in Q 2:67–73 which is taken by Muslim exegetes to symbolize the disobedience of the Israelites. The well of Miriam and the water from the rock, conflated in many of the exegetical traditions examined earlier, was only available to the Israelites because of the merits of

Miriam.[34] It is this water, and the purificatory effects of the rituals associated with it, that Moses, in Numbers 20:10, claims to produce himself but fails.[35] The loss of the water and the punishment of Moses along with the Israelites underlines his fault in the failure of the Israelites to enter the land.

These various accounts of Moses and his character are consistent with the exegetical analysis of the image of Moses in Q 18:60–82 and related passages. In Q 18:60, Moses says he will travel to the ends of the Earth, continuing forever if necessary, to reach his goal. Presumably, he was leaving the Israelites behind while he went in search of his own interests. In verses 62–64 it is clear that Moses' ambition and focus upon finding his goal has caused him to miss and go beyond the sign of the fish. Following this, the account in verses 66–82 shows how Moses fails, three times in a row, to keep his agreement with al-Khiḍr. According to the Ubayy b. Ka'b story and its link with Exodus 18, Moses set out because he had claimed God's knowledge and authority for himself, acting as judge and king in place of God. The explanation of al-Khiḍr's actions in verses 79–82 demonstrates that Moses did not understand God's justice. Moses was not qualified to lead the Israelites into the Holy Land, nor did those who left Egypt under his command enter the land, but not because Moses was a mere human.[36] Rather, Q 18:60–82 teaches that Moses failed because he would not admit that he was a mere human, and acknowledge that it was the abundance and wisdom of God which would allow him to save his people.

From these accounts, it is evident that Muslim exegesis does not hold up Moses as an exemplary prophet to be imitated or hoped for in the future. Both Jewish and Christian exegesis refer to Deuteronomy 18:15, that God will raise up a prophet like Moses, as promise of an eschatological messianic figure.[37] Muslim exegesis stresses that Moses was responsible for the revelation of the Torah, a punishment for the Israelites. Not unlike the opposition of Jesus and Moses in the Gospel of John 1:17, the Muslim criticism of Moses is in contrast to the image of the Prophet Muhammad, who is revealed the Quran which repeals the curse of the law. The Prophet Muhammad is not like Moses who is raised and steeped in the privileged education of the court of Pharaoh and claims God's knowledge as his own. Rather, the Prophet Muhammad is supposed to be illiterate, only a conveyer of the revelation. Muslim exegetes use this contrast between Moses and Muhammad to conceptualize the differences between themselves and the other People of the Book, particularly the Jews as imagined to be the Prophet Muhammad's opponents in Medina.

In their explanation of the Prophet Muhammad's statement that Islam is the religion of Abraham, the Muslim exegetes specifically target Moses and the Israelites. Abraham's most telling virtue is understood to be his obedience in the sacrifice of his son, not questioning the reasoning of God's command. Both Jewish and Christian exegesis focus on the expiatory consequence of the sacrifice, on the self-sacrifice of the "beloved son" as willing victim. Linking Abraham's son as victim to the Paschal Lamb, Jews identified with Isaac, and Christians with Jesus the spiritual heir of Abraham.[38] Muslim exegesis, though, highlights a

different aspect of the sacrifice. In Genesis 22:16–17 God promises blessings and descendants for Abraham, echoing the promise of Genesis 17:6–8, because he has offered his son to God. It is not the circumcision of Genesis 17 nor the sacrifice (that Abraham is ultimately unable to perform) which results in God's blessings, but rather it is Abraham's act of obedience to do these seemingly unjust things which God has commanded him. According to the Muslim exegetes, this attitude of unquestioning obedience is precisely that which Moses and the Israelites lack in their sins against God. This is epitomized for Moses in Q 18:60–82, and for the Israelites in their attempts to circumvent God's commands in the Wilderness of Wandering (Q 5:20–26), the red cow sacrifice (Q 2:67–73), and in the parable of the city by the sea (Q 7:163–166).

Like Abraham, the Prophet Muhammad is portrayed as a type of second Adam. Muslim exegesis, drawing upon Isaiah 42 and Isaiah 61:1–2 which Jesus reads in Luke 4:16–22, makes the Prophet Muhammad to be a prophet to all peoples, the gentile prophet sent to the non-Israelites with a new revelation.[39] Both Abraham and the Prophet Muhammad re-establish the sanctuary at Mecca, a sanctuary originally founded by Adam as a temporary earthly representation of Eden. With both Abraham and the Prophet Muhammad is renewed the original covenant with Adam, that his descendants would reenter Eden if they acknowledged God and followed his commands. In a report given on the authority of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, the Prophet Muhammad relates his status as "beloved" of God and its relationship to Adam.

> When Adam committed his sin he said: "Oh Lord, I ask you by the right of Muhammad, will you forgive me?" God said: "How do you know about Muhammad, I have not yet created him?" He said: "Lord, because when you created me with your hand and breathed into me from your spirit, I raised my head and saw what was written on the foundations of the Throne: 'There is only one God and Muhammad is the Apostle of God.' I knew that you would not place his name there unless he is the most loved of creation to you." God said: "You are right, Adam. He is the most beloved of creation to me. When you ask me in the right of his name, I will forgive you. If only for Muhammad did I create you."[40]

The Prophet Muhammad is God's beloved because it is to him that God reveals the Quran which provides the means by which Adam's descendants might return to Eden.[41] Echoing Jeremiah 31:31–34 and Jesus' words in John 8:31–36, Muslim exegetes describe the revelation given to the Prophet Muhammad as a new covenant, unlike that given to Moses and the Israelites when they came out of Egypt. The Prophet Muhammad is the eschatological Adam, standing at his Pool, ready to recognize his followers and re-admit them to the garden of Eden.

Rather than being the passive recipients of garbled stories, Muslim exegetes seem to have appropriated and forged ideas in the crafting of an exegetical paradigm which projects the Prophet Muhammad as a model for their own authority. The exegesis examined here stresses that the Prophet Muhammad is human but

that the source of his knowledge is divine and not fallible. This demands a simple obedience, not a questioning of the reasons for God's commands. At the same time, the Muslim exegetes show, through their acts of interpretation themselves, that it is only with knowledge from the Prophet Muhammad that the Quran can be understood properly. Without the exegetical connections and contextualizations provided by the Prophet Muhammad and his companions, the interpretation of Q 18:60–82 and its links to other passages would be difficult to ascertain. It is the Muslim exegetes alone, experts in the preservation and understanding of and heirs to this interpretive knowledge passed from the Prophet Muhammad, who are authorized and needed to engage in the explanation of God's revelation.

The exegesis of Q 18:60–82 and related passages shows the insistence on a notion of authority based on the text of the revelation and the Prophet Muhammad's interpretation of it as mediated through the exegetes. This structure of authority is reinforced by the understanding of the Quran as stressing not the abstract qualities of good and evil, but rather the distinction between right and wrong, legal and illegal. The archetypal act of disobedience by Iblīs illustrates this point when he, like Moses, sins against God in his prideful questioning of God's command to prostrate himself before Adam, thinking that he knew better than God. Throughout the Quran, acknowledging God and his rôle as creator is defined as obedience to the revealed message of the prophets, the message to focus and direct oneself to God alone.

The final verses of sūrat al-Kahf epitomize this message.[42] Verses 103–105 tell that the greatest of losers are those whose efforts have been wasted in the life of this world, thinking that they were doing good with what they made themselves. They are those who do what they think is right, seeking their own immortality, rather than the commands delivered by the prophets. Verses 106–107 say that these losers will have Hell as their reward, while those who follow the commands of God will have the gardens of Paradise as their resting place. The sūrah ends stressing the necessity of depending on God alone and underlining the prophet as human messenger. It ends with God's command to the Prophet Muhammad, that he say: "I am a mere human being like you but to whom it has been revealed that your God is an only God."

NOTES

Introduction

1 See Julian Obermann, "Koran and Agada: The Events at Mount Sinai," *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 58 (1941): 23–48. This quote is taken from p. 23.

2 See Obermann, "Koran and Agada," 24–25. Obermann's definition of "Agada" is somewhat broad. Although he equates it with the "Oral Torah" (25n1), he refers throughout his essay to the Agada as the Targum, Midrash, and Talmud.

3 See Obermann, "Koran and Agada," 40–41. The translation here is mine.

4 See H. Hirschfeld, *Beiträge zur Erklärung des Korān* (Leipzig, 1886), esp. 63. A similar approach to the relationship of the Quran to the polemic between the Prophet Muhammad and the Jews of Medina can be found in Hirschfeld, "Historical and Legendary Controversies between Muhammad and the Rabbis," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 10 (1897–1898): 100–116.

5 See Obermann, "Koran and Agada," 42. Hirschfeld's explanation is also criticized by W. Rudolph, *Die Abhängigkeit des Korans von Judentum und Christentum* (Stuttgart, 1922) on the grounds that it assumes the Prophet Muhammad to have heard Exodus 24:7 or Deuteronomy 5:27 in Hebrew.

6 Obermann, "Koran and Agada," 43–44 cites a number of rabbinic references. For the comment on Psalm 78:36–37, see *Sefer Mekiltā de-Rabb Ishma'el*, ed. Friedmann (Vienna, 1870), 89b–98; Midrash Rabbah on Deuteronomy 29:3. For the comment on Proverb 24:8, see Midrash Rabbah on Leviticus, 10b. Obermann also cites the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 24:7. All citations from the Midrash Rabbah on the Torah come from *Midrash Rabbah: Bereshit-Devarim*, 11 vols, ed. M. Mirkin (Tel Aviv, 1986).

7 See Obermann, "Koran and Agada," 44. On the reference, see *Yalkut Shimoni*, ed. D. Hayman and Y. Shiloni (Jerusalem, 1984–) on Exodus 24:7 and *The Babylonian Talmud*, ed. I. Epstein (London, 1948), Shabbat 88a and Ketubah 112a. Jeremiah 5:21, not cited by Obermann, also accuses the Israelites of having ears but not hearing.

8 See Obermann, "Koran and Agada," 25.

9 See Obermann, "Koran and Agada," p. 30 for Obermann's use of Aramaic in the Quran to prove that it was derived from the Targum, p. 26 for the references to technical Aramaic terms. For a definition of "the oriental memory" see p. 45. See also Obermann's suggestion (p. 45, n45) that the Prophet Muhammad received Talmudic instruction on the basis of Q 25:5.

10 See Obermann, "Koran and Agada," 45–47 for the attribution of "wishful mishearing" to the Prophet Muhammad. It should be noted that if the Prophet Muhammad were hearing Exodus 24:7 or Deuteronomy 5:27 in Aramaic, as Obermann seems to suggest when attributing the Arabic term for "Mount Sinai" [ṭūr] to the Aramaic Targum or Peshiṭta [ṭūrā], then the pun with the Arabic does not hold. The Aramaic phrase in Exodus 24:7 is "na'abēd u-niqabbēl" using two roots differing from the Hebrew.

11 See Obermann, "Koran and Agada," 24–25 and his comments on 34–35n21.

12 There is disagreement among the early exegetes concerning the referent in the beginning of Q 4:46. Some hold that the phrase is to be understood in relation to Q 4:44 and should be interpreted as "among those [who were given a portion of the book (v44)] are the Jews." Others maintain that the phrase is to be taken by itself with the meaning "among those who are Jews are those who ... " See the discussion in Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (Beirut, n.d.), on Q 4:46.

13 See Ismā'īl b. Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm* (Beirut, n.d.), on Q 4:43–46.

14 See the opinion of Mujāhid reported in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 4:46.

15 See 'Alī al-Faḍl b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (Beirut, n.d.), on Q 4:46 and 2:104.

16 See Maḥmūd b. 'Umar b. Muḥammad al-Zamakhshārī, *al-Kashshāf 'an ḥaqā'iq ghawāmiḍ al-tanzīl wa 'uyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-ta'wīl*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Salām Shāhīn (Beirut, 1315/1995), on Q 4:46. Obermann goes so far as to claim that the Prophet Muhammad used the word "rā'i-nā" with knowledge of its differing Hebrew and Arabic meanings, pp. 45–46, although he earlier (p. 25) had stated that the Prophet Muhammad did not know Hebrew. Obermann cannot, however, explain how the phrase "Hear without being heard" constitutes an altering of words, nor can he identify its origins in Jewish sources.

17 I do not attempt to provide a thorough or systematic overview of the varied history of scholarship on the relationship of the Quran and the Bible. Some of this has been treated in part by the studies mentioned below, though critiques of earlier scholarship on specific points of interpretation should be clear from subsequent chapters. For an overview of some of these scholars, see Bernard Lewis, "The Proto-Islamic Jews," in his *Islam and History* (London, 1973), 123–137, 315–317 and some of the essays in Lewis and Kramer, eds, *The Jewish Discovery of Islam* (Tel Aviv, 1999).

18 For an overview of the development of Old Testament Theology, see H.J. Kraus, *Die Biblische Theologie: Ihre Geschichte und Problematik* (Neukirchen, 1970); J.D. Smart, *The Past, Present, and Future of Biblical Theology* (Philadelphia, 1979); H.G. Reventlow, *Problems of Old Testament Theology in the Twentieth Century* (Philadelphia, 1985); J.H. Hayes and F. Prussner, *Old Testament Theology: Its History and Development* (Atlanta, 1985); Werner Lemke, "Theology: Old Testament," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, s.v.

On the question of whether Old Testament Theology is a Christian enterprise, see Lemke, "Is Old Testament Theology an Essentially Christian Discipline?" *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 11 (1989): 59–71; J. Levenson, "Why Jews are not Interested in Biblical Theology," in *Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel*, ed. J. Neusner *et al.* (Philadelphia, 1987), 281–307.

For an overview of the history and methods of "Source Criticism" see U. Cassuto, *The Documentary Hypothesis and the Composition of the Pentateuch* (Jerusalem, 1961); R.E. Clements, *One Hundred Years of Old Testament Study* (Philadelphia, 1976). For the methods of "Source Criticism" see John Barton, *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study* (Philadelphia, 1984); and the original J. Wellhausen, *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten. II, Die Composition des Hexateuchs* (Berlin, 1885).

19 See, for example, Kurt Rudolph, "Basic Positions of Religionswissenschaft," *Religion* 11 (1981): 97–107 and Ugo Bianchi, *History of Religions* (Leiden, 1975). See also the insights in Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "The Study of Religion and the Study of the Bible," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 39 (1971): 131–140.

20 See Reuven Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands: The Evolution of the Abraham-Ishmael Legends in Islamic Exegesis* (Albany, 1990), esp. the introduction and first two chapters.

21 Firestone cites Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London, 1982) which is largely an essay on the effect of writing and printing upon oral cultures. A wider-reaching analysis of the interrelationship of oral and written texts can be found in Jack Goody, *The Interface between the Written and the Oral* (Cambridge, 1987). This interrelationship is also examined with specific reference to the transmission of religious knowledge in William A. Graham, *Beyond the Written Word: Oral Aspects of Scripture in the History of Religion* (Cambridge, 1987).

22 See the carefully qualified statement in Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 17–18.

23 See Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, esp. 15–18. Taking this perspective, it is difficult to ascertain the exact dates and contexts for the transmission of the Bible and Jewish and Christian interpretation into an Arabic milieu. Firestone's claims are backed by the research of Gordon Newby, *A History of the Jews of Arabia from Ancient Times to their Eclipse under Islam* (Columbia, 1988) and Moshe Gil, "The Origin of the Jews of Yathrib," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 4 (1984): 203–223. For a more recent examination of the Jews of Medina, see Michael Lecker, *Muslims, Jews and Pagans: Studies on Early Islamic Medina* (Leiden, 1995) and some of the essays collected in Lecker, *Jews and Arabs in Pre- and Early Islamic Arabia* (Brookfield, 1998).

24 Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 157. It is unclear by "legends Muhammad faithfully retold" whether Firestone intends the Quran or the exegetical expansions on the Quran attributed to the Prophet Muhammad.

Firestone goes on to cite H.G. Reissner, "The Ummī Prophet and the Banū Israil of the Qur'ān," *Muslim World* 39 (1949): 276–281 and H. Hirschfeld, "Historical and Legendary Controversies between Muhammed and the Rabbis." Reissner specifically refutes Hirschfeld's position, one here shared by Firestone though in a different form, that the Prophet Muhammad was surprised out of ignorance by the Jews' rejection of him. Although his specific identifications of the Quranic "ummiyyūn" with the Hebrew "'am ha-arez̤" remain unconvincing, Reissner concludes that the Prophet Muhammad's use of Biblical and Jewish allusions was intentional.

25 See the statements concerning Arabization in Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 18–19. From another perspective, see the implicit critique of Firestone's model in Jaroslav Stetkevych, *Muḥammad and the Golden Bough: Reconstructing Arabian Myth* (Bloomington, 1996); Suzanne Stetkevych, "Sara and the Hyena: Laughter, Menstruation, and the Genesis of a Double Entendre," *History of Religions* 36 (1996): 13–41. Jaroslav Stetkevych refers to a "culture-specific, coherent pre-Islamic Arabian myth–which deserves to be qualified as autochthonous" (ix). I was able to gain considerable insight into this approach from Jaroslav Stetkevych, "Convergence of Canons and the (Re)Construction of Islamic Myth," presented at the "Canons and Canonicity Colloquium," Comparative Religion Program, University of Washington, April 13, 1999. Some useful comments on the Islamic use of indigenous Arabian myth can also be found in Suzanne Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak: Pre-Islamic Poetry and the Poetics of Ritual* (Ithaca, 1993).

26 Firestone cites Jonathan Culler, "Presupposition and Intertextuality," *Modern Language Notes* 91 (1976): 1380–1396, a revised version of which appears as Chapter 5 in Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (Ithaca, 1981), 100–118. For an approach similar to Firestone's use of intertextuality, see Marilyn Waldman, "New Approaches to 'Biblical' Materials in the Quran," in *Studies in Islamic and Judaic Traditions*, ed. W. Brinner (Atlanta, 1986), 47–64.

Also foundational for an understanding of "intertextuality" are Julia Kristeva, *Semiotiké* (Paris, 1969) and Kristeva, *La révolution du langage poétique* (Paris, 1974), trans. *Desire in Language* (Oxford, 1980). See also, Roland Barthes, *S/Z* (Paris, 1970), trans. Richard Miller, *S/Z: An Essay* (New York, 1974). Kristeva argues, in a passage cited by Culler (107), that "a text works by absorbing and destroying at the same time the other texts of the intertextual space" (*Semiotiké*, 256). This runs counter to what seems to be the

Quranic use of allusions and references which were intended to be recognized by Jews and Christians as coming from their own textual traditions.

27 See Jacob Lassner, *Demonizing the Queen of Sheba: Boundaries of Gender and Culture in Postbiblical Judaism and Medieval Islam* (Chicago, 1993).

28 Lassner illustrates this perspective and explains its significance in Chapters 5 and 6 of his *Demonizing the Queen of Sheba*, 88–119 and 120–155, though it pervades his larger analysis of the Solomon and Sheba traditions. See also the briefer discussion of this process of transfer and absorption in Lassner, "The 'one who had knowledge of the book' and the 'mightiest name' of God: Qur'ānic exegesis and Jewish cultural artifacts," in *Studies in Muslim-Jewish Relations*, ed. Ronald Nettler (Philadelphia, 1993), 59–74.

29 The full explanation of Lassner's argument, and the points below, can be found in his *Demonizing the Queen of Sheba*, 104–109 and "The 'one who had knowledge of the book' and the 'mightiest name' of God: Qur'ānic exegesis and Jewish cultural artifacts," 60–65.

30 It is important to note that Lassner seems more hesitant in *Demonizing the Queen of Sheba* (108–109) than in "The 'one who had knowledge of the book' and the 'mightiest name' of God: Qur'ānic exegesis and Jewish cultural artifacts" (70) to conclude that the Muslim exegetes made the conflation intentionally, knowing the associations of Asaph with the Ark of the Covenant and the Psalms.

See also the opinion expressed in Lassner, "The Covenant of the Prophets: Muslim Texts, Jewish Subtexts," *Association of Jewish Studies Review* 15 (1990): 207–238, esp. 235 where Lassner states that Muslims "lacked the requisite linguistic, philological, and cultural background to acquire a working knowledge of most classical Jewish sources first-hand. As a result, Muslims cited Jewish texts without reading them and made reference to Jewish sources without knowing that they had done so."

31 See the articulation of this position with specific reference to the Solomon and Sheba traditions in Lassner, *Demonizing the Queen of Sheba*, 115–119.

32 See, in particular, Lassner, *Demonizing the Queen of Sheba*, 135–137. Although Lassner raises this important issue, he devotes only about a page to its systematic discussion, and there is very little other research outside of Lassner's work. One must also be careful to distinguish the later Jewish use of materials which originate in an earlier Muslim context, and not to assume that all materials that parallel or allude to the Bible originate in pre- and/or non-Islamic contexts.

Lassner, *Demonizing the Queen of Sheba*, 124–126 also suggests that the inclusion of Jewish sources in Muslim exegesis might have been initiated by Jewish converts to Islam seeking to demonstrate the continuity of their identity as Jews or to preserve their ties with non-converted Jews.

33 See, for example, Lassner, "The Covenant of the Prophets," 235–236. See also M. Perlmann, "Eleventh-Century Andalusian Authors on the Jews of Granada," *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 18 (1949): 269–284.

34 See Steven Wasserstrom, *Between Muslim and Jew: The Problem of Symbiosis under Early Islam* (Princeton, 1995). For the background on the use of the term "symbiosis" see pp. 3–12. See also his conclusions, esp. pp. 206–225. Wasserstrom cites the insightful comments of Jonathan Z. Smith, "What a Difference a Difference Makes," in *"To See Ourselves as Others See Us": Christians, Jews and "Others" in Late Antiquity*, eds. Jacob Neusner and Ernest Frerichs (Chico, 1985), 3–49.

35 This phrase is adapted from J.Z. Smith, "A Pearl of Great Price and a Cargo of Yams: A Study in Situational Incongruity," in his *Imagining Religion* (Chicago, 1982), 90–101 on p. 98. An earlier version of this was published in *History of Religions* 16 (1976): 1–19. Along these same lines, see Clifford Geertz, "Ethos, World View, and the Analysis of Sacred Symbols," in his *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, 1973), 126–141. Older, but still useful is Raymond Firth, *Symbols: Public and Private* (Ithaca, 1973).

36 A convincing example of this is the use of the name "Metatron" in Jewish and Islamic contexts as analyzed by Wasserstrom, *Muslim and Jew*, 181–202. For a more recent attempt to look at Jewish–Islamic polemic as informing Muslim identity, see Uri Rubin, *Between Bible and Qur'ān: The Children of Israel and the Islamic Self-Image* (Princeton, 1999). See also some of the helpful analysis in Suliman Bashear, *Arabs and Others in Early Islam* (Princeton, 1997).

37 For a systematic overview of reading and its relation to religious authority and identity, see Paul Griffiths, *Religious Reading: The Place of Reading in the Practice of Religion* (Oxford, 1999), esp. 40–59 and 89–94. On the use of certain implements in the evocation of authority, see Bruce Lincoln, *Authority: Construction and Corrosion* (Chicago, 1994).

38 See the analysis of memory and authority in Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990), esp. 189–220. A similar model is developed of the "culture broker" in Robert Hefner, *Hindu Javanese: Tengger Tradition and Islam* (Princeton, 1985).

From a different perspective, see the analysis of the production of culture and memory in Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism* (Chicago, 1997). For a convincing account of culture production as ideology, see John Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture: Critical Social Theory in the Era of Mass Communication* (Stanford, 1990).

39 In addition to the specific references in the notes to subsequent chapters, see the general treatments in E.E. Elder, "Parallel Passages in the Koran – The Story of Moses," *Muslim World* 15 (1925): 254–259; B. Heller, "Mūsā," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed. (Leiden, 1960), 7:638–639; A.H. Johns, "'Let my People go!' Sayyid Qutb and the Vocation of Moses," *Islam and Christian Muslim Relations* 1 (1990): 143–170; C. Sirat, "Un midras juif en habit musulman: la vision de moïse sur le mont Sinaï," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 168 (1965): 15–28. There are also some comments to be found in D. Künstlinger, "Tūr und Gabal im Kurān," *Rivista Orientalia* 5 (1927): 58–67.

Chapter 1

1 On Wahb b. Munabbih and the traditions associated with his name, see R.G. Khoury, *Wahb ibn Munabbih* (Wiesbaden, 1972). Further biographical references can be found in F. Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums* (Leiden, 1967), 1: 305–307.

2 Some of the earliest references to this report are found in Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, ed. M.J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1879–1901), 414–429, trans. William Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel* (Albany, 1991), 1–18.

3 See A.J. Wensinck, "al-Khaḍir," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed., 4: 902–903. The same article is found in the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, s.v.

4 This interpretation has more recently been endorsed and summarized, despite later references to dissenting theories, by Brinner in his introduction to and comments on the al-Khiḍr story in his *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 1–18, esp. 1 and footnotes passim.

5 See Mark Lidzbarski, "Wer ist Chadhir?" *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 7 (1892): 104–116 and Karl Dyroff, "Wer ist Chadhir?" *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 7 (1892): 319–327.

Earlier, scholars had recognized the existence of the fish motif in later Iranian versions of the Alexander romance. It was assumed that these later stories were dependent upon Q 18:60–65. See C.H. Ethé, *Alexanders Zug zum Lebensquell im Land der Finsternis: Eine Episode aus Nizâmîs Iskendernâme* (Munich, 1871), esp. 381.

6 See K. Vollers, "Chidher," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 12 (1909): 234–284. Voller's work traces the development of the al-Khiḍr stories from what is seen as their origins in ancient Babylonian literature through later Muslim scholarship.

It is also important to note the findings published in the monumental work on the relationship of the Gilgamesh epic to later literature around the world: Peter Jensen, *Das Gilgamesche-Epos in der Weltliteratur*, 2 vols. (Strassburg, 1906).

7 See Richard Hartmann, "Zur Erklärung von Sūre 18, 59ff," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 24 (1910): 307–315. Hartmann's piece is most useful as a review of previous scholarship on the key issues.

8 For the development, sometimes inconsistent, of Israel Friedländer's theories, see Friedländer, "Zur Geschichte der Chadhirlegende," and "Alexanders Zug nach dem Lebensquell und die Chadhirlegende," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 13 (1910): 92–110 and 319–327. Much of this was incorporated into Friedländer, *Die Chadhirlegende und der Alexanderroman* (Leipzig, 1913). Making the strongest case for the connection between the Alexander stories and Q 18:60–65, it seems Friedländer was the first to use the "fish" to demonstrate the link between the two stories. See, in particular, the references in *Die Chadhirlegende und der Alexanderroman*, p. 330.

9 There is a discussion of the Persian versions of the Alexander stories in Minoo S. Southgate, *Iskandarnamah: A Persian Medieval Alexander-Romance* (New York, 1978). For an overview of the Arabic and Ethiopic sources for the Alexander romance, see Karl F. Weymann, *Die äthiopische und arabische Übersetzung des Pseudokallisthenes* (Kirchhain, 1901). There is also an overview of some of the various versions in Ernest A. Wallis Budge, *The History of Alexander the Great: Being the Syriac Version* (Cambridge, 1889) which is a critical edition and translation of a Syriac version of the Alexander romance, including some additional Syriac sources on Alexander.

The standard reference for the history of the Alexander romance is Theodor Nöldeke, "Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderroman," *Denkschriften der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch–Historische Classe, Wien* 37.5 (1890): 1–56.

10 Nöldeke, "Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderroman," 30–32.

11 For a discussion of Jacob of Serugh and his work, see Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der christlichen Literaturen des Orients* (Leipzig, 1907), 25–27. A brief overview of the sermon in the context of the history of the Alexander stories can be found in Nöldeke, "Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderroman," 31–32. An English translation of the Syriac text was first published from a manuscript in the British Museum in E.A.W. Budge, *The History of Alexander the Great: Being the Syriac Version*, 163–200. The Syriac text with a German translation was published in Carl Hunnius, "Das syrische Alexanderlied," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 60 (1906): 169–209. This last piece was also published separately as *Das syrische Alexanderlied*, ed. and trans. Carl Hunnius (Leipzig: 1906).

12 There is an extended discussion of these lines in Friedländer, "Alexanders Zug nach dem Lebensquell und die Chadhirlegende," 210–221.

13 For an English translation of this story, see *The Babylonian Talmud*, ed. I. Epstein (London, 1948), Tamīd, 26–29.

14 The reconstruction of the "history" of the Greek, and related Latin, versions of the Alexander stories is a huge undertaking. For one of the earliest and still influential treatments, summarizing the scholarship of the nineteenth century, see Adolf Ausfeld, *Der griechische Alexanderroman* (Leipzig, 1907). There is a wealth of information in W. Kroll, *Historia Alexandri Magni* (Berlin, 1926). The most recent work is Reinhold Merkelbach, *Die Quellen des griechischen Alexanderromans*, Zetemata Monographien zur klassischen Altertumswissenschaft 9 (München: 1977). For particular Greek recensions, see 201–211.

On the attempts to identify and date particular recensions, see *Der griechische Alexanderroman Rezension γ*, vol. 1, ed. Ursula Lauenstein (Meisenheim, 1962), vol. 2, ed. Hartmut Engelmann (Meisenheim, 1963), vol. 3, ed. F. Parthe (Meisenheim, 1969). See also Leif Bergson, *Der griechische Alexanderroman, Rezension β* (Uppsala, 1965).

A comprehensive and thought-provoking survey of Alexander in medieval Europe is to be found in George Cary, *The Medieval Alexander*, ed. D.J.A. Ross (Cambridge, 1956; reprint, 1967).

15 Recension α, found in a single manuscript, is usually dated to the third century C.E. The Latin recension of this version, attributed to Julius Valerius, is not possible to date except that it is usually considered to be dependent upon recension α. If the Armenian recension can be attributed to Moses of Khoren, and is dependent upon recension α, then recension α must be dated before the fifth century.

16 Recension λ is represented by five manuscripts. They are peculiar in their elaboration of the adventures recounted in the letter to Olympia [II.38–41], in particular the mention of Alexander's descent into the sea and flight into the air. Manuscript L is technically a manuscript of recension β with some unique material including a letter from Alexander to his mother [III.31].

Both of these recensions are supposed to be based upon recension β which is usually dated fourth to sixth century, later than recension α. Sections II.38–41 ends book II in the Greek recension β. These sections are much abbreviated in recension β. II.39 does contain the story of the fish escaping but not the cook gaining immortality. See Bergson, *Der griechische Alexanderroman, Rezension β*, 131–134.

17 For this account, see Bergson, *Der griechische Alexanderroman, Rezension β*, 132–133.

18 The dating of recension γ is, in part, based on its supposed derivation from recension ε which is dependent upon Pseudo-Methodius which is usually dated no earlier than 640. For a brief overview of the sources for recension ε, see Merkelbach, *Die Quellen des griechischen Alexanderromans*, 206–208.

19 There is an English translation of this episode in *The Greek Alexander Romance*, trans. Richard Stoneman (New York, 1991), II. 40–41, 119–122.

20 The strongest statement of this argument is found in Friedländer, *Die Chadhirlegende und der Alexanderroman*, 61–67. Friedländer's explanation of the link between the Quran and earlier sources is given in a footnote on 63.

21 The meaning of "servant" for *fatā* is uncertain. Outside of this verse, the term is usually used to indicate a "youth" or "young man." The plural "fityah" occurs in Q 18:9 and 12 to describe the "youths" who sought refuge in the cave. The dual "fatayān" occurs in Q 12:36 to refer to the "two youths" who are in prison with Joseph. See the discussion of the term in E.W. Lane, *Arabic–English Lexicon* (Cambridge, 1984), 2:2336a.

22 Wensinck contends that the figure of the traveling companion comes from the Alexander romance "is suggested by the fact that the companion is called fatā (here meaning "servant"), a term that points to Alexander's cook rather than to Rabbi Joshua" (903). Note, as was discussed earlier, that to make Joshua b. Levi the servant of Moses makes Moses play the part of Elijah.

23 It is important to note that Wensinck denies the connection that Friedländer makes between the water of life and the meeting place of the two waters. See Wensinck, "al-Khaḍir," 902.

24 There are five different reports in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 1: 48–50. See the English translation by Franz Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood* (Albany, 1985), 217–218. There are two reports given in Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam fī ta'rīkh al-mulūk wa al-umam*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā and Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā (Beirut, n.d.), 1: 128.

25 Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muntaẓam fī ta'rīkh al-mulūk wa al-umam*, 1: 128. An obvious parallel to this passage is the creation of the heavens and the earth out of Tiamat in the *Enuma*

Elish. For an English translation of the story, see E.A. Speiser, "Akkadian Myths and Epics," in *Ancient Near Eastern texts relating to the Old Testament*, 2d ed., ed. James Pritchard (Princeton, 1955), 60–72.

26 This line of interpretation is followed briefly in Wensinck, "al-Khaḍir," 903. There are many references to these sorts of associations in Wensinck's other works. See, for example, Wensinck, "The Ideas of the Western Semites Concerning the Navel of the Earth," *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenshapen te Amsterdam*, Afdeeling Letterkunde, n.s. 17.1 (1916) and Wensinck, "The Ocean in the Literature of the Western Semites," *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenshapen te Amsterdam*, Afdeeling Letterkunde, n.s. 19.2 (1918).

27 On the references to Q 68:1, see al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 48–50. See the translation by F. Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 217–218. For reports on the rôle of the pen in the creation of the world, see al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 29–33. See the translation in F. Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 198–203.

Note that the Egyptian god of the watery abyss, a personification of the life-giving waters of the Nile, associated with the creation of the world out of chaos, is named "Nun." For further information on this god, see A. Erman, "Bebete eins ungerecht Verfolgten und andere Ostraca aus den Königsgräbern," *Zeitschrift für aegyptians Sprache und Altertumskunde* 38 (1900): 32.

28 See Q 37:142–145 in which Jonah is swallowed and spit up on the shore by a fish. In 68:48 there is a reference to the "ṣāḥib al-ḥūt" which is normally understood to be Jonah.

29 This story can be found in *The Greek Alexander Romance*, II.38, 118–119. Like the story of the fish and the cook, this story only occurs in the later recensions, L, λ, and γ. For II.38 in early recensions, see Bergson, *Die griechische Alexanderroman, Rezension β*, 131–132.

It should be noted that another parallel exists in Indian literature, from the stories surrounding the avatars of Visnu. In the the Shatapatha Brāhmana 1.8.1.1–6 and Matsya Purāna 1.11–34 and 2.1–19 there are stories which describe how Manu finds a fish which grows huge and saves him from perishing in the flood. The Sanskrit term for the fish, *jhaṣa* is, like *ḥūt*, the term used for the astrological fish Pisces. For a discussion of these and other related stories, see Surya Kanta, *The Flood Legend in Sanskrit Literature* (Delhi, 1950).

30 This story is found in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 421. See the translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 10. al-Ṭabarī also reports that al-Lu'lu' and al-Majrān hold that the water mentioned in Q 18:61 and 63 is not fresh but salt water. See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 18:61–63.

31 See, for example, M.M. Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (London, 1957) who translates it as "by a marvel." J.M. Rodwell, *The Koran*, 2d ed. (London, 1876) translates it as "in a wondrous sort." M. Kasimirski, *Le Coran* (Paris, 1840; reprint, 1976) has "par une voie souterraine." Brinner, "The tale of al-Khiḍr," notes these translations and that the translation as "by way of a subterranean passage" is consistent with Lane, *Arabic–English Lexicon*, 1:1341–1342.

The syntax of this phrase is discussed in Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb* (Beirut, 1980) on Q 18:63 where *'ajab-an* is explained, in the first instance as an adjective to the *maṣdar maḥdhūf* or *muṭlaq* as if the passage would be understood as *ittakhadha ittakhadh-an 'ajab-an*.

32 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* on Q 18:61–63.

33 The same explanation is given in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 417. See the translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 5–6. This explanation is repeated in al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 18:61. It is also repeated in Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, on Q 18:61. It is also mentioned in abbreviated

form by Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 18:61. This explanation, traced back to the authority of the Prophet Muhammad, is commended by al-Ṭabarī in his *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 18:61.

34 This explanation is repeated in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 421–422. See the translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 10–11. The same explanation is given in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 18:61.

35 This explanation is repeated in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 428 where it is combined with the story that everywhere the fish swam the water became solid like rock. See the translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 3:17.

36 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 18:63.

37 For a comprehensive overview of al-Ṭabarī's work, see the introduction in F. Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 5–134.

38 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 18:61. There is also a report in al-Ṭabarī's commentary on the term "sarab-an," from Ibn Zayd also, in which the fish is whole again after its death, but attributes the fish's resurrection not to the water, but to God. See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 18:61.

39 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 1: 424–425. See the translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 13–14.

40 On this interpretation, see Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, on Q 18:61. Some of the other explanations found in al-Ṭabarī, like the fish escaping through a "window" in the water, are retained by al-Rāzī but not seen as alternative explanations to the general story as he explains it.

A similar but less elaborate explanation linking the fish's escape to its resurrection can be found in al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 18:61–63 where it is simply stated that when Moses returned to where Joshua lost the fish he saw it alive and swimming away. It is also reported that when Joshua got the fish wet with the water it came back to life and jumped into the water. al-Zamakhsharī retains the explanations of "sarab-an" as being that the fish escaped either through a window in the water or into a subterranean passage.

41 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 18:61.

42 There is a brief discussion of this point in Minoo Southgate's appendix to the translation of *Iskandarnamah: A Persian Medieval Alexander-Romance*, 196–201. Some discussion of this and related issues can be found in A.R. Anderson, *Alexander's Gate, Gog and Magog and Enclosed Nations*, Medieval Academy of American Publications 12 (Cambridge, 1932).

43 For information on al-Mundhir III, and his epithet Dhu al-Qarnayn, see Imru' al-Qays, *Diwān*, ed. Muḥammad Abū Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1969), 60:3; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-munammaq fī akhbār al-Quraysh* (Hyderabad, 1964), 340. The identification of Dhu al-Qarnayn with al-Mundhir III is discussed in Joseph Horovitz, *Koranische Untersuchungen* (Berlin, 1926), 111–113. For an overview of al-Mundhir III's reign and place in Lakhmid history, see Gustave Rothstein, *Die Dynastie der Laḫmiden in al-Ḥīra: Ein Versuch arabisch-persischen Geschichte zur Zeit der Sasaniden* (Berlin, 1899; reprint, Hiidesheim, 1968).

44 There is a discussion of this identification in Southgate, *Iskandarnamah*, footnote 45 to Appendix III, 220–221. This is referred to in the work of Abū al-Kalām Āzād, *Dhu al-Qarnayn yā Kūrush-i kabīr*, trans. into Persian M.A. Bastani Parizi (Tehran, 1965) who argues that Q 18:83–101 was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad in response to questions asked him by some Jews.

In Muḥammad 'Alī, *The Holy Qur'ān*, 6d ed. (Lahore, 1973), 586–586, it is argued that Dhu al-Qarnayn is Darius I.

45 This identification is discussed in Theodor Nöldeke, *Geschichte des Qorāns*, revised by Friedrich Schwally (Leipzig, 1909; reprint, Hildesheim, 1961), 1: 140–142, footnote 5.

There is another reference mentioned in Nöldeke–Schwally to the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis (99:2) which describes Rome as *ba'al qarnai'im*, which might be translated into Arabic as *al-Rūm dhāt al-qarūn*.

46 For example, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, on Q 18:83 mentions four different opinions as to the identity of Dhu al-Qarnayn in Q 18:83, but does not mention Cyrus as one of the possibilities. There are no accounts of Cyrus in al-Ṭabarī's *Ta'rīkh* which describe him as a world conqueror.

47 For this reference, attributed to Wahb b. Munabbih, see Ibn Hishām, *al-Tījān*, published in Mark Lidzbarski, "Zu den arabischen Alexandergeschichten," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 8 (1893): 263–312. The text appears in 278–312. For the complete text, see Ibn Hishām, *Kitāb al-tijān* (Hyderabad, 1347).

48 For this reference, see al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 684–686. See the translation in Moshe Perlmann, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Ancient Kingdoms* (Albany, 1987), 78–80.

49 For this reference, see Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, on Q 18:83. Afrīqish is identified by Hishām al-Kalbī as Afrīqish b. Qays b. Ṣayfī b. Saba' b. Ka'b b. Zayd b. Ḥimyar b. Saba' b. Yashjub b. Ya'rub b. Joktan which, given the confused geneological lines of the Ḥimyarī rulers, could be the same person mentioned by al-Ṭabarī. al-Kalbī's geneaology is given in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 516. See the translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 98 where it is mentioned that Afrīqish brings the Canaanites, who had been defeated earlier by Joshua, to Ifrīqiyah.

There is also a reference in Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddimah*, trans. F. Rosenthal (Princeton, 1967), 1: 21–25 to Afrīqus b. Qays b. Ṣayfī's campaigns in North Africa.

50 The connection between Ṣa'b Dhu al-Qarnayn and Q 18:83–101 is discussed in Lidzbarski, "Wer ist Chadhir?" esp. 107–108. Lidzbarski assumes that the Ṣa'b stories are taken from an earlier version of the Alexander stories.

51 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 685–686. See the translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 79–80. Note that this story and the one following seem to be derived from or include etiological stories about al-Ḥīrah.

52 For this story and a discussion of it, see Lidzbarski, "Zu den arabischen Alexandergeschichten," 263–312. There is a summary of this account in Southgate, *Iskandarnamah*, Appendix III, 198–201.

53 See, for example, the grape episode in the Ethiopic recension, Budge, *The Life and Exploits of Alexander the Great: Being a Series of Ethiopic Texts*, 271–272. It is important, though, that the fish episode does not appear in the account of Ibn Hishām.

The gift of the heavy stone appears in the Latin work *Iter ad Paradisum* which is supposed to have been written by a Jew in the twelfth century. In the Babylonian Talmud, Tamīd, 32b Alexander comes to the gate of the garden of Eden and is given an eye which outweighs all his silver and gold but is weighed down with some dust. The eyeball is said to be that of a person who is never satisfied. On Alexander in the Talmud, see the study by Israel Lévi, "La légende d'Alexandre dans le Talmud," *Revue des Etudes Juives* 2 (1881): 293–300. There is a brief discussion of this account in Cary, *The Medieval Alexander*, 19–21.

54 Ibn Hishām's account also includes a number of elements from earlier and near contemporaneous Alexander stories, such as the story of the heavy stone, and the building of the gates against Gog and Magog. The incorporation of these elements into Ibn Hishām's account suggest that the identification of Dhu al-Qarnayn with Ṣa'b is an attempt to appropriate earlier Jewish and Christian stories into a more Arabian and Islamic context. It is also possible that Ibn Hishām's account is the source for these elements into later commentaries on Q 18:83–101 that identify Dhu al-Qarnayn with Alexander, and later Ethiopic and Persian Alexander stories.

The story of building the gates against Gog and Magog occurs in the sermon of Jacob of Serugh and in the so-called Syriac "Legend of Alexander." See E.A.W. Budge, *The History of Alexander the Great: Being the Syriac Version*, 150–154, 182–185. The inscription on the gate, mentioned in the "Legend of Alexander" but not in the sermon, appears later in the *Mujmal al-tawārīkh wa al-qiṣaṣ*, ed. M.T. Bahar (Tehran, 1940), 57.

55 This is the standard geneology for the Arabic, including Q 18:60–101 and the commentaries on these verses, Ethiopic, and Persian "recensions" of the Alexander stories. This theory goes back to the long introduction to E.A.W. Budge, *The History of Alexander the Great: Being the Syriac Version*, and to Nöldeke, "Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderroman." The more detailed study of Weymann, *Die äthiopische und arabische Übersetzung des Pseudokallisthenes*, follows this basic theory.

56 As was discussed earlier, it is not certain that the Syriac Pseudo-Callisthenes was not written as late as the ninth century, even assuming it was taken from a Pahlavi original as Nöldeke claims. If it were taken from a Pahlavi original, it would be further incumbent to show from where the Pahlavi recension is derived. The most obvious possibilities would be recension λ or manuscript L which contain roughly the same material. It should be noted, however, that the usual reconstruction of the history of the Alexander stories' recensions makes λ and L independent of the Syriac recension which derives from a hypothetical δ recension. For an overview of this theoretical reconstruction, see Merkelbach, *Die Quellen des griechischen Alexanderromans*, 208–211.

57 There is a short overview of the Islamic Alexander stories in Armand Abel, *Le roman d'Alexandre: légendaire médiéval* (Bruxelles, 1955), 55–89.

58 There are other elements in the *Shāhnāmah*, such as Alexander's visit to Mecca, that show the Islamic influence on the Alexander stories. For an English translation of the Alexander stories, see A.G. Warner and W. Warner, *The Sháhnáma of Firdausí* (London, 1912), 6: 85–190, esp. 159–162. There is also a discussion of the relationship between Firdawsī's version and other Alexander stories on 60–84. An abridged English translation can be found in *The Epic of the Kings*, trans. Reuben Levy (Chicago, 1967), 243–250. For a dated but valuable discussion of this issue, see Ethé, "Alexanders Zug zum Lebensquell im Land der Finsternis," esp. 343–349.

59 See Wensinck, "al-Khaḍir," 903. For the Hebrew text, see Adolph Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch* (Vienna, 1873), 5: 133–135.

60 Another related issue is a dispute, found in some of the exegesis, that the Moses of Q 18:60–82 is not Moses b. 'Imrān, but Moses b. Manasseh [Mīshā]. See, for example, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *mafātiḥ al-ghayb* (Beirut, 1980), on Q 18:60–82. See also al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1:613 and its expansion in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 424 and the English translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel* (Albany, 1991), 13. There is further discussion of the identity of this Moses in al-Tha'labī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* (Beirut, 2000), 126 and in Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-ta'rīkh*, ed. C. Tornberg (Leiden, 1867; reprint, Beirut, 1965), 1:160.

This may be due to a ketib-qirē in the Massoretic text of Judges 18:30 where the name Manasseh is written as "MSH" with the nūn provided only as a superscript letter, allowing the name to be read as Manasseh rather than Moses [Mōshē], yet without the Massoretic apparatus the name could have been read as Mishē to distinguish it from Moses. See the discussion in Gordon Newby, *The Making of the Last Prophet: A Reconstruction of the Earliest Biography of Muhammad* (Columbia, 1989), 114–115.

61 The existence of the Arabic original of Ibn Shāhīn's *al-Faraj ba'd al-shiddah*, was first published by Abraham Harkavy in *Festschrift zum achtzigsten Geburtstage Moritz Steinschneider's* (Leipzig, 1896). The manuscript discovered by Harkavy was obtained by the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York where its significance was again taken up by Julian Obermann, "Ein Werk Agadisch-Islamischen Synkretismus," *Zeitschrift für Semitistik* 5 (1927): 43–68.

The Arabic manuscript discovered by Harkavy was published by Obermann, *Studies in Islam and Judaism: The Arabic Original of Ibn Shāhīn's Book of Comfort* (New Haven, 1933). A modern Hebrew translation relying on the Arabic text, various Hebrew versions, and five fragments from the Cairo Genizah was published by H.Z. Hirschberg, *Ḥibbur yafeh me-ha-yeshu'ah*, Sifrīyat Meqorot 15 (Jerusalem, 5714/1953). Shraga Abramson, *Rab Nissim Ga'ōn: ḥamishah sefarīm* (Jerusalem, 1965) has consulted some forty manuscripts of the Arabic original and all the extant fragments. The various versions have been consulted for the English translation by William Brinner, *An Elegant Composition Concerning Relief after Adversity* (New Haven, 1977). The Joshua and Elijah story occurs on 13–16.

62 In his article, Wensinck mentions Y.L. Zunz, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin, 1875), 1:130. The discussion can also be found in Zunz, *Die Gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden*, revised and trans. H. Albeck, *ha-Drashōt be-Israel* (Jerusalem, 1947).

63 See Abraham Geiger, *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judentum aufgenommen*, 2d ed. (Leipzig, 1902).

64 For this view, see Friedländer, *Die Chadhirlegende und der Alexanderroman*, esp. 257. Similar observations are made in Friedländer, "Zug Geschichte der Chadhirlegende," 92–110 and Friedländer, "Alexanders Zug nach dem Lebensquell und die Chadhirlegende," 161–246.

65 Obermann, "Two Elijah Stories in Judeo-Arabic Transmission," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 23 (1950–1951): 400.

66 Obermann, "Two Elijah Stories in Judeo-Arabic Transmission," 399–400. For this sort of perspective, also see John Walker, *Bible Characters in the Koran* (Paisley, 1931).

67 Obermann, "Two Elijah Stories in Judeo-Arabic Transmission," 401. Note that this same position is reiterated in David H. Baneth's review of Obermann in *Kiryat Sefer* 11 (1935): 349–357, esp. 350.

68 Ibn Shāhīn, *al-Faraj ba'd al-shiddah*, 3a–3b. Brinner, *An Elegant Composition Concerning Relief after Adversity*, 6.

69 Ibn Shāhīn, *al-Faraj ba'd al-shiddah*, 1a. Brinner, *An Elegant Composition Concerning Relief after Adversity*, 3. Note that the Harkavy manuscript which Obermann edited begins at "owing to your desire..." Brinner takes the rest of the text from a Hebrew version.

On this genre, see Brinner, *An Elegant Composition Concerning Relief after Adversity*, xxiv–xxix; and Alfred Wiener, "Die *Faraǧ ba'd aš-Šidda*-Literatur," *Der Islam* 4 (1913): 270–298, 387–420.

70 See Ibn Shāhīn, *al-Faraj ba'd al-shiddah*, 38b–43b, 45b–48b, 85b–87b, 87b–91a, 102b–103b, 147a–150b, 153a–154b. See Brinner, *An Elegant Composition Concerning Relief after Adversity*, 48–52, 54–57, 96–98, 99–102, 116–117, 168–172, 175–176. The story on 87b–91a and 99–102 is discussed in Obermann, "Two Elijah Stories in Judeo-Arabic Transmission," 401–404.

71 See Ibn Shāhīn, *al-Faraj ba'd al-shiddah*, 79b–81a, 101b–102a, 111b–116b. See Brinner, *An Elegant Composition Concerning Relief after Adversity*, 90–91, 114–115, 127–131.

72 See Ibn Shāhīn, *al-Faraj ba'd al-shiddah*, 145a, 145b. See Brinner, *An Elegant Composition Concerning Relief after Adversity*, 162, 163.

73 See M. Plessner's review of Hirschberg's modern Hebrew translation of Ibn Shāhīn's work, in *Tarbiz* 24 (Jerusalem, 1954): 469–472. This is discussed in Haim Schwarzbaum, "The Jewish and Moslem Versions of Some Theodicy Legends," *Fabula* 3 (1959): 119–169.

74 See Schwarzbaum, "The Jewish and Moslem Versions of Some Theodicy Legends," esp. 140–146.

75 For an overview of these stories, see C.A. Williams, *Oriental Affinities of the Legend of the Hairy Anchorite*, 2 vols. (Urbana, 1925–1926). Schwarzbaum also refers to two

scholars who attribute the story in the Quran to Christian rather than Jewish origins. See Sigmund Fraenkel's review of Nöldeke's "Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderroman" in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 45 (1891): 309–330 and J. Horovitz, *Koranische Untersuchungen*, 43, 141.

76 An example of this divine guidance can be found in the fifth century stories associated with Paphnutius in the *Peregrinatio Paphnutiana*, preserved in Coptic, Greek, and Ethiopic recensions. For the Coptic version, see E. Amélineau, "Voyage d'un Moine Égyptien dans le Désert," *Recueil de Travaux* 6 (1885): 166–194. The Ethiopic version is published in F.M. Esteves Pereira, *Vida de Santo Abunafre* (Lisbon, 1905). For an English summary of the story, see Williams, *Oriental Affinities of the Legend of the Hairy Anchorite*, 2: 81–86.

77 An example of this long journey being accomplished in a miraculously short time can be found in the versions of the story of the life of Paul of Thebes, or the "first hermit" in the Historia Monachorum in *Patrologia Latina*, 21: 428–429. There is a variant of this story in the Historia Lausiaca in *Patrologia Graeca*, 34: 1156–1161. A Syriac version is translated into English in E.A.W. Budge, *Paradise of the Fathers* (New York, 1907; reprint, 1972), 1: 372. For an English paraphrase of this story, see Williams, *Oriental Affinities of the Legend of the Hairy Anchorite*, 2: 62–71. A discussion of the story exists in Richard Reitzenstein, *Historia Monachorum und Historia Lausiaca. Eine Studie zur Geschichte des Mönchtums und der frühchristlichen Begriffe Gnostiker und Pneumatiker*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, n.f. 7 (Göttingen, 1916), 90–92.

78 For an overview of these cases, see Williams, *Oriental Affinities of the Legend of the Hairy Anchorite*, 1:30, 52–55; 2:66, 83, 87, 97, 99, 101, 114, 118–119. In several places, Williams discusses the possibility that the figure of the gnostic ascetic, or hairy anchorite, is based on Utnapishtim from the Epic of Gilgamesh.

79 For an example of this description of the gnostic ascetic's location and living conditions, see Williams, *Oriental Affinities of the Legend of the Hairy Anchorite*, 2: 75, 85, 95, 97, 115. Often the location of the gnostic ascetic is seen as an oasis or garden of Eden-type place in the wilderness of the desert. See, in particular, the description of the abode of the four ascetics in the stories of Paphnutius in Williams, *Oriental Affinities of the Legend of the Hairy Anchorite*, 2: 85.

80 See Williams, *Oriental Affinities of the Legend of the Hairy Anchorite*, 2: 95–98.

81 See Williams, *Oriental Affinities of the Legend of the Hairy Anchorite*, 2: 62–71.

82 On the ascent to heaven to receive a divine word in late antiquity, see H. Lewy, *Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy: Mysticism, Magic and Platonism in the Later Roman Empire* (Cairo, 1956); A.F. Segal, "Heavenly Ascent in Hellenistic Judaism, Early Christianity, and their Environment." *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, 23.2., ed. W. Haase (Berlin, 1980), 1333–1394; Ioan Culiano, "L'Ascension de l'Ame' dans les Mystères et Hors des Mystères," in *La Soteriologia dei Culti Orientali nell'Impero Romano*, ed. Ugo Bianchi and M.J. Vermaseren (Leiden, 1982), 276–307; Ioan Culianu, *Psychanodia I: A Survey of the Evidence Concerning the Ascension of the Soul and its Relevance* (Leiden, 1983); J. Kroll, *Die Himmelfahrt der Seele in der Antike*, Kölner Universitäts-Reden 27 (Köln, 1931).

The issue of how broadly the ascent to heaven motif is spread in late antiquity, and its significance for the history of religions in general is an issue still unresolved. On these questions, see W. Bousset, W. *Die Himmelsreise der Seele* (Darmstadt, 1971); C. Colpe, "Die 'Himmelsreise der Seele' als philosophie- und religionsgeschichtliches Problem," in *Festschrift J. Klein*, ed. E. Fries (Göttingen, 1967), 85–104.

83 Schwarzbaum, "The Jewish and Moslem Versions of Some Theodicy Legends," 142–148 deals with the three episodes independently and attempts to give parallels for each of them from disparate sources. He acknowledges that none of the parallels are exact enough to suggest dependence.

84 This interpretation has been suggested by L. Ginzberg, "Haggadōt Qeṭū'ōt," *ha-Goren* 9 (1922): 31–68 and by Schwarzbaum, "The Jewish and Moslem Versions of Some Theodicy Legends," 145. It was also, apparently, considered by other rabbinic sources as is evident from the different versions of the story discussed in what follows.

85 For this story, see "Midrash ōtiōt de Rabbi Akiba ha-shalem," in *Bate midrashōt*, ed. S.A. Wertheimer (Jerusalem, 1953), 2:388ff; "Midrash alphabet shel Rabbi Akiba," in *Bet ha-Midrasch*, ed. Jellinek (Vienna, 1876), 3:44; Yalqut Shimoni on Exodus, 1:173; Midrash ha-Gadol on Exodus, 67, cited from *Midrash ha-gadōl shemōt*, ed. M. Margulies (Jerusalem, 1956), 67; Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, trans. Paul Radin (Philadelphia, 1928; reprint, Baltimore, 1998), 2:325–326. For Schwarzbaum's discussion of this episode, see his "The Jewish and Moslem Versions of Some Theodicy Legends," esp. 140–141.

86 See Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch*, 5 : xxxvii. See also Zunz, *Die Gesammelte Vorträge der Juden*, 1: 130; Zunz-Albeck, *ha-Drashōt be-Israel* (Jerusalem, 1947). This relationship is also mentioned by Israel Lévi, *Revue des Études Juives* 8 (1887): 71.

87 See Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch*, 6 : xxxii.

88 See Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch*, 5 : xxxvi.

89 It should be noted that Schwarzbaum argues that Elijah's killing the cow of the hospitable man is a parallel to the servant of God killing the boy. He claims that the killing of the cow is derived from a Talmudic source that roughly parallels this scene.

90 There is a brief overview of the association between al-Khiḍr and Elijah in Bernhard Heller, "Chadhir und der Prophet Elijahu als wundertätige Baumeister," *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 81 (1937): 76–80.

91 This is noted by Wensinck, "al-Khaḍir," 904.

92 Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣābah fī tamyīz al-ṣaḥābah*, ed. 'Ādil Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd and 'Alī Muḥammad Mu'awwaḍ (Beirut, 1415/1995), s.v. "Khaḍir." Ibn Ḥajar also cites a similar statement attributed to a Ibn Shāhīn, on the basis of a weak chain of transmission.

93 This tradition is found in Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ* (Beirut, 1994), Faḍā'il 170–174. All citations to al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* are taken from Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. Ḥajar, *Fatḥ al-bārī bi-sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut, 1408/1988). See also al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayan fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 18:65, al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 429. See the English translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 17.

94 For this, see al-Nawawī, *Tahdhīb al-asmā'*, ed. Wüstenfeld (Göttingen, 1842–1847), 1:228; al-Diyārbakrī, *Ta'rīkh al-khamīs fī aḥwāl anfas nafīs* (Cairo, 1866; reprint, Beirut, 1970), 1:106; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, 4: 336. These references are discussed in Wensinck, "al-Khaḍir," 905.

95 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 415. See the translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 3. This early report, with its mention of al-Khiḍr and Elijah meeting each year at the festival [mawsim], seems to be related to the later story with its elaboration that the two figures meet each year during the pilgrimage.

96 For another source connecting Elijah with fertility and theodicy, see the Midrash Rabbah on Psalm 90:1 regarding the "shiggayōn" of David, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and Moses. See the translation by William G. Braude, *The Midrash on Psalms* (New Haven, 1959), 1: 114–117 and 2: 85–92. The Midrash Rabbah on Psalm 7 also comments on Habakkuk's challenging of God, stating that Habakkuk would not leave a circle he drew on the ground until God answered his complaint and saved Israel. A similar episode is attributed to Hōnī ha-me'aggel [the circle-drawer] who, in the Babylonian Talmud (Ta'anīt 23a) will not leave a circle he draws on the ground until God causes it to rain. There is also a discussion of this story by E.E. Urbach in *Tarbiz* 17 (1946): 7 and by G.B. Sarfatti in *Tarbiz* 26 (1957): 126–153.

There is difficulty in evaluating the provenance and date of the Midrash Rabbah on Psalms. Zunz, in particular, in his *Die Gesammelte Vorträge der Juden*, 375 argues that the Midrash Rabbah on Psalms 1–118 was redacted in the second half of the ninth

century on the basis of references to historical events and dependence upon later texts. This is discussed further in the Hebrew translation of Zunz's work by Albeck. See Zunz–Albeck, *ha-Drashōt be-Yisra'el*, passim. This dating has been questioned by Buber, in the introduction to his edition of the Midrash Rabbah on Psalms and by Braude in his introduction. It is difficult, given the current state of scholarship, to trace the contents back to the Talmudic rather than Gaonic period. It is not impossible, however, that the motif of impetuous speech is influenced by Islamic traditions about Moses' pride and his association with theodicy stories in particular.

97 See L. Ginzberg, *On Jewish Law and Lore* (New York, 1955), 70. Schwarzbaum, "The Jewish and Moslem Versions of Some Theodicy Legends," discusses this in footnote 141, pp. 145–146.

98 The story is paraphrased in L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 3: 135–136. The references to Ibn Shu'ayb, along with a brief discussion of the origins of this story and its subsequent versions, are found in volume 5: 56–57. On the significance of Ibn Shu'ayb in rabbinic Judaism, see G. Scholem in *Kiryat Sefer* 6 (1929/1930): 109–118 and Scholem in *Tarbiz* 24 (1954/1955): 294–295.

99 See Ibn Shu'ayb, *Derashōt 'al ha-Tōrah*, 98c.

100 See, for example, *Sefer ha-massiyōt*, trans. Moses Gaster, *The Exempla of the Rabbis*, 2d ed. (New York, 1968), #432, pp. 168–169 and #353, pp. 130–131. Scholars have noted the dependence of this collection on Ibn Shāhīn's work and the *Midrash ha-gadōl*. On the references to Ibn Shāhīn's work, supposedly #148–149 in Gaster, see S. Abramson's edition of Ibn Shāhīn's work, 406–408. For a discussion of the dependence of Gaster's text on the *Midrash ha-gadōl*, see Bernard Heller's review of the revised edition of Gaster in *Revue des Études Juives* 81 (1925): 3–5. See also the introduction to the *Midrash ha-gadōl: Bereshit*, by Mordecau Margulies (Jerusalem, 5707/1947), 11.

Gaster himself argues, in the introduction (1–49), that the text dates to the fourth century. Since the publication of this work, a number of scholars have argued for its later redaction, primarily on the grounds that it borrowed from rather than being the source for a number of later rabbinic works. For an overview of these arguments, see the prolegomenon to *The Exempla of the Rabbis*, xxv–xxx by William Braude.

The dating to the fourteenth century was first made by Israel Lévi in his review of the first edition of the book in *Revue des Études Juives* 34 (1897): 153–155. He cites a number of reasons such as the use of Babylonian rather than Palestinian Aramaic, and the use of the locution "in the West they say" found in the Babylonian Talmud to refer to sayings by Palestinian Amorīm.

101 An English translation of the story can be found in Edward Lane, *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, ed. E. Stanley Poole (New York, 1914), 3: 322–323.

It is exceedingly difficult to date individual stories from the 1001 Nights. The printed Arabic editions, the so-called "vulgate" text or "Zotenberg's Egyptian recension" (Būlāq and Cairo) are based on a recension of the stories compiled in the eighteenth century. Scholars are divided on the history of the stories in this recension, but it is possible that some of the stories originated in pre-Islamic times, from Iranian or Indian sources. For an overview of the development of the stories, and the scholarship on this, see Duncan Black MacDonald, "The Earlier History of the Arabian Nights," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1924): 353–397; Nabia Abbot, "A Ninth-Century Fragment of the "Thousand Nights," New Light on the Early History of the Arabian Nights," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 8 (1949): 129–164; E. Littman, "Alf layla wa layla," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed., 1: 358–364.

102 See al-Damīrī, *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān al-kubrā* (Cairo, 1386). The section on sheep runs 108–115. The story in question is found on 115. On these two versions of the story, and on the relationship of al-Damīrī to al-Qazwīnī, see Joseph De Somogyi, *Index des Sources de la Ḥyāt al-Ḥayawān de ad-Damīrī*, Extrait du Journal Asiatique 213 (Paris, 1928) and De Somogyi, *Biblical Figures in ad-Damīrī's Ḥayāt al-Ḥayawān* (Budapest,

1937), esp. 278. al-Qazwīnī's work has been published separately as al-Qazwīnī, *'Ajā'ib al-makhlūqāt wa gharā'ib al-mawjūdāt*, 2d ed., ed. Fārūq Sa'd (Beirut, 1977).

103 See Hermann Brockhaus, "Gellert und Jāmī," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 14 (1860): 706–710. The text is also published in B.E. Cowell, "On Certain Mediaeval Apologues," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 1 (1860): 10–17.

This poem is part of Jāmī's famous *Haft awrang*, or "seven thrones." For further information on Jāmī's work, see C. Huart's article "Djāmī" in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, revised in the second edition by H. Massé, 2: 421–422. See also the monograph by 'Alī Aṣghar Ḥikmat, *Jāmī* (Tehran, 1320).

104 Jāmī's spiritual guide was Sa'd al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Kāshgharī, a disciple and successor to Bahā' al-Dīn Naqshband, founder of the Naqshbandī order.

105 For an example of a commentary on the *Iskandarnāmah*, see Hermann Ethé, "Alexanders Zug zum Lebensquell im Land der Finsternis," *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch–Historische Klasse* (München, 1871): 343–405.

106 On the sources of Ibn Shu'ayb's sermons, see Carmi Horowitz, *The Jewish Sermon in 14th Century Spain: The Derashot of R. Joshua ibn Shu'eib* (Cambridge, 1989).

107 See his statement in Ibn Shāhīn, *al-Faraj ba'd al-shiddah*, 3b. Translated in Brinner, *An Elegant Composition Concerning Relief after Adversity*, 6.

108 This story is found in Berakōt, 51a. It is discussed in Zvi Kaplan, "Joshua b. Levi," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem, 1972), 10: 283–284.

109 See, for example, Ketubōt 77b in the Babylonian Talmud, and the "Ma'aseh de-Rabbi Yehōshu'a ben Levī," in Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch*, 2: 48–51.

110 See, for example, Isidore Lévy, *La Légende de Pythagore de Grece en Palestine* (Paris, 1927), esp. 154–165.

111 In addition to the comprehensive treatment of the influence of Gilgamesh in later literature in Jensen, *Das Gilgamesch-Epos in der Weltliteratur*, passim, see Arthur Christensen, *Les types du premier homme et du premier roi dans l'histoire légendaire des Iraniens*, Archives d'Études Orientales 14.1–2 (Stockholm: 1917, 1934).

112 It would be next to impossible to list the various stories in which immortal beings of some type are associated with giving or denying immortality to mortal beings, even if limited to the ancient Mediterranean world. For an overview of the ancient Mediterranean stories involving the association of water with cosmogony and immortality, see Wensinck, "The Ocean in the Literature of the Western Semites," passim. See also the discussion in E.W. Hopkins, "The Fountain of Youth," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 26 (1905): 1–67 and August Wünsche, "Die Sagen vom Lebensbaum und Lebenswasser: altorientalische Mythen," *Ex Orient Lux* 1.2–3 (Leipzig, 1905).

There is a wider ranging but less discerning overview of the association of water and immortality in Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (New York, 1958), 188–215. See the extensive bibliography 213–215.

113 As was noted earlier, in his, "Wer ist Chadhir?" Lidzbarski claims that the name "al-Khiḍr" is a jumbled form of the Sumerian name of Utnapishtim, "Ziusudra" which he transliterates in German as "Chasisadra" (110–112).

114 In the Ethiopic Pseudo-Callisthenes and the Persian *Iskandarnāmah* al-Khiḍr plays roughly the same rôle he does in the commentaries on Q 18:60–65. In the so-called Ethiopic "Christian romance" published in E.A.W. Budge, *The Life and Exploits of Alexander the Great: Being a Series of Ethiopic Texts*, 2:437–553, the character of al-Khiḍr or the one having esoteric knowledge is distinguished from the person who gains immortality. The part of al-Khiḍr is played by Enoch and Elijah, both of whom are associated with al-Khiḍr in rabbinic and Islamic stories (477–481). The part of the person who gains immortality is played by a nameless fisherman who discovers

the water of life by chance and then gains immortality for himself by jumping in it. The fisherman is beheaded by Alexander but does not die, recalling the Arthurian story of Gwayne and the green knight (481–483).

115 These two episodes from Jacob of Serugh's sermon echo the episodes from the Babylonian Talmud, Tamīd 32a–32b, where Alexander discusses philosophy with a group of sages from the south, then meets the Amazons, and finally washes a salted fish (which does not come back to life) in a well which Alexander proclaims to flow from the garden of Eden.

116 It should be noted, however, that Q 18:60–64 and 65–82 do seem to have two different characters: the companion of Moses and the servant of God. The companion of Moses, identified as Joshua b. Nun by the bulk of the exegetes, does not have the attributes of esoteric knowledge, but in a report transmitted on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās it is said that Joshua jumped into the water of life and gained immortality. He was then put on a ship which rocks in the seas until the Day of Judgment. See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 428. See the translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 16. Although preserving the two attributes of wisdom and immortality with two different characters, this explanation would inverse the characters of the Alexander story in which the wise man is Alexander's guide not his destination.

117 For the episode of the descent into the ocean, see II.38. For the episode of the ascent into heaven, see II.41 in the Greek manuscript L. The English translation of these passages is found in *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 118–119, 122–123.

Neither of these two episodes, or the water of life episode is found in the Greek manuscript A. The episodes do not occur in the Syriac Pseudo-Callisthenes recension, nor do the descent into the ocean and ascent into heaven appear in any of the Syriac Alexander stories. All of these episodes are treated more elaborately in the Greek recension γ. For the relevant sections in the Greek recension β, see Bergson, *Der griechische Alexanderroman, Rezension* β, 131–132, 134.

118 For the episode in the *Iskandarnāmah*, see Southgate, *Iskandarnāmah*, 54–60.

119 For the episode in the Ethiopic recension, see E.A.W. Budge, *The Life and Exploits of Alexander the Great: Being a Series of Ethiopic Texts*, 1: 242–286 in which a number of the key elements in the later versions of the Alexander stories occur, such as these three episodes, the gift of the grapes and the stone, and the explanation for why Alexander is called Dhu al-Qarnayn. In the so-called Ethiopic "Christian romance," published by Budge, there is a story in which Alexander is carried off on his horse to a spiritual temple at which he meets Elijah and Enoch. Later, there is the description of a certain fishing spot at which the fish never die despite their being caught and cut open. See Budge, 477–483.

In this latter episode, the fisherman is beheaded by Alexander but does not die. The fisherman in this episode is analogous to al-Khiḍr in the longer Ethiopic recension. See note 114 above.

120 For an English translation of this section of the Epic of Gilgamesh, see *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, trans. N.K. Sandars, 3d ed. (New York, 1972), 97–117 which draws upon a combination of sources from the Sumerian, Hittite, and Akkadian versions of the epic. For a fuller translation and study, see M.G. Kovacs, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (Stanford, 1985). Some of the Sumerian texts have been translated by S.N. Kramer, "Sumerian Myths and Epic Tales," in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 44–52. For the Hittite version, see the translation in J. Friedrich, "Die hethitischen Bruchstücke des Gilgameš-Epos," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 39 (1929): 1–82 and H. Otten, *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 8 (1958): 93–125. Some of the Akkadian versions have been translated by E.A. Speiser, "Akkadian Myths and Epics," in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 72–99. There is a Hurrian fragment of Gilgamesh's journey to Utnapishtim published in A. Ungnad, "Das hurritische Fragment des Gilgamesch-Epos," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 35 (1924): 133–140.

121 On these parallels, see Bruno Meissner, *Alexander und Gilgamos* (Leipzig, 1894), esp. 16–19. For an analysis of these themes as they occur as nostalgia in Arabic poetry, see Jaroslav Stetkevych, *The Zephyrs of Najd: The Poetics of Nostalgia in the Classical Arabic Nasīb* (Chicago, 1993), esp. 168–201.

It should be noted also that there are a number of striking parallels between the Gilgamesh and Alexander stories, and the sixth voyage of Sindbad found in the *Alf layla wa layla*. For an in-depth discussion of the Sindbad stories and the relationship of the motifs to other stories, see Ḥusayn Fawzī, *Ḥadīth al-Sindibād al-qadīm* (Cairo, 1943).

122 In the Greek manuscript L of the Alexander stories, the water of life is found in the land of darkness where the ground is covered with rubies [II.39–41]. This recalls Gilgamesh's journey to the "mouth of the waters" through the land of darkness and the garden in which the bushes bear gems. In the Persian recensions, the water of life is found on top of the mountain Qāf, which, in some traditions reviewed in later chapters, is regarded as the "world mountain" beyond which lies the garden of Eden. See Southgate, *Iskandarnāmah*, 56–60.

That the water of life flows from the garden of Eden is stated in the Babylonian Talmud, Tamīd 32b.

123 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurān*, on Q 18:60. Also, see al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:21.

124 The story of the rock on the well is found in al-Ṭabarī. It is repeated in al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 28:21.

Note that in addition to the rock in Q 18:63, and this rock here, there are two other rocks associated with both Moses and water in the commentaries. The first is the rock which Moses strikes in the wilderness to provide water to the Israelites during their forty years of wandering. These stories can be found in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*. In the *Me'ārath gazzē*, attributed to Ephraim the Syrian, trans. E.A.W. Budge, *The Book of the Cave of Treasures* (London, 1927), it is stated that the rock from which Moses drew water in the wilderness is said to be the same rock that covered the tomb of Jesus. There is also a story in which a rock steals Moses' clothes while he is taking a bath. See al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Ghusl 21 and Anbiyā' 616. For an English translation, see *The Translation of the Meanings of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, trans. Muḥammad Muḥsin Khān (Madīnah, n.d.), 1: 169–70 and 4: 407.

125 al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 28:21 explains that Moses ate nothing but the leaves of trees on his journey to Midian. When he arrived he had walked so far that it is said that the soles of his feet fell off. Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:21 repeats the same story including the two reports, also mentioned in al-Ṭabarī, that the entrails of Moses' stomach were green from hunger.

It is also significant that there are a number of traditions which attribute a divine guide to Moses on his journey to the water of Midian. al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 28:21 reports that some say Moses was guided by an angel holding a spear. al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣāṣ al-anbiyā'*, trans. Wheeler Thackston, *The Tales of the Prophets of al-Kisa'i* (Boston, 1973), 221 states that at night Moses was guided by the stars and during the day by a huge lion.

126 There are a lot of traditions regarding the character of the rod. For the story that an angel of God gave it to Shu'ayb, see al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 460–461. See the translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 45.

For the origins of the rod in the garden of Eden, see al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:28 where Gabriel gets it from Adam in the garden of Eden and gives it to Moses. al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 28:28 states that the rod belonged to Adam in the garden of Eden and was the property of the subsequent prophets until it arrived in the possession of Shu'ayb. al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣāṣ al-anbiyā'*, 222 mentions the prophets through whom the rod passed to Shu'ayb and Moses. The idea that the rod came from the garden of Eden is also found in *The Book of*

the Bee, attributed to a Bishop Solomon of Basrah [fl. 13th century], ed. and trans. E.A.W. Budge (Oxford, 1886), 50–51.

127 See al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 18:60 and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, on Q 18:60.

128 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 18:60. The same report is given, without a chain of transmission, in al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 18:60. There is a discussion in Wensinck about the supposed location of the water of life in the farthest location of the west in his "The Ideas of the Western Semites Concerning the Navel of the Earth," passim. Note also that the "double-deep" [mbk nhrm] appears in Ugaritic texts as El's abode. The account in Genesis 2:10–14 of the rivers coming from a single source in the garden of Eden is also apropos.

129 See Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, on Q 18:60.

130 See the detailed arguments for this in Meissner, *Alexander und Gilgamos*, and in Adolf Jensen, *Das Gilgamesch-Epos in der Weltliteratur*, esp. vol. 2. Some of the stories associated with Gilgamesh and Alexander are related to Nimrod in Muslim exegesis on the Abraham story, esp. in relation to Q 2:260. For an in-depth discussion of the Nimrod stories, see Heinrich Schützinger, *Ursprung und Entwicklung der arabischen Abraham-Nimrod-Legende*, Bonner Orientalistische Studien, n.s. 11 (Bonn, 1961).

131 For an overview of the different interpretations of Alexander's horns, see A.R. Anderson, "Alexander's horns," *American Philological Association Transactions and Proceedings* 58 (1927): 100–122.

132 Nöldeke identifies two passages in the Syriac Pseudo-Callisthenes in which Alexander refers to horns on his head: Alexander says: "God has made me horns upon my head with which I can thrust down the kingdoms of the earth" and God says: "I have elevated you over all the kingdoms. I have made horns of iron to grow on your head." See the Syriac text in E.A.W. Budge, *The History of Alexander the Great: Being the Syriac Version*, 146 and 156. The discussion of these passages is found in Nöldeke, "Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderroman," 11–24. Note, however, that Alexander is never referred to as Dhu al-Qarnayn or the Syriac equivalent *ba'al qarnanē*.

133 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 491. See the translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 73–74.

134 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 495–496. See the translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 78–79.

135 The Peshiṭta has "... Moses did not know that the skin of his face was made to shine because he had talked to God." or "was made to shine more while he was talking to God" See *The Old Testament in Syriac: According to the Peshiṭta Version*, ed. The Peshiṭta Institute Leiden (Leiden, 1977), 1: 201.

This is almost a word for word translation of what is found in Targum Onkelos: "Moses did not know that the radiance of glory on his face had increased while he spoke with him." Targum Pseudo-Jonathan has "the radiance on his face had increased." All citations to the Targum Onkelos are taken from the text in *Miqra'ōt Gedōlōt: Ḥameshah ḥōshme Tōrah* (Union City, n.d.). See also *Targum Onkelos to Exodus*, ed. and trans. Israel Drazin (New York, 1990), 318–319.

136 On the relationship of these words, see Nahum Sarna, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Exodus* (Philadelphia, 5751/1991), 221. Sarna also mentions that the use of *qaran* could be an allusion to the golden calf in the preceeding verses, based on the fact that *qeren* usually means "horn."

137 For a discussion of the different versions of this verse in the Greek text, see John William Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus* (Atlanta, 1990), 570–571. The text of this version mentioning the change in color is found in *The Old Testament in Greek*, ed. A.E. Brooke and Norman McLean (Cambridge, 1909), 1: 274. The apparatus indicates several examples of the use of color rather than light to describe the change in Moses' face.

138 There is another story that describes how the Prophet Muhammad encounters Moses and Jesus in heaven, and Jesus' face is described as being red as if he had just come out of a steam-bath. See al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, in Anbiyā' 607. For an English translation, see *The Translation of the Meanings of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 4: 398.

139 See al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, in Bad' al-waḥy 92. This story is also found in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 418 and 424. See the English translation in Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 7 and 13.

140 al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, trans. Thackston, 250.

141 The text of the *Iter ad Paradisum*, usually dated to the twelfth century, was first edited on the basis of two manuscripts (P, W) by Julius Zacher (Königsberg, 1859), reprinted in the edition of the *Alexanderlied* edited by Kinzel (Halle, 1884). Another edition, on the basis of two other manuscripts (D, O) is found in Mario Esposito, *Hermathena* 15 (1909): 368–382. The most recent publication is edited by Alfons Hilka on the basis of three other manuscripts (P, K, M1, M2) in addition to Esposito's edition in *La Prise de Defure and Le Voyage d'Alexandre au Paradis Terrestre*, ed. Lawton P.G. Peckham and Milan S. La Du, Elliott Monographs 35 (Princeton, 1935), xli–xlviii. In this same publication, also see the parallel passages from the *Faits de Romains* (xlviii–lii) and the *Voyage d'Alexandre au Paradis Terrestre* (56–70).

The *Iter ad Paradisum* is attributed to a Salamon Didascalus Judaerorum, and is usually thought to be a work of Jewish origins. A general discussion of this episode in medieval European literature may be found in Cary, *The Medieval Alexander*, esp. 150–151 and 299–301.

142 This text, edited and translated on the basis of a single Bodleian Hebrew manuscript, can be found in Rosalie Reich, *Tales of Alexander the Macedonian: A Medieval Hebrew Manuscript Text and Translation with a Literary and Historical Commentary* (New York, 1972).

143 See the mention of the stone in its Ethiopic context in W. Hertz, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen* (Stuttgart-Berlin, 1905), 73ff. Also note the attempts to relate this heavy stone and eyeball, and the search for it, to a wider folklore tradition in A.H. Krappe, "The Indian Provenance of a Medieval Exemplum," *Traditio* 2 (1944): 499–502 and M. Gaster, "The Legend of the Grail," *Studies and Texts* 2 (1925): 879–901.

144 For the many accounts of Alexander's attempts to enter Paradise by flying, see the Jerusalem Talmud, Abodah Zarah 3:1:42c; Midrash Rabbah on Numbers 13 and 14; Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 11: 28b–29a; Yalqut Shimoni on 1 Kings 18. On Alexander's ocean journey, see Midrash Rabbahon Psalms and Yalqut Shimoni on Psalm 93:5. All citations from the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer are taken from the Warsaw 1852 text and the English translation by G. Friedländer (London, 1916; 4d ed., New York, 1981). All citations from the Jerusalem Talmud are taken from *Talmud Yerushalmi*, 7 vols (Jerusalem, 1998).

145 All citations to Rashi are taken from the Miqra'ōt Gedōlōt. For another English translation of this passage, see *Chumash with Targum Onkelos, Haphtaroth and Rashi's Commentary*, trans. A.M. Silberman and M. Rosenbaum (Jerusalem, 5745), 94. See also, *Pentateuch with Targum Onkelos, Haphtaroth and prayers for Sabbath and Rashi's Commentary*, trans. M. Rosenbaum *et al.* (London, 1946). See also the accounts in Midrash Lekah Tov on Exodus 18:13 and 17 which attempt to defend Moses against this charge by Jethro. See Mekhilta Yitro 2:59b–60a, Mekhilta de Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai 89–90, and Pa'aneah on Exodus 18:13–17.

146 On this controversial and thickly argued theory, see Baruch Halpern, "The Iron Gods of Israelite History," in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East Revisited*, ed. J.A. Hackett and P. Machinist (Decatur, 1988), F. de Vaux, "Sur l'origine kénite ou madianite du yahvisme," *Eretz Israel* 9 (1969): 28–32; and M. Weinfeld, "The Tribal League at Sinai," 303–14 and D.N. Freedman, "Who is Like Thee Among the Gods: The Religion of Early Israel," 315–35 in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross*, ed. P.D. Miller, P.D. Hanson, and S.D. McBride (Philadelphia, 1987).

Chapter 2

1 The doctoral dissertation, written in Latin, was entitled "Inquiratur in fontes Alcorani sue legis Mohammedicae eas qui ex Judaismo derivandi sunt." The German was published in Baden, 1833. The work was translated in English by F.M. Young as *Judaism and Islam* in 1896 and published in Madras: Delhi Mission on the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1898. This English translation has been reprinted with a useful introduction by Moshe Pearlman (New York, 1970).

For an overview of Geiger and his work, see L. Geiger *et al.*, *Abraham Geiger, Leben und Lebenswerk* (Berlin, 1910). More recently, see M. Wiener, *Abraham Geiger and Liberal Judaism* (Philadelphia, 1962).

2 A. Geiger, *Judaism and Islam*, 124.

3 This divine sight attributed to Moses in this phrase is discussed in the *Midrash Rabbah: Shemot*, trans. H. Freedman and Maurice Simon (Jerusalem, 1977), 36.

The statement that Moses saw "that there was no man" after turning this way and that is taken to mean either that there was no one else to save the Israelite or that there was no hope that Dathan's descendents would become righteous (37). This latter explanation is reflected in Targum Neofiti. See the translation and commentary in *Targum Neofiti 1: Exodus*, trans. Martin McNamara (Collegeville, 1994), 16. The same explanation is given in Rashi's commentary on Exodus 2:12.

4 The discussion of the Midian episode is found in Heinrich Speyer, *Die biblischen Erzählungen im Qoran* (Gräfenhainichen, 1931), 249–251. Other elements associated with Q 28:21–28 are discussed on 251–256.

5 See the English translation in *Midrash Rabbah: Exodus*, trans. S.M. Lehrman (New York), 1: 32. This same passage, adding the citation of the three verses from Genesis and Exodus where the well is mentioned, is found in the Midrash ha-Gadōl on Exodus 2:15.

6 This same point has been emphasized in Biblical scholarship. See John Van Seters, *The Life of Moses: The Yahwist as Historian in Exodus–Numbers* (Louisville, 1994), 31–32; Brevard Childs, *Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary*, Old Testament Library (Philadelphia, 1974), 31; George W. Coats, "Moses: Heroic Man, Man of God", *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, Supplement Series, 57 (Sheffield, 1985), 50–51; R.C. Culley, *Studies in the Structure of Hebrew Narrative* (Philadelphia, 1976), 41–3; W.H. Schmidt, *Exodus*, Biblischer Kommentar: Altes Testament, 2.1 (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1974–1988), 84.

7 Zunz, *Die Gottesdienstliche Vorträge der Juden*, esp. 256–258 dates the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus to the tenth century assuming that the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis can be dated as early as the fifth century.

8 This reference and all subsequent references to Ibn Ezra's *Sefer ha-shem* are taken from the text reprinted in the Miqra'ōt Gedōlōt.

9 This is taken from the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 29:1–3. The same passage, although omitting the commentary on part of the verse, can be found in *Genesis Rabbah: The Judaic Commentary to the Book of Genesis*, trans. Jacob Neusner (Providence, 1985), on Genesis 29:1–3.

10 This point is made by Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah*, 3:33.

11 It is often remarked that the "well" in the wilderness to which R. Ḥama b. Ḥanina refers is that mentioned in Numbers 21:17 in a song the Israelites sang to commemorate their conquests of Transjordan. See the editors' commentary in the *Midrash Rabbah: Bereshīt*, on Genesis 29: 1–3.

12 See Speyer, *Die biblischen Erzählungen im Qoran*, 251.

13 Ephraim the Syrian [Ephraem syrus], *In Genesim et in Exodum Commentarii*, ed. R.-M. Tonneau, CSCO 152–153, Scriptores Syri 71–72 (Louvain, 1955), s.v. 2:8, p. 128. There is a Latin translation of the passage in vol. 2: 109–110.

14 For this passage, see *Targum Neofiti 1: Exodus*, trans. Martin McNamara (Collegeville, 1994), on Exodus 2:21.

15 See the translator's notes in *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Exodus*, trans. Michael Maher (Collegeville, 1994), on Exodus 2:21, p. 6.

16 This is taken from the Sifre on Deuteronomy 4:1. All citations from this text are taken from *Sifre de Devarim*, ed. L. Finkelstein (New York, 1969). See the English translation in *Sifre to Deuteronomy: An Analytical Translation*, trans. Jacob Neusner (Atlanta, 1987), 1: 30.

17 al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:23. This report is also found in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 458–459. For an English translation, see Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 43–44.

18 The reports attributed to Ibn Jurayj and Shurayḥ can be found in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:23. The report attributed to 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb can be found in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:23.

19 al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 28:23.

20 All citations from the Abōt de Rabbi Nathan are taken from the text published as *Maseket Abōt de-Rabbi Natan*, ed. Schechter (Vienna, 1887), and are referenced by chapter and page. This publication includes manuscripts A and B of the Abōt de Rabbi Nathan. For an English translation of A, see *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan*, trans. J. Golden (New Haven, 1955). For an English translation of B, see *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan*, trans. A. Saldarini (Leiden, 1975). The comment cited here is attributed to R. Ḥananiah and occurs in the context of the commentary on Song of Songs 1:6 which has been introduced in connection with Deuteronomy 28:46–48.

21 The Greek text and English translation of this passage is taken from *De Vita Mosis* 1: 10 in *Philo*, trans. F.H. Colson (Cambridge, 1959), 6: 302–305.

22 It should also be mentioned, that in the parallel between Jacob's well and the different periods of Israel's history found in the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis, R. Ḥanina repeatedly states that the rock was called "great" not because of its size, but because of what it symbolizes such as the miracle of water in the wilderness, the rejoicing at the place of water drawing during the festivals, or the merits of the patriarchs.

23 The first explanation is taken from the Abōt de Rabbi Nathan, 20:4.

24 al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:22. I have omitted the isnāds from the reports given in al-Ṭabarī. A condensed version of this report is to be found in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:22.

25 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:22.

26 al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 28:24.

27 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:27–28.

28 Q 28:24 does not mention a tree, but there are a number of reports preserved in the commentaries on this verse, some of which will be discussed below, which indicate that the shade in which Moses sat was the shade of a tree. For some of these reports, see al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:24. Some of these reports are repeated in al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 28:24 and in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:24.

29 See, for example, al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:22. The same report is recorded in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:22.

30 This report is found in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:22. It is also found in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 462. See Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 47. The report, without the full isnād, is repeated in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:22.

Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 46, footnote 237, mentions that the Arabic *ḥabr* is related to the Hebrew *ḥaber*, a title used for certain rabbinic authorities, but that the term does not always refer to a rabbi in Arabic literature, among Jews or Muslims.

31 In al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 28:25 it is simply stated that Zipporah was the name of the daughter married to Moses. Although some of the reports in al-Ṭabarī mention disagreement over the names of the father and the second daughter, all of the reports agree that the wife of Moses was Zipporah.
32 This is recounted in Jan Knappert, *Islamic Legends: Histories of the Heroes, Saints and Prophets of Islam* (Leiden, 1985), 1:108. Unfortunately, Knappert does not indicate the source of this report although it is attributed to more than one person.
33 This report is found in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:23. It is also repeated in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:23.
34 Gordon Newby, *The Making of the Last Prophet*, 117 claims that Ibn Isḥāq reports the name of the second daughter as Leah.
35 al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 28:27–28.
36 Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:27–28.
37 Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:27–28.
38 For the details of this interpretation, see Jon Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity* (New Haven, 1993), 50–51. Additonal useful insights can be found in Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, "The Fruitful Cut: Circumcision and Israel's Symbolic Language of Fertility, Descent, and Gender," in his *The Savage in Judaism: An Anthropology of Israelite Religion and Ancient Judaism* (Bloomington, 1990), 141–176.
39 See the discussion and references in Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, 95–101.
40 See Rashi on Genesis 32:33. See also "Gid ha-Nashe," in Ben Abraham, *Ḥidushe ritba 'al masekhet Gitin ve 'al masekhet Ḥulīn* (Sudilikou, 1835), s.v.
41 This is also cited in Eilberg-Schwartz, *The Savage in Judaism*, 155. There is an extended discussion of a number of traditions in which hardwood and fruit trees are used to represent fertility, and their pruning to represent circumcision in particular on 141–176.
42 al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān* (Beirut, 1405/1985), on Q 3:93. See Mahmoud Ayoub, *The Qur'ān and its Interpreters: The House of 'Imrān* (Albany, 1992), 252.
43 All citations from the Targum Yerushalmi are taken from the text in the Miqra'ōt Gedōlōt.
44 For an English translation, see Friedländer, *Midrash Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, 284.
45 A similar theme is reflected in some of the accounts which, building on the mention that Jacob was afraid of his older brother, state that the angel attacked Jacob in order to help prepare him for his encounter with Esau. See Yalqut Shimoni, 1:132. Other accounts mention that the blessing that Jacob demanded of the angel was a confirmation of his birthright over Esau. See Sefer ha-Zohar Ḥadash, 3:45 and Midrash Tanḥuma Buber 1:127. All citations from the Sefer ha-Zohar Ḥadash are from the text published in Leghorn, 1866. An English translation of parts of this can be found in *The Zohar*, trans. Harry Sperling and Maurice Simon, 4 vols. (New York, 1984). All citations from the Midrash Tanḥuma Buber are from the text edited by Shlomo Buber, 2 vols. (Wilna, 1885; reprint, New York, 1946).
46 See Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, Chapter 37; Friedländer, *Midrash Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, 285–286. A similar stress upon Jacob's mistake and God's modification of his promise is found in the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 32:21. See also Gerson D. Cohen, "Esau as a Symbol in Early Medieval Thought," in *Studies in the Variety of Rabbinic Culture* (Philadelphia, 1991): 243–269.
47 Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, 37; Friedländer, *Midrash Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, 285.
48 On the issue of child sacrifice in the Bible and Israelite religion, see Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*, esp. 113 on Genesis 32:33.
49 Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*, ix. Levenson also cites other examples of child sacrifice found in the Hebrew Bible which are not necessarily interpreted as expiatory. See Judges 11:29–40 and 2 Kings 3:26–27. The Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 24:13 sees Jephthah's sacrifice of his daughter in Judges 11:29–40

as a punishment for his making the vow in the first place. For further discussion of this, see David Marcus, *Jephthah and his Vow* (Lubbock, 1986).

50 See al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 5:25.

51 These two reports are found in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:23. One of these two reports is found in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 262. See Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 47. This same report, mentioned without an authority, is to be found in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:23.

52 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:23.

53 These reports can be found in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:22.

54 All citations from the commentary of Ramban [Naḥmanides] are taken from the text in the Miqra'ōt Gedōlōt. See his comments on Numbers 10:29.

55 Both of these latter options, as well as a cursory overview of the rabbinic theories, are mentioned in Sarnah, *The JPS Torah commentary: Exodus*, on Exodus 2:18.

56 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:25.

57 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:25.

58 al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:22. Following this, there is another report that is similar. The same report is repeated in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:22.

59 See St Ambrose, "Jacob and the Happy Life," in his *De Patriarchis*, trans. Michael P. McHugh, *St. Ambrose: Seven Exegetical Works* (Washington, DC, 1972), 5:22, p. 158.

60 See Ambrose, "Jacob and the Happy life," 4: 19, p. 156.

61 See, for example, A.P. Hayman, ed. and trans., *The Disputation of Sergius the Stylite Against a Jew*, CSCO 338–339, Scriptores Syri 152–153 (Louvain, 1973), 5: 5.

62 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jami' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:21 and Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:21. The mention of the magical lion is found in al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, trans. Thackston, *The Tales of the Prophets of al-Kisa'i*, 221.

63 See, for example, al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 18:61 and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, on Q 18:61, and Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:22.

64 See, for example, the accounts given in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:28.

65 al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 28:27–28.

66 al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 28:27–28. al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:27–28 also explicitly states that Adam took it from the garden of Eden. For an English translation of al-Ṭabarī's version, see Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 45.

67 For an overview of the evidence, see Wayne Meeks, *The Prophet-king: Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology* (Leiden, 1967), esp. 176–215. For the many associations of Egyptian and Mesopotamian kingship with a control over nature, see Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature* (Chicago, 1948; reprint, 1978). A wider-ranging examination of kingship and its relation to the Tree of Life can be found in Geo Widengren, *The King and the Tree of Life in Ancient Near Eastern Religion*, King and Saviour 4 (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift 1951: 4). Some related material can be found in Theodore Gaster, *Thespis: Ritual, Myth, and Drama in the Ancient Near East* (New York, 1977).

68 al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:27–28. This same story is repeated in al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 28:27–28.

69 This might also be related to the tradition in the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 4:21 and 7:1, attributed to R. Judah, that inscribed upon the rod were the Hebrew abbreviations for the ten plagues.

70 This story is summarized from *The Book of Jasher*, trans. M.M. Noah (New York, 1840), 232–233. There are parallel stories of the imprisonment and the rod in the garden found in the Midrash Vay-Yosha' and the Dibrē ha-yamīm shel Mōshe rabbē-nū. Both of these are published in Adolph Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch* (Leipzig, 1853), 1:35–57, and 2: 1–11.

71 The study of initiation rites in the ancient world and in Biblical materials in particular is a vast undertaking. One can cite the well-documented, but not thickly informed by ethnography, studies of Hugh White, "The Initiation Legend of Isaac," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 91 (1979): 1–30 and "The Initiation Rite of Ishmael," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 87 (1975): 267–305. See also D. Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity: Elimination Rites in the Bible and in Hittite and Mesopotamian Literature* (Atlanta, 1987). A parallel found further afield might be some of the Dacian and Eastern European accounts of ritual initiation where the initiate is transformed into a predatory animal-king. In many of these accounts, a blood-stained rod or club features prominently. For a broad overview, see Mircea Eliade, *Zalmoxis, The Vanishing God: Comparative Studies in the Religions and Folklore of Dacia and Eastern Europe*, trans. Willard Trask (Chicago, 1971) and Geo Widengren, *Hochgottglaube im alten Iran* (Uppsala, 1938). A more popular treatment focusing on lycanthropy can be found in R. Eisler, *Man into Wolf* (London, 1951). Earlier examples that feature the use of clubs and rods can be found in Richard von Kienle, "Tier-Völkernamen bei indogermanischen Stämme," *Wörter und Sachen* 14 (1932): 25–67.

72 This report, attributed to 'Aṭā' b. al-Sā'ib, is found in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:27–28. It is repeated in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 28:27–28.

73 al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 28:27–28.

74 See Pirke de Rabbi Eliezar, 40. See Friedländer, *Midrash Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, 312–317.

75 See Budge, *The Book of the Bee*, 50–51.

76 There have been many attempts to reconstruct the historical and literary references to the division of the "Arabs" according to the offspring of Abraham and Keturah, and the sons of Ishmael. Arab genealogists generally consider Shu'ayb to be related to Midian the son of Abraham and Keturah. Some claim that Midian was the son of the daughter of Lot, or that Shu'ayb was actually the grandson or great–grandson of Levi son of Jacob son of Isaac. Wahb b. Munabbih reports that Shu'ayb was unrelated to Abraham by birth but was already alive at the time of Abraham's being cast into the fire in Babylon.

The association and sometimes conflation of the Midianites and the Ishmaelites is also evident in the claim of the Arab genealogists that both of these groups constitute the so-called "Arabicized Arabs" [al-must'aribah] as opposed to the "Original Arabs" [al-'aribah] who were the descendents of Aram b. Shem b. Noah (including the Ad, Thamud, Jurhum, Tasam, Amim, Midian, Amalek, Abil, Jasim, Qahtan, the Banu Yaqtan, and others). Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, in his exegesis of the Hūd story in Q 7:65–72, claims that all the "Arabicized Arabs" are descendents of Ishmael.

For an overview of the identification of these groups, see Ernest Axel Knauf, *Ismael: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Palästinas und Nordarabiens im 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr.* (Wiesbaden, 1985) and his *Midian* (Wiesbaden, 1988). Other significant works include I. Ephal, *The Ancient Arabs* (Jerusalem, 1982) and F.V. Winnett, *The Arabian Genealogies in the Book of Genesis* (Nashville, 1970). Knauf, in particular, attempts to disentangle what he takes to be references to several distinct groups under the general heading of "Ishmaelites."

Chapter 3

1 Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* (Beirut, 1312/1992), 186; See also al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr fī tafsīr al-ma'thūr* (Beirut, 1421/2000), on Q 2:127. For a different rendition of this same episode, see Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 2:127; Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 90. See also the account in al-Azraqī, *Akhbār Makkah*, 2 vols, ed. F. Wustenfeld, *Chroniken der Stadt Mecca* (Leipzig, 1858; reprint, Beirut, n.d.), 1: 27–28. Many of the Persian Alexander stories also include an account of Dhu al-Qarnayn visiting Mecca, but they do not mention Abraham's presence.

2 al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 414–415; Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Children of Israel*, 1–3. See also Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-ta'rīkh*, ed. C. Tornberg (Leiden, 1867; reprint, Beirut, 1965), 1:160.

3 See the references in Gerhard van Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, trans. John Marks (Philadelphia, 1961) and Claus Westermann, *Genesis 12–36: A Commentary*, trans. John Scullian (Minneapolis, 1985).

4 This is commented upon by Van Rad, *Genesis*, s.v. and Victor Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50* (Grand Rapids, 1995), s.v.

5 For a brief overview of the different positions on this issue, see Westermann, *Genesis*, 346.

6 Note also that the LXX and Old Latin add "and Ahuzzath his advisor" to Genesis 21:22 from Genesis 26:26, apparently recognizing and strengthening the parallel between the two episodes with Abraham and Isaac.

7 For an overview of the Hagar narratives, see S. McEvenue, "A Comparison of Narrative Styles in the Hagar Stories," *Semeia* 3 (1975): 64–80.

8 It should be noted, however, that the MT does not necessarily indicate that Abraham placed Ishmael on Hagar's back, but rather can be read to indicate that Abraham "took the bread and a skin of water, and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her back. [He gave also] the child [to her] and sent her away. She went off wandering in the desert of Beersheba." In the LXX, the direct object "the child" seems to be taken as a referent to that which Abraham placed on the back of Hagar. Verse 15, again, indicates that Ishmael was an infant when Hagar places him under a bush from which God commands Hagar to pick him up in verse 18. This is discussed briefly in Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 95–96.

9 Note that Genesis 21:33 is often taken as an insertion from J into the otherwise E narrative of the rest of the verses. This is, in part, based on the use of the name Yahweh in verse 33, but also on the lack of a parallel between this verse and the account of Isaac at Beersheba in Genesis 26.

Also note that the MT omits the mention of "Abraham" from verse 33, but it is included in the Samaritan, LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate. The gloss does not seem necessary owing to the fact that verse 32 establishes that Abimelech and the others had returned to Philistine territory.

10 See, for example, M.H. Pope, *El in the Ugaritic Texts*, Supplement to Vetus Testamentum (Leiden, 1955), 14–16. Other parallels can be found in F.M. Cross, "Yahweh and the God of the Patriarchs," *Harvard Theological Review* 55 (1962): 236–241. For an overview of the use of this term, see E. Jenni, "Das Wort 'ōlām in Alten Testament," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 64 (1952): 197–248 and 65 (1953): 1–35, esp. 1–5 on the use of the term in Genesis 21:33. Jenni concludes that this reference indicates the existence of a pre-Israelite cult of el 'ōlām which the Israelites later transferred to Yahweh.

The term "el 'ōlām" does not otherwise occur in the Bible as an epithet of Yahweh. The term "'ōlām" by itself occurs in opposition to the "God of Jacob" in Psalm 75:10, however. A description of Yahweh as unchanging is found in Psalm 102:25–27.

11 It should be noted, however, that earlier, in verse 15 Judah takes Tamar to be a whore [zōnah], and that it is only later, in verse 21 that he makes the claim that he had had sex with an apprently more socially respected "cult prostitute."
12 On this debate, see Y. Aharoni, "The Horned Altar of Beer-sheba," *Biblical Archaeologist* 37 (1974): 2–6 and Yigael Yadin, "Beer-sheba: The High Place Destroyed by King Josiah," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 222 (1976): 5–17. Aharoni argues that the archaeological evidence indicates that the city was destroyed a century before Josiah, possibly during the reign of Hezekiah, as mentioned in 2 Kings 18:4.
13 For this text of the Targum Onkelos using the cognate accusative, see *Targum Onkelos to Genesis*, ed. and trans. Moses Aberbach and Bernard Grossfeld (New York, 1982). The editors suggest that this use of the cognate accusative might be an attempt to avoid the association of "eshel" with the marker of a cultic shrine. The text of Targum Onkelos in the Miqra'ōt Gedalōt has "tree" [īlanā]. Ibn Ezra also glosses "eshel" as "īlan."
14 For the Syriac text, see *The Old Testament in Syriac: According to the Peshiṭta Version.*
15 This is taken from the text of Ramban [Naḥmanides] in the Miqra' ōt Gedōlōt on Genesis 21:33. For another English translation, see *Ramban: Commentary on the Torah, Genesis*, trans. Charles Chavel (New York, 1971).
16 In his commentary on Genesis 21:33, however, Rambam states that the "eshel" refers to a "garden" [pardes] where Abraham prayed.
17 See W. von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch* (Wiesbaden, 1965), s.v. This point is also made in Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, on Genesis 21:33.
18 The text of the Yerushalmī is taken from the Miqra'ōt Gedōlōt, following the English translation in McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis*, on Genesis 21:33. McNamara also gives variants from other Vatican, Nürnberg, and Leipzig manuscripts, as well as the marginalia to Neofiti 1. For an overview of this tradition in the Palestinian Targums, see B. Barry Levy, *Targum Neophyti 1: A Textual Study* (Lanham, 1986), on Genesis 21:33.
19 Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 21:33.
20 Sōtah 10a in the Babylonian Talmud.
21 Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 21:33.
22 *Mechilta de-Rabbi Simon b. Jochai: ein halachischer und haggadischer Midrasch zu Exodus*, ed. D. Hoffmann (Frankfurt, 1905), on Exodus 17:7. The same two traditions, although the phrasing of the second is slightly altered, about the naming of Massah and Meribah can be found in the *Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael,* ed. and trans. Jacob Lauterbach (Philadelphia, 1933; reprint, 2001), on Exodus 17:7.
23 For a critical but brief overview of the Massah and Meribah episode, see Sigo Lehming, "Massa und Meriba," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 73 (1961): 71–77.
24 Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 17:7.
25 Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael on Exodus 17:7. The opinion of R. Joshua is also found in the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 17:7.
26 Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 17:7 and Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael on Exodus 17:7.
27 See Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael on Exodus 17:35.
28 See Pseudo-Philo, *Biblical Antiquities*, 21a. Latin text published by G. Kisch, *Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, Publications in Mediaeval Studies 10 (Notre Dame, 1949). English translation by D.J. Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James Charlesworth (Garden City, 1985), 297–378.
29 See Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael on Exodus 15:27.
30 See Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 18. This tradition is also found in the Abōt de Rabbi Nathan, 9. Variants can be found in the Mishnah, tractate Pesachīm 54a, Sifre on Deuteronomy 355, and the Palestinian Targums on Numbers 22:28.

31 Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 35.

32 See, for example, the traditions in Seder 'Olam 5, Midrash Tanḥuma, ed. S. Buber, 4:127; Pesiqta de Rab Kahana, 34b. For the Seder 'Olam, see Abraham b. David, *Seder 'olam zuta, seder 'olam rabbah* (Lemberg, 1850). For a more recent edition of the Seder 'Olam Rabbah, see the edition (Jerusalem, 1994). Citations from the Pesiqta de Rab Kahana are taken from the edition by B. Mandelbaum, 2 vols (New York, 1962). For an English translation, see W. Braude and I. Kapstein (Philadelphia, 1975).

33 For these traditions, see Midrash Tanḥuma, 4:127–128, 3:74–75; Midrash Rabbah on Song of Songs, 37a; Yalqut Shimoni 1:426; and Tanḥuma Hukkat 21. See also the brief overview in Ginzburg, *Legends of the Jews*, 3:53 and 6:21–22. Citations from the Midrash Rabbah on Song of Songs are from the text in *Midrash Rabbah Shir ha-Shirīm*, ed. S. Buber (Wilna, 1887). Citations from the Midrash Tanḥuma are from the text published as *Midrash Tanḥuma 'al ḥameshah ḥōmshe Tōrah*, ed. Yosef (Wilna, 1883).

34 For an overview of the Abraham narratives in the Quran, see Y. Moubarac, *Abraham dans le Coran: l'histoire d'Abraham dans le Coran et la naissance de l'Islam*, Études Musulmanes 5 (Paris, 1958), 41–50.

35 al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 1:271–272. This English translation follows that found in *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, trans. William Brinner (Albany, 1987), 65–66.

36 See al-Tha'labī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 47.

37 See Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, ed. Eduard Sachau *et al.* (Leiden, 1904), 1:46–47. For an overview of these versions of the story, see Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, esp. 48–51.

38 For an overview of Abraham's establishment of the sanctuary at Mecca, see Moubarac, *Abraham dans le Coran*, 73–81.

39 See Mujīr al-Dīn, *al-Uns al-jalīl bi-ta'rīkh al-Quds wa al-Khalīl* (Amman, 1973), 1:35. Firestone notes that Mujīr al-Dīn's account also closely parallels an episode reported in al-Qummī, *Tafsīr al-Qummī* (Beirut, 1411/1991), on Q 21:71. in which Abraham is stopped and his flocks confiscated by agents of Nimrod. See Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 198n.5.

40 See Abōt de Rabbi Nathan, 20:4.

41 See, for example, the account in the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 36.

42 See, for example, Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān* (Beirut, 1957), s.v. "Sab'a."

43 See Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 30.

44 For an overview of the treatment of Mary in this early exegesis, see L. Cheikho, "Mawlid Maryam al'adhrā' fī taqlīd al-Islām," *Machriq* 24 (1926): 682–687.

45 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* on Q 19:16. Ibn al-Jawzī preserves an opinion of 'Aṭā' that Mary had separated herself in order to delouse her head. According to Ibn 'Abbās, her separation was in order to purify herself from menstruation and to comb her hair. On the traditions in al-Ṭabarī, see A. Ferné, "La vie de Jésus dans Tabari," *Islamochristiana* 5 (1979): 7–29 and A.M. Charfi, "Christianity in the Qur'ān Commentary of Tabari," *Islamochristiana* 6 (1980): 105–148. For an older account, see J. Robson, "Stories of Jesus and Mary," *Muslim World* 40 (1950): 236–243 and J. Robson, "Muhammadan Teaching about Jesus," *Muslim World* 21 (1939): 37–54.

46 al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 3:42.

47 This is based on the edition prepared by H.R. Smid, *Protoevangelium Jacobi: a Commentary*, Apocrypha Novi Testamenti (Assen, 1965).

For an overview of the various infancy narratives, see R.E. Brown, "Gospel Infacy Narrative Research from 1976 to 1986," *Catholic Bible Quarterly* 48 (1986) 469–483, 661–680; and R.E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah* (Garden City, 1977). The annunciation itself, based on the account in the gospel of Luke, is the subject of L. Legrand, *L'Annonce à Marie (Lc 1, 25–38)* (Paris, 1981).

48 See the Protoevangelium Jacobi, 8–9.
49 See the Protoevangelium Jacobi, 11.
50 See the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, 8. For the Latin text, see J.C. Thilo, *Codex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti* (Leipzig, 1832). For an English translation, see E. Henneke, *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. W. Schneemelcher, trans. R. McL. Wilson (Philadelphia, 1963), 1:360–368.
51 See Protoevangelium Jacobi, 11:1.
52 A similar test is described in Josephus, *Jewish Antiquties*, ed. and trans. H. Thackeray *et al.* (Cambridge, 1962), 3:270; Philo, *Life of Moses*, ed. and trans. F.H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker (Cambridge, 1929–1962), 3:62; and in Mishnah, Sōtah 2:2 and 9:9. For further comment on the variants among the descriptions of this test, see Smid on the Protoevangelium Jacobi, 11:1. Citations from the Mishnah are taken from the edition by H. Albeck, *Shishah Sidre Mishnah* (Tel Aviv, 1954–1958). For an English translation, see Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah: Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes* (London, 1933).
53 Smid notes that Sōtah 2:2 mentions taking the woman "away," and Philo says the woman is to drink it and "go forth." See Smid on Protoevangelium Jacobi, 11:1.
54 See Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, 12.
55 Smid notes that in Mishnah, Sōtah 2:4, the guilty woman, after having drunk the bitter water and reacted as a guilty person is expected to react, is ordered to be taken away so that the temple court not be made unclean. See Smid on Protoevangelium Jacobi 11:2.
56 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 19:17 and al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 19:17.
57 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* on Q 3:37.
58 The Protoevangelium Jacobi 8:1 mentions that Mary lived in the temple and was fed by an angel, suggesting that she was kept in seclusion. The connection between Mary's seclusion and that of nuns at later convents is noted in Smid on 8:1. See also the comment of Amann on 8:1.
59 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 19:16.
60 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 19:16.
61 Note, that Maracci, *Prodomi* (Paudua, 1698), 4:85–87, 104–105, 178–179 interprets the "elevated place" of Q 23:50 to be a reference to "Paradise."
62 al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 3:42.
63 This connection is made explicit in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 23:50.
64 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 23:50.
65 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 3:36.
66 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 3:38. This also closely parallels the story of the request for a child of Mary's mother after seeing a nest of birds. See the Protoevangelium Jacobi, 3.

It is also important to consider that, although the exegesis conflating the location of the annunciation and the birth of Jesus tend to locate the sanctuary of Mary somewhere in the undefined "east," there are a number of traditions that associate its description and location with other places. For example, the "elevated place" mentioned in Q 23:50 is variably identified with al-Ramlah in Palestine, Damascus, Jerusalem, and Egypt. All of these sites, excluding the mention of Egypt, seem to be closely related to the notion that Mary went east of Jerusalem to seclude herself from her family. The mention of Egypt, however, could be a reference to the flight of Mary and Jesus to Egypt mentioned in Matthew 2:13–18. There does not seem to be other more explicit references to this flight to Egypt, perhaps because these have been replaced by the references to the "remote" sanctuary to which Mary withdraws in Q 19:22. The flight of Mary and Jesus from Jerusalem to Palestine would closely parallel the explusion and flight of Hagar and Ishmael from somewhere between al-Ramlah and Jerusalem to Beersheba and

eventually Egypt. See, for example, al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 19:22.

67 See al-Tha'labī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 81. There is a brief discussion and translation of this report in the context of a longer passage from al-Tha'labī in Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 57–58.

It has also been claimed that Sarah's menstruating is mentioned as a sign that she would indeed give birth to a son. Such an explanation would need to explain the mention of menstruation in light of Genesis 18:11, and take into account that Sarah is supposed to have been menstruating before either Abraham or she hear the annunciation of Isaac's birth, according to many rabbinic sources which attribute the menstruation to a ruse on Sarah's part to stay in the tent and spy on the angels with Abraham. Also, it should be noted that were Sarah menstruating, Abraham would be prohibited from having sex with her according to Leviticus 18:19. Nor is it certain that menstruation should be regarded as an indication of pregnancy, but more likely a lack of pregnancy. See, for example, Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 203n.33.

68 See Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, 36. Note that in the MT, Sarah laughs "to herself" [be-qirbah] but in the LXX Sarah is said to laugh "to her relatives" [bi-qerobehah]. According to Rashi, the change to Sarah's laughing "out loud" was meant to emphasize that Sarah laughed publically, thus making her lie about not laughing all the more obvious. This is pointed out in Rashi's commentary on Genesis.

69 On the explusion of Hagar and Ishmael, see Moubarac, *Abraham dans le Coran*, 63–72.

70 See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. Fārān. Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 205n17 also mentions the possibility that the area around and south of Beersheba, which was associated with the Idumeans and the Roman province of "Arabia," would have been understood to correspond to the Biblical "desert of Paran." On the geography of this area in late antiquity, see Glen Bowersock, *Roman Arabia* (Cambridge, 1983).

71 See, for example, the report attributed to 'Alī in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 275.

72 See the report attributed to 'Alī in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 277 where Ishmael is called a "little son." There is a report attributed to al-Suddī in which Abraham and Ishmael set out with pickaxes. See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 276. See Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs,* 70–71.

73 See, for example, the account attributed to Ibn 'Abbās in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 279–282. See Brinner *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs,* 73–76.

74 See, for example, the report attributed to 'Alī, in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 276 where God commands Abraham to build the sanctuary but Ishmael is an infant for whom Hagar climbs al-Ṣafā and al-Marwah to find water. A similar report is given on the authority of Mujāhid in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 278–279. See Brinner *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs,* 70–73.

75 See, for example, the report attributed to Ibn 'Abbās in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 285–286 where Abraham finds Ishmael at Zamzam mending arrows. See Brinner *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs,* 78–79.

76 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 282–285. See Brinner *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs,* 75–79.

77 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 14:37.

78 For a painstaking account of these different versions and an overview of their relationship to the Biblical account, see Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 63–66.

79 See, for example, the account given in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 14:37.

80 See Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā*,' s.v. Ibrāhīm. That Ishmael was still nursing is also mentioned in al-Azraqī, *Akhbār Makkah*, 279–280. This is discussed in Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 64.

81 Note, as above, that this is not necessarily the implication of the MT, but is clear from the LXX.

82 On this conflict of opinions, see Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 135–151.
83 See the reports attributed to Ibn 'Abbās in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 279–282 and 282–285. See Brinner *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs,* 73–78. This is also found in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Anbiyā' 10 and Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad* (Cairo, 1313), 3:347–348.
84 See the report attributed to 'Alī in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 275–276. See Brinner *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs,* 69–70. This reference, attributed to Ibn 'Abbās, is also found in al-Azraqī, *Akhbār Makkah*, 279–280.
85 See, for example, the report attributed to Ibn 'Abbās in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 282–285. See Brinner *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs,* 75–78. This is repeated in Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 223–224.
86 See the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer, 36.
87 For the accounts which use this term, see al-Azraqī, *Akhbār Makkah*, 23, 280; al-Bukhārī, Anbiyā' 10, and Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 2:124–127. These references and the connection between menstruating and drawing water are discussed in Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 205n20. Unfortunately, Firestone does not discuss the distinction between the root "ḥwḍ" referring to collecting water and the root "ḥyḍ" referring to menstruation. On this association and the more widely attested use of the Arabic verb ḍaḥikat/taḍḥaku with the double-meaning of "laugh" and "menstruate," see Suzanne Stetkevych, "Sarah and the Hyena: Laughter, Menstruation, and the Genesis of a Double Entendre," 13–14 and passim.
88 al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 280. See Brinner *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs,* 74.
89 On the circumcision of Hagar, see the report, attributed to al-Suddī, in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 277–278. See Brinner *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs,* 71–72. In Tha'labī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 71 this is changed to Hagar being the first woman to have her ears pierced, this done by Sarah.
90 See the parallels cited from the Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer and the Yalqut Shimoni in Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 65 and 205n.19.
91 This interpretation is reflected in the translation given by Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 74 and by Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 63–65.
92 al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 108; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Tabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 279. I have omitted the references to the transmitter from these few sentences. See also al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:36.
93 al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 322; Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 108. See also the rabbinic accounts of the building of the tower in Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews,* 1:177–181, 5:198–206.
94 See al-Azraqī, *Akhbār Makkah*, 32. See the English translation and discussion of this passage in Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 88–90.
95 See, for example, the report given on the authority of al-Suddī in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:127. For an overview of some of these traditions, see Uri Rubin, "The Ka'bah: Aspects of its Ritual Functions and Position in Pre-Islamic and Early Islamic Times," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 8 (1986): 97–131.
96 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:127. This is mentioned in Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 87.
97 See, for example, the reports given in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ,* Anbiyā' 75–76 and Shirb 10; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, 25:78. Citations to Ibn Mājah are taken from the text edited by Muḥammad Fū'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, 2 vols. (Cairo, n.d.).
98 al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 283. See a similar report in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Shirb 11.
99 al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 281.
100 al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 279.
101 al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 283.

102 See, for example, the interpretations offered in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* and Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 17:1. On some of the relationships between Mecca and Jerusalem, see H. Busse, "Jerusalem in the Story of Muḥammad's Night Journey and Ascension," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 14 (1991): 1–40 and Moshe Gil, *A History of Palestine, 634–1099*, trans. Ethel Broido (Cambridge, 1992), esp. 96–98.

103 See Oleg Grabar, "Masdjid al-akṣā," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed., 707–708; A. Guillaume, "Where was al-Masjid al-Aqṣā?" *al-Andalus* 18 (1953): 323–336; and S.D. Goitein, "The Sanctity of Jerusalem and Palestine in Early Islam," in his *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions* (Leiden, 1966), 135–148.

104 Note that, in earlier Aramaic usage, the term "masgid" is sometimes used to designate a stele or pillar as a place of worship. See A. Jeffery, *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān* (Baroda, 1938), 263–264; J. Pedersen, "Masdjid" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed., 644–677, esp. 644.

105 On this, and for a general overview of some of the Biblical and rabbinic associations with Sinai/Horeb and Zion, see Jon Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (San Francisco: 1985), esp. 89–96, 111–137, 187–209.

106 See, for example, Yalqut Shimoni, Vay-Yera 22.

107 For the pre-existence of the well of Miriam, see Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 3. Its association with the well of Abraham can be reviewed in Yalqut Shimoni 1:764 on Numbers 21:18 and Yelammedenu, 6:79–90. Citations from the Yelammedenu are from the text edited by Jellinek in his *Bet ha-Midrasch*, 6:79–90. For the healing qualities of the water, see Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 18:22. General discussions of the well can be found in Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael, on 6:52b and Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 26.2.

108 See Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 51. Much of this account is derived from the description of the waters of the eschatological sanctuary in Ezekiel 47:1–12.

109 See Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 51; Ezekiel 47:8–9.

110 See Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 51; Ezekiel 47:12.

111 See Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 51; Ezekiel 47:9; Yalqut Shimoni on Ezekiel on 47:9.

112 See Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 51; Ezekiel 47:10.

113 See the descriptions given in R.B. Winder, "Makka," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed., 147–180.

114 The description of the waters in the heavenly paradise as flooding is suggested in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 88:12.

115 See the discussion of this passage in Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 132–133. Levenson notes that the feast in verse 8 refers to the meal of the communion sacrifice mentioned in Leviticus 3.

116 See 1 Kings 1:33, 38, 45; On some of the parallels between the descriptions of Jerusalem and Eden, see Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 128–137; Levenson, *Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezekiel 40–48*, Harvard Semitic Monographs 10 (Missoula, 1976), esp. 25–36.

117 See Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 132.

118 On these references and the association of the two waters, see Levenson, *Sinai and Zion* 129–131; Geo Widengren, *The King and the Tree of Life in Ancient Near Eastern Religion*, esp. 5–41; Speiser, "The Rivers of Paradise," in *Oriental and Biblical Studies*, ed. J.J. Finkelstein and M. Greenberg (Philadelphia, 1967), 23–34, esp. 25–26.

119 See al-Wāsiṭī, *Faḍā'il al-Bayt al-Muqaddas*, ed. I. Hasson (Jerusalem, 1979), 13, 44; Ibn Shāhīn, *Kitāb zubdat kashf al-mamālik wa bayān ṭuruq wa al-masālik*, ed. P. Ravaisse (Paris, 1894), 22; Amikam Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship: Holy Places, Ceremonies, Pilgrimage*, Islamic History and Civilization 8 (Leiden, 1995), 81. For further references on Gihon, see M. Görg, *Das Zelt der Begegnung: Untersuchung zu den sakralen Zelttraditionen Altisraels*, Bonner biblische Beiträge,

27 (Bonn, 1967); A. Lemaire, "Le pays d'Eden et le Bet-Adini: aux origines d'un mythe," *Syria* 58 (1981): 313–330.

120 al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 276.

121 For an overview of the post-Biblical sources on the rivers of Eden, see Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 5:91–92n.51.

122 Babylonian Talmud, Tamīd, 32b. Recensions of this story, including the so-called "heavy stone" or "eyeball" motif, can be found in numerous sources. These later recensions do not, however, contain the account of the salted fish becoming sweet. For some of the Latin recensions, see *La prise de defur and le voyage d'Alexandre au paradis terrestre*, passim.

123 See Wensinck, "The Ideas of the Western Semites concerning the Navel of the Earth," esp. 12–24. See some of the information provided in G.R. Hawting, "The Origins of the Muslim Sanctuary at Mecca," in G.H.A. Juynboll, ed., *Studies on the First Century of Islamic Society* (Carbondale, 1982), 23–49.

124 See M. Kister, "A Booth Like the Booth of Moses," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 25 (1962): 150–155.

125 According to al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 20:12, Kadā is a hill in "dhu al-Ṭuwwīn" on the outskirts of Mecca. Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. Ṭuwwā, records the opinion of al-Jawharī that it is a location near Mecca. Many of the authorities place Ṭuwwā near Jerusalem. See al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itiqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, ed. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Bughā (Beirut, 1416/1996), 2:1082, s.v. Ṭuwwā in Section 69.

126 See Ibn Ẓafar, *Khayr al-bishr bi khayr al-bashar* (Cairo, 1863), 19; Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds: Medieval Islam and Bible Criticism* (Princeton, 1992), 95n62. Lazarus-Yafeh (88) also notes that in his commentary on Isaiah 35:1, Rashi interprets "desert" [ẓiyya] as a reference to "Zion" and Jerusalem. Other significant Biblical passages applied to Mecca include: selected verses from Isaiah 19–20, Psalm 153, Isaiah 60:107 (addressed to Mecca), Isaiah 54:1 (compared with Q 14:37, Mecca as barren woman), Ezekiel 19:10–14 (Mecca as vine in wilderness).

127 See Ibn Ẓafar, *Khayr al-bishr*, 21; Ibn Qutaybah quoted in Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Wafā bi-aḥwāl al-muṣṭafā*, ed. Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Waḥīd (Cairo, 1966), 69; Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, 95–96. On the relationship between Ibn Qutaybah's work and Ibn al-Jawzī, see C. Brockelmann, "Ibn Ǧauzī's Kitāb al-Wafā bi-Faḍā'il al-Muṣṭafā," *Beiträge zur Assyriologie und Semitischer Sprachkunde* 3 (1898): 1–59 and Brockelmann, "Muhammedanische Weissagungen im Alten Testament," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentlische Wissenschaft* 15 (1895): 135–142; Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, 79–80.

128 See Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, *Hidāyat al-Ḥayārā min al-yahūd wa al-Naṣārah* (Cairo, 1905), 106–107; Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, 95–96.

129 See Ibn Qutaybah quoted in Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Wafā bi-aḥwāl al-muṣṭafā*, 70; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyah, *Hidāyat al-Ḥayārā*, 106; Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, 96–97.

130 The italics are added. This passage is taken from the translation of O.S. Wintermute in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (Garden City, 1985), 2:35–142. It is interesting to note that although Jubilees has been dated to the Hellenistic period, the most complete witnesses for this text are a set of about 19 Ethiopic manuscripts, the best of which is dated to the sixteenth century. Approximately one-fourth of the text is preserved in a Latin recension which has been dated to the fifth century. The Syriac fragments are taken from a later, medieval Syriac chronicle which is based on both Syriac and Arabic sources.

For an overview of the textual sources for Jubilees, see J.C. VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees*, Harvard Semitic Museum, Harvard Semitic Monography 14 (Missoula, 1977). The Ethiopic text edited from four manuscripts is published by R.H. Charles, *The Ethiopic Version of the Hebrew Book of Jubilees*

(Oxford, 1895). The Latin text can be found in Charles and in H. Rönsch, *Das Buch der Jubiläen oder die kleine Genesis* (Leipzig, 1876; reprint, Amsterdam, 1970). For the Syriac fragments, see E. Tisserant, "Fragments syriaques du Livre des Jubilés," *Revue biblique* 30 (1921): 55–86, 206–232.

131 On some of the various traditions related to the association of the Ka'bah with Abraham in pre-Islamic times, see Uri Rubin, "Ḥanifiyya and Ka'ba: An Inquiry into the Arabian Pre-Islamic Background of dīn Ibrāhīm," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 13 (1990): 85–112.

132 See al Suyūṭī, *al-Itiqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Section 10, pp. 110–111. See also Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 2:125.

133 See, for example, Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 2:125.

134 For an overview and analysis of the traditions related to the rediscovery of the well, see G.R. Hawting, "The Disappearance and Rediscovery of Zamzam and the 'Well of the Ka'ba'," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 43 (1980): 44–54.

135 Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-nabawīyah*, ed. Ṭaha 'Abd al-Rūf Sa'd (Beirut, n.d.), 1:281. For another English translation, see A Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad* (Karachi, 1955; reprint, 1982), 64.

The Beirut text has "Qal'ayyah" instead of the "Qal'ah" which is attested in the Wüstenfeld and Cairo editions used by Guillaume. Yāqūt identifies Qal'ah as a mountain in Syria, which could, of course, refer to Jerusalem, but this is not indicated elsewhere. It could also be a direct reference to the mountain mentioned below in 2 Maccabees 2:4–8. On this see G.R. Hawting, "The Disappearance and Rediscovery of Zamzam and the 'Well of the Ka'ba'," for the different accounts of the discovery of the well and possible significance of the treasure discovered there.

136 See, for example, al-Azraqī, *Akhbār Makkah*, s.v. who relates that it was the chief of the Jurhum who buried the objects, though he is said to have buried them after his people were already driven from Mecca.

137 This is the conclusion of Hawting, "The Disappearance and Rediscovery of Zamzam and the 'Well of the Ka'ba'," 44. Hawting seems to consider this a case of Muslim borrowing of Jewish traditions and does not consider the reasons the Muslim exegetes might have for circulating and repeating such accounts.

138 This text is taken from the translation provided in *The Jerusalem Bible* (Doubleday, 1966). The Greek text can be found in Lancelot Brenton, *The Septuagint with Apocrypha* (London, 1851; reprint, 1998). Note that a parallel story is told of the hiding of the fire in 2 Maccabees 1:19. On the relation of 2 Maccabees to the temple in Jerusalem, see R. Doran, *Temple Propoganda: The Purpose and Character of 2 Maccabees* (Washington, DC, 1981). The apocalyptic character is also discussed in J. Collins, *Daniel, First Maccabees, Second Maccabees* (Wilmington, 1981) and in A. Momigliano, *Sesto Contributo alla Storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico*, 2 parts (Rome, 1980).

139 See, for example, the overview of this tradition within Samaritanism in M.F. Collins, "The Hidden Vessels in Samaritanism," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 3 (1972): 97–116.

140 See, for example, Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael 5:51b, Pesiqta de Rab Kahana 32a, and Sibylline Oracle 2:188.

141 See Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Nāsikh wa al-mansūkh* (Beirut, n.d.), on Q 2:115. For further discussion of this issue and the disagreements concerning whether or not abrogation [naskh] occurred in relation to these verses, see the lengthy discussions in al-Jaṣṣāṣ, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* (Beirut, 1406), on Q 2:115; Ibn al-'Arabī, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā' (Beirut, n.d.), on Q 2:115.

142 See the references to this issue in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:115 and 2:150. See also Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 2:115.

Chapter 4

1 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. Jābars.

2 al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159, on the authority of Ibn Jurayj.

3 al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 67–69. See Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 237–238.

4 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 21:72–73. The term "ba'al" also occurs in Q 4:128 and 37:125. In Q 37:125 it is usually understood to refer to the god "Ba'al" and in Q 4:128 the reference is taken to be to a "husband" and the allowance of a separation.

For Genesis 18:12, the Masoretic text has "adonī zakēn" where the Targum Onqelos has "ribbōnī" and the Targum Jonathan adds the name "Abraham" to the verse. Both "adonī" and "ribbōnī" have the sense of "my lord" as does Q 11:72, though the Hebrew term "ba'al" which also has the sense of "lord" is commonly used for "husband." These versions can be found in the Miqra'ōt Gedōlōt on Genesis 18:12. For the Targum Onkelos and Pseudo-Jonathan, see also I. Razin, ed. and trans. *Targum Onkelos to Exodus* (New York, 1990), s.v. Genesis 18:12.

5 For an overview of the Islamic traditions relating to Gog and Magog, see 'Akāshah 'Abd al-Munnān al-Ṭaybī, *Yajūj wa Majūj: ṣifātu-hum wa 'addadu-hum wa makānu-hum wa qiṣṣah Dhī al-Qarnyan ma'a-hum* (Cairo, n.d.). For references in ḥadīth collections, see al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Ḥajj 47, Anbiyā' 7, Manāqib 25, Tafsīr sūrah 22, Ṭalāq 24, Riqāq 46, Fitan 4, 68; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Imān 379, Fitan 1–3, 39, 40, 110; Abū Dā'ūd, *Sunan*, Malāḥim 1; al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi' al-ṣaḥīḥ*, Fitan 21, 23, 59, Tafsīr sūrah 22; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, Fitan 9, 28, 33. On the history of the motif of Alexander's building of the "gates" in pre-Islamic sources, see A.R. Anderson, *Alexander's Gate, Gog and Magog and Enclosed Nations*, passim. Gog and Magog are also mentioned in relation to the barrier through which they will burst in Q 21:96.

6 See, in particular, the explanation given in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 18:83 where this opinion is provided, as one of four interpretations of the meaning of "Dhu al-Qarnayn," without the identification of the transmitter. In his commentary on Q 18:83, al-Ṭabarī only gives the first three opinions as provided by Ibn Kathīr, but not the notion that it refers to the two tips of the sun. al-Ṭabarī does mention the opinion, probably linked with the interpretation of Daniel 8:21, that the two horns represent Dhu al-Qarnayn's kingship over both Rome and Persia. See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 18:83. For an overview of the different intepretations of Alexander's horns in non-Islamic sources, see A.R. Anderson, "Alexander's Horns," *American Philological Association Transactions and Proceedings* 58 (1927): 100–122.

A variant on this explanation is given in al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 18:83 where Dhu al-Qarnayn travels to the "tips" of the sun and takes it by its "horns" [qarnayn]. See also the account in al-Kāshānī, *Tafsīr al-ṣāfī* (Tehran, n.d.), on Q 18:83.

7 See *Iskandarnāmah*, ed. Iraj Afshar, Persian Texts Series 17 (Tehran, 1964); English translation by Southgate, *Iskandarnāmah*, 56–57.

8 See *Iskandarnāmah*; Southgate, *Iskandarnāmah*, 58–59.

9 See Firdawsī, *Shāhnāmah-yi Firdawsī*, ed. E. Bertels (Moscow, 1963), 1:159–162; Southgate, 172–173.

10 See Abū Ṭāhir Muḥammad Ṭarsūsī, *Dārābnāmah-yi Ṭarsūsī*, ed. Z. Safa, Persian Text series 23, 36 (Tehran, 1965–1968), 2:455–458; Southgate, *Iskandarnāmah*, 183.

11 See 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, "Khiradnāmah-yi Iskandarī," in *Masnavī-yi haft awrang*, ed. M. Madrasi Gilani (Tehran, 1958), 990; Southgate, *Iskandarnāmah*, 181.

12 On the notion of the "world-mountain" or "weltberg," see the caveats raised by the study of Richard J. Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament* (Cambridge, 1972), esp. 1–25.

13 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. Qāf. For a discussion of the non-Islamic use of the terms Qāf and al-Burz, see T. Fahd, "La naissance du monde selon l'Islam," *Sources Orientales. La naissance du monde* (Paris, 1959): 237–251.

14 See Southgate, *Iskandarnāmah*; 157–158. The phrase "bayna al-saddayn" is taken directly from Q 18:93, referring to the mountain pass which Dhu al-Qarnayn blocked up to hold back Gog and Magog. The city of Jābalsā is also mentioned as the city on the western edge of the kingdom of Shāhmalik, a kingdom which extends in the East from the rising-place of the sun. See Southgate, *Iskandarnāmah*; 117.

15 On these traditions, see al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsim fī ma'rifat al-aqālim*, ed. M.J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1906), 46.

16 This account is found in all of the major recensions. On the various recensions, see the notes to Chapter 1.

17 For the Ethiopic versions, see Budge, *The Life and Exploits of Alexander the Great, Being a Series of Ethiopic Texts*. Volume 1 is the edited texts, and vol. 2 is an English translation. An overview of the Ethiopic sources in relation to some of the Arabic versions can be found in K. Weymann, *Die äthiopische und arabische Übersetzung des Pseudo-kallisthenes*. In these accounts, Alexander is said to speak both with a magical bird and with an angel.

18 On these traditions, see al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsim fī ma'rifat al-aqālim*, 46. A similar claim is given in al-Sha'bī's exegesis of Q 7:159. See al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (Beirut, 1411/1995), on Q 7:159.

19 al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 50:1.

20 See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. Qāf; al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qurān*, on Q 50:1; al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 50:1.

21 Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 50:1 given on the authority of Layth b. Abī Salīm, on the authority of Mujāhid, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās. It is also cited in al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 50:1.

22 This quote attributed to Wahb b. Munabbih is taken from Ibn Hishām, *Kitāb al-tijān*, 278–312. This tradition is also recounted in al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 50:1. There is a summary of Wahb b. Munabbih's account of Ṣa'b dhu al-Qarnayn in Southgate, *Iskandarnāmah*, Appendix III, pp. 198–201, though Southgate's summary does not mention this particular episode. The connection between the Ṣa'b dhu al-Qarnayn of Wahb b. Munabbih's account and Q 18:83–101 is discussed in Lidzbarski, "Wer ist Chadhir?" 104–116.

23 See al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 50:1. See also the account of Dhu al-Qarnayn questioning Qāf in al-Tha'labī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 4.

24 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 120; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Food*, 291 given on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās. There is another mention of this in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 132–133; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 303 also given on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās. Rosenthal (291n788) points out that the editions of al-Ṭabarī read the name of this mountain as "Būdh" instead of "Nūdh." Following Rosenthal, I have adopted the reading as "Nūdh" following later Arabic sources and the reference to the mountain of Nōd in the *Me'ārath gazzē* [Book of the Cave of Treasures]. See *Die Schatzhōhle (Me'ārath Gazzē)*, ed. and trans. C. Bezold (Leipzig, 1883–1888; reprint. Amsterdam, 1981).

25 See Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 291n788; For an overview of the use of Nod in the Bible, see James R. Davila, "Nod," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman *et al.* (New York, 1992), s.v. Nod. The early Islamic account of this can be found in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 5:31. In al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 144; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 315 there is another report given on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās that Cain was banished by Adam from the mountain of Nūdh after his killing of Abel.

26 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 170; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 340 given on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās.

27 It is important not to over-emphasize this notion of the mountain linking the heavens and the earth as being another example of the "world-mountain" or "weltberg" popularized by the so-called Pan-Babylonianists. See, for example, A. Jeremias, *Das Alte Testament im Lichte des Alten Orients*, 2d ed. (Leipzig, 1906), 49; P. Jensen, *Die Kosmologie der Babylonier* (Strassbourg, 1890), esp. 195–201; B. Meissner, *Babylonien und Assyrien* (Heidelberg, 1925), esp. 107–111. A critique of this position is found in Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament*, 1–25 and Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual*, Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism (Chicago, 1987), esp. 13–23 but passim.

For a more nuanced discussion of the linkage between the mountain top and heaven, see Otto Kaiser, *Die mythische Bedeutung des Meeres im Ägypten, Ugarit, und Israel*, 2d ed., Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 78 (Berlin, 1962), esp. 107–112.

28 al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 121; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 292.

29 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 119–124; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 290–295.

30 See Ṭarsūsī, *Dārābnāmah-yi Ṭarsūsī*, 2:481–485; Southgate, *Iskandarnāmah*, 182.

31 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 123–124 and 163; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 294–295 and 334.

32 See al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsim fī ma'rifat al-aqālim*, 47.

33 See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. Abū Qubays.

34 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 162 and 164; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 333 and 335.

35 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 192–193; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 362–363; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. Abū Qubays, who also reports that before Islam the mountain was named al-Amīn because the black cornerstone was kept there safe from the flood. Some of the exegesis on the mention of the "Bayt al-Ma'mūr" in Q 52:4 also includes discussion of the saving of the black cornerstone on Abū Qubays during the time of the flood of Noah.

36 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 121–124; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 292–295.

37 See al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsim fī ma'rifat al-aqālim*, 47.

38 In his English translation of this passage, Rosenthal notes only that the Syriac names include the final long "a" which imitates the Aramaic definite article. See *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 237. It should be noted, however, that the "mar" in Marqīsīyā is commonly used in Syriac as a honorific for saints. The "bar" in Barjīsīyā is commonly used in Syriac to indicate "son of" as in Bar Hebraeus.

There are a number of later Iranian scholars who attach mystical significance to the two cities, though the etymologies offered are not strictly linguistic. See the overview in Henri Corbin, *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth: From Mazdean Iran to Shī'ite Iran*, trans. Nancy Pearson, Bollingen Series 91 (Princeton, 1977), esp. 83–84 and passim in part two. Originally published as *Terre céleste et corps de résurrection: de l'Iran mazdéen a l'Iran shī'ite*, Collection La Barque du Soleil (Paris, 1960). Part 1 originally published in *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 22 (1953).

39 See, for example, al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 50:1; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 50:1; al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 50:1; al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 50:1; al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 50:1; Ibn al-Wardī, *Kharīdat al-'ajā'ib wa farīdat al-ghurā'ib* (Cairo, 1939), 5–6, 90–91.

40 On the letters at the beginning of certain sūrahs, see al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itiqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:989, s.v. Section 62.

41 See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. "Qāf." al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itiqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:1083, s.v. Section 69 lists "qāf" as the name of a place, the mountain surrounding the earth. See also the comments in R. Blachère, *Introduction au Coran* (Paris, 1959), esp. 147, s.v. Q 50:1.

42 See, for example, the account in al-Qazwīnī, *Āthār al-bilād wa akhbār al-'ibād*, s.v. Jābarsā.

43 On the use of the five mountains in the time of Adam, see, for example, the reports mentioned in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 123; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 294. On the mention of the five mountains during the time of Abraham, see, for example, al-Azraqī, *Akhbār Makka*, 29; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa al-nihāyah fī ta'rīkh* (Cairo, 1351–1358), 1:246. There is a brief discussion of these traditions in Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 91 and 216n65.

44 The term "ṭūr" is found another eight times in the Quran, seven of them referring apparently to Sinai alone (2:63, 2:93, 4:154, 19:52, 20:80, 28:29, 28:46). Q 52:1 mentions "al-ṭūr" which is associated with various mountains on which revelations were revealed, including Sinai. See C. Bailey, "Sīnā," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 9:652 and Arthur Jeffery, *The Foreign Vocabulary in the Qur'ān*, 184–185. Muslim exegetes consider the term to be Syriac for "mountain." See, for example, al-Suyūṭī, *al-Madhdhāhīb fī-mā waqa' fī al-Qur'ān min al-'Arab* (Beirut, n.d.), 93; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itiqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:114; al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1376/1957), 1:288; al-Andalusī, *al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ* (Cairo, 1328), 1:239; al-Sijistānī, *Gharīb al-Qur'ān* (Cairo, 1382/1963), 136.

The term "Sīnā'" is considered to be Nabataean. See, for example, al-Suyūṭī, *al-Madhdhāhīb fī-mā waqa' fī al-Qur'ān min al-'Arab*, 79–80; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itiqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:113; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 23:20.

The term "Sīnīn" is considered to be Ethiopic. See, for example, al-Suyūṭī, *al-Madhdhāhīb fī-mā waqa' fī al-Qur'ān min al-'Arab*, 79; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itiqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 2:113; al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 1:288; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 9:52.

45 For a general overview of the Biblical references to Mount Sinai, see G.I. Davies, "Mount Sinai," *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6:47–49; G.I. Davies, *The Way of the Wilderness: A Geographical Study of the Wilderness Itineraries in the Old Testament*, Society for Old Testament Study Monograph Series 5 (Cambridge, 1979). For the mountain in general, see the broad-ranging study of Joseph J. Hobbs, *Mount Sinai* (Austin, 1995).

46 The notion of a "Sinai-complex" [Ex. 19–24, 32–34] and "Kadesh-complex" [Ex. 17–18, Num. 10–14] was first used by Julius Wellhausen and H. Gressmann. See the discussion of these two complexes in J. Engnell, "The Wilderness Wanderings," in his *A Rigid Scrutiny: Critical Essays of the Old Testament*, trans. John T. Willis (Nashville, 1969), 207–214 [originally published as "Ökenvandringen," in *Svenskt Bibliskt Uppslagsverk*, 2d ed., 2:1501–1507]. G.I. Davies, "Mount Sinai," pp. 47–48 identifies the Sinai-complex as Exodus 18–40, Leviticus, Numbers 1–10, and Deuteronomy 1:6–18, 4:9–14, 5:2–31, and 9:8–10:11.

The standard references for the text-critical study of the wilderness iterinerary include M.-J. Lagrange, "L'itinéraire des Israélites du pays de Gessen aux bords au Jourdain," *Revue Biblique* 9 (1900): 63–86; M. Noth, "Nu 21 als Glied der Hexateuch-Erzählung," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 59 (1940–1941): 161–189 [=*Aufsätze zur biblischen Landes- und Altertumskunde*, ed. Hans Walter Wolff (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1971), 1:75–101]; Noth, "Der Schauplatz des Meerseswunders," *Festschrift für Otto Eissfeldt*, ed. J. Fück (Halle, 1947), 181–190 [=*Aufsätze zur biblischen Landes- und Altertumskunde*, 1:102–110]; Noth, *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions*, trans. B.W. Anderson (Englewood Cliffs, 1972), 223–227;

Wolkmar Fritz, *Israel in der Wüste: Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung der Wüstenüberlieferung des Jahwisten* (Marburg, 1970); Menahem Haran, "The Exodus Routes in the Pentateuchal Sources," *Tarbiz* 40 (1970–1971): 113–143; Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, 1973), 308–321; George Coats, "The Wilderness Itinerary," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 34 (1972): 135–152; Jerome T. Walsh, "From Egypt to Moab: A Source Critical Analysis of the Wilderness Itinerary," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 39 (1977): 20–33; E. Anati, *Har Karkom: Montagna Sacra nel Deserto dell'Esodo* (Milan, 1984); G.I. Davies, "Wilderness Wanderings," in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6:912–914.

47 For more specific research on the location of the Wilderness of Sin, in addition to the information found in the discussion of the wilderness itinerary, see Ze'ev Meshel, "Mas'ē bnai Yisrael be-midbar ve pīrūsham," in *Qadimōnī'ōt Sinai* [Sinai in Antiquity: Researches in the History and Archeology of the Peninsula], ed. Ze'ev Meshel and Israel Finkelstein (Tel Aviv, 1980), 71–78; David R. Seely, "Wilderness of Sin," *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6:47 and I. Beit-Arieh, "The Route Through Sinai: Why the Israelites Went South," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 15.3 (1988): 28–37. Exegesis of Q 5:23–29 describes the Israelites' wandering in the "Bādiyat al-Tīh" or "Desert of Tīh." On Sinai in rabbinic scholarship, see Yehoshua Swartz, "Sinai be-mesōret ha-Yehūdīm u-be-maḥshevet Yisrael," in *Qadimōnī'ōt Sinai*, 79–97.

48 See al-Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, Ṭahārah 221. There is an overview of this and some of the other accounts of the Prophet Muhammad visiting various locations associated with prophets in Heribert Busse, "Jerusalem in the Story of Muhammad's Night Journey and Ascension," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 14 (1991): 1–40, esp. 10–21. The various traditions and versions of the Night Journey and Ascension are provided in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 17:1.

49 See al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-nubūwah ma'rifah aḥwāl ṣāḥib al-sharī'ah*, ed. 'Abd al-Mu'aṭī Qal'ajī (Beirut, 1405), 1:135–137.

50 See Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Faḍā'il 164; al-Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, Ḥayḍ 215 both transmitted on the authority of Anas b. Mālik. This same account is found in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 17:1.

51 See, for example, al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 17:1; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 17:1. In one of the accounts preserved by Ibn Kathīr and al-Bayhaqī, on the authority of Abū 'Ubaydah, the Prophet Muḥammad sees Abraham by the Oak of Mamre mentioned in Genesis 18. See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 17:1; al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-nubūwah*, 1:73.

52 See, for example, Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-nabawīyah*, 263–264. For an English translation, see Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ibn Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, 182.

53 Although some scholars prefer to make a distinction between the Night Journey and the Ascension, both are often combined and discussed at the same time. The secondary literature is voluminous but of uneven quality in its historical and literary analysis. Some of the older but important attempts to find a historical context for the narratives can be found in A.A. Bevan, "Mohammed's Ascension to Heaven," in *Studien zur semitischen Philologie und Religionsgeschichte*, ed. Karl Marti (Giessen, 1914), 49–61. J. Horovitz, "Muhammeds Himmelfahrt," *Der Islam* 9 (1919): 159–183; A. Guillaume, "Where was al-Masyid al-Aqsà?" *al-Andalus* 18 (1953): 323–336.

Some of the more general religious implications of the Night Journey and Ascension in later Islamic scholarship is reviewed in A.E. Affifi, "The Story of the Prophet's Ascent (mi'rāj) in Ṣufī Thought and Literature," *Islamic Quarterly* 2 (1955): 23–27; J.R. Porter, "Muhammad's Journey to Heaven," *Numen* 21 (1974): 64–80; E.H. Waugh, "Religious Aspects of the Mi'raj Legends," *Etudes arabes et islamiques: actes du XXIXe Congres international des orientalistes* 4 (Paris, 1975): 236–244.

54 See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. Jābars.

55 al-Kāshānī, *Tafsīr al-ṣāfī*, on Q 18:83 and al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 18:84. Similar information is provided in Ibn Babawayh, *Ikmāl al-dīn wa i'timām al-ni'mah fī ithbāt al-rajah* (Najaf, 1970) and al-Rawāndī, *al-Kharā'ij wa al-jarā'iḥ*, ed. Mu'assasat al-Imām al-Mahdī (Qum, 1409).

56 Note that a number of traditions, associated both with the exegesis of Q 2:246–251 and with the story of Abraham's re-establishment of the Ka'bah in Q 2:122–129, describe the Arabic "Sakīnah" as a cloud-like apparition. See, for example, al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:248 and 2:125; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 2:248 and 2:125. There is a brief discussion of the Sakīnah and its relation to the Hebrew Shekhīnah in Firestone, *Journeys in Holy Lands*, 207n.42. See also I. Goldziher, "La notion de la sakina chez les Mohametans," *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 27 (1893): 296–308.

57 See, for example, the variants mentioned in Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam fī ta'rīkh al-mulūk wa al-umam*, 1:27.

58 See Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, on Q 50:1. A similar comparison is found in the works of the Shaykh Aḥmad Aḥsā'ī, in his *Jawāmi' al-kalim* (Tabriz, 1856), 1:3, 9d Risalah. See Corbin, 153–154.

59 al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159.

60 On the various meanings and placements of the "sīn" and "ṣād" in Arabic, see M.V. McDonald, "Sīn," in *Encylopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed., 9:615–616; M. McDonald, "The Order and Phonetic Value of Arabic Sibilants in the Abjad," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 19 (1974): 36–46; and M. McDonald, "On the Placing of ṣ in the Maghribi adjad and the Khirbet al-Samrā' ABC," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 37 (1992): 155–166.

61 Several of the accounts mention the river of sand which flows between the ordinary world and the location of these followers of Moses. There is one report, given on the authority of al-Suddī, in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159 and in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 7:159 in which the river is said to be made of "honey" [shahd] which may be, as the editor of al-Qurṭubī notes, a misprint for "flowing" river [sahl] as found in al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr fī al-tafsīr bi al-ma'thur*, on Q 7:159 or the explanation, given in al-Qazwīnī, *Athār al-bilād wa akhbār al-'ibād*, s.v. Jābarsā, that the river of sand flows like arrows [sahm]. al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159 identifies this as a "valley" of sand.

62 On the "Arab" prophets of the Quran, see Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān* (Beirut, 1984) and Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 108, s.v. Hūd. There is also a brief mention of this in A.J. Wensinck and Ch. Pellat, "Hūd," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed., 3:537–538.

63 For a general, synthetic overview of Hūd and the 'Ād, see al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 231–244; Brinner, *The History of al-Tabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 28–40; Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 108–125; al-Tha'labī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 36–39; al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 103–110; Thackston, *The Tales of the Prophets of al-Kisa'i*, 109–117; R.B. Serjeant, "Hud and other Pre-Islamic Prophets of Hadramawt," *Le Muséon* 6 (1954): 121–179.

64 See, for example, al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 23:31–41 identifies two opinions, that the verses apply either to Hūd and the 'Ād or to Ṣāliḥ and the Thamūd. This is likewise the interpretation found in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, s.v. Q 23:31–41; Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*; and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, on Q 23:31–41. al-Shawkānī, *Fatḥ al-qadīr*, ed. Hishām al-Bukhārī and Khuḍr 'Ikārī (Beirut, 1417), on Q 23:31–41 associates the passages with Hūd and the Thamūd alone.

65 The tomb of Hūd is located in a number of places according to different traditions. According to al-Ḥarawī, *Ishārat ilā ma'rifat al-ziyārah*, ed. Janine Sourdel-Thomine, *Guide des lieux de pelerinage* (Damascus, 1953), p. 97 the tomb is located at the mouth of the Barhut in the Hadramawt, and was a place of pilgrimage. al-Ḥarawī also

mentions opinions that it is between Zamzam and the Ka'bah (p. 86), or in the South wall of the mosque at Damascus (p. 15).

According to Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, *Riḥlat Ibn Baṭṭūṭah* (Beirut, 1964), there used to be an inscription at the mosque in Damascus stating that "this is the tomb of Hūd b. 'Eber" but he goes on to state the the real tomb is probably in al-Aḥqāf, identified as a sand desert in southern Arabia between the Hadramawt and 'Oman (eastern part of al-Ramla). On the tomb of Hūd in relation to pilgrimages, see F. Krenkow, "The annual fairs of the ancient Arabs," *Islamic Culture* 21 (1947): 111–113.

66 For a general, synthetic overview of Ṣāliḥ and the Thamūd, see al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 244–252; Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 40–47; Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 126–138; al-Tha'labī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 36–39; al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 110–121; Thackston, *The Tales of the Prophets of al-Kisa'i*, 117–128; al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab wa ma'ādh al-jawhar*, ed. Barbier de Meynard, Pavet de Courteille, Charles Pellat, Publications de l'Université Libanaise, section des études historiques 11 (Beirut, 1965), 3:83–90; A. Rippin, "Ṣāliḥ," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed., 8:984; A. van den Branden, *Histoire de Thamoud* (Beirut, 1960); J. Halevy, "Le prophete Salih," *Journal Asiatique* 5 (1905): 146–150.

67 For a discussion of Quḍār and the possible relation of his name to the Biblical Qedar, see Jaroslav Stetkevych, *Muḥammad and the Golden Bough*, esp. 68–77.

68 al-Ṭabarī reports that some claim Ṣāliḥ died in Mecca at the age of 58 years and that he had been among his people for twenty years. See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 252; Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 47. A similar tradition is found in Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 138 without a chain of transmission. See also the tradition reported by Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 138 on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās regarding the Valley of 'Assfān. See also 'Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Haythamī, *Majma' al-zawā'id* (Beirut, 1982), 3:220.

It is also important to note that the famous grave of Abū Righāl, considered to have been the only one of the Thamūd, aside from Ṣāliḥ and his followers, not to have been destroyed by God's punishment because he was at the sanctuary of God, is identified by the Prophet Muḥammad. See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 250; Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 45; Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 136. It is in the grave of Abū Righāl that the "golden bough" [ghuṣn min dhahab] is found. See Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 136–137, s.v. Ṣāliḥ; Abū Dā'ūd, *Sunan*, 3088; al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-nubuwwah*, 6:297. See also J. Stetkevych, *Muḥammad and the Golden Bough*, esp. 36–48.

69 See al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 119–120; Thackston, *The Tales of the Prophets of al-Kisa'i*, 126–127. Note also that Ka'b al-Aḥbār reports that the people of Thamūd who were destroyed were divided into ten tribes, paralleling the descriptions of the destruction of the ten tribes of Israel in the exegesis of Q 17:2–8. See al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 110; Thackston, *The Tales of the Prophets of al-Kisa'i*, 117–118.

70 According to al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 26:123–140, there are several opinions regarding the meaning of "high place" [rī'] in verse 128. Ibn 'Abbās is recorded, in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 26:128 as saying that it refers to an elevated place on the earth. On the authority of Qatādah, al-Ḍaḥḥāk, al-Kalbī, Muqātil, al-Suddī, and Ibn 'Abbās the term refers to a road, indicating that the people of 'Ād set up signs to themselves on every highway. According to 'Umārah, the term indicates a mountain. Mujāhid says the term refers to a road between two mountains.

The term "artifices" [maṣāna'], according to al-Suddī, Mujāhid, and Ibn 'Abbās, is considered to be a reference to water towers [burūj al-ḥammām]. See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 26:129 and al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 26:129. Qatādah and al-Zajjāj say that the term refers to containers of water. al-Jawharī says the term refers to something like pools which collect rain.

The codex of Ibn Mas'ūd has "kay takhludū" instead of "la'alla-kum takhludūna" for Q 26:129. Ubayy b. Ka'b's codex has "ka'annu-kum tukhalladūna" instead following Qatādah, 'Alqamah, and Abū al-'Ālīyah. See Arthur Jeffery, *Materials for the History of the Text of the Qur'ān: The Old Codices* (Leiden, 1937), 68 and 151.

71 See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. Iram. The city is described, in terms taken from Q 89:8, as unlike any others in the land. The builder, Shaddād b. 'Ād, made himself to be great, and what he had done was heard in heaven. His city included castles of gold and silver and dwellings under which flowed rivers. See also W.M. Watt, "Iram," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed., 3:1270. Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 116, s.v. "Hūd" discredits this interpretation of Iram. The notion that this city of Iram dhāt al-'Imād was built in 'Aden seems to be an etiological attempt linking the name 'Aden/'Eden with this city which is said to have been built in imitation of the garden of Eden.

72 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 246; Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 42 given on the authority of 'Amr b. Khārijah.

73 This episode is reported in Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-nabawīyah*, 898–899; Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, 605. For variants, see also al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 250; Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 45; Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 136; Abū Dā'ūd, *Sunan*, 3088; al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-nubuwwah*, 6:297.

The ruins at Madā'in Ṣāliḥ are considered to be Nabataean, and the city was second in importance only to Petra during the time of the Nabataean hegemony in the area. The most complete account of the ruins is still J.A. Jaussen and R. Savignac, *Mission archéologique en Arabie* (Paris, 1909). For an overview of the history of this area in this early period, see Ernst Axel Knauf, *Ismael: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Palästinas und Nordarabiens im 1. Jahrtausend v.Chr.*, passim. Some relevant information can be found in Werner Caskel, *Das altarabische Königreich Lihyan* (Krefeld, 1950).

74 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 7:69. The first term "baṣṭah" [often read as "basṭah"] is understood to refer to the fact that God added to the stature of the people of 'Ād, and made their men to be taller than most. The last term referring to the people of 'Ād as "tufliḥūn" is understood to mean "blessed" by God, referring to this increased stature among other things.

75 al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-'Arab fī funūn al-adab* (Cairo, 1938), 13:73. See the discussion of this in J. Stetkevych, *Muḥammad and the Golden Bough*, 17–22.

76 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on 26:146–152 in which these verses are interpreted to indicate that God provided the people of Thamūd with houses to protect them, he planted gardens for them, he caused flowing springs to gush forth, and he caused vegetables and fruits to be produced for them.

77 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 23:31–41 and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, on Q 23:31–41.

78 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 245 and 248–250 Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 41 and 44–45.

79 J. Stetkevych, *Muḥammad and the Golden Bough*, 24–29 attempts to show how the three-day respite granted the people of Thamūd parallels the accounts mentioned in relation to the Israelites in Exodus 32:5–29 and Numbers 25:1–9.

80 See al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-'Arab fī funūn al-adab*, 13:77.

81 See Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, on Q 46:25.

82 See, for example, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, on Q 46:25; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 243–244; Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 39–40.

83 These traditions are found related to the exegesis of Q 69:6. See also al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 244; Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 40.

84 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 250; Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 45. According to al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-'Arab fī funūn al-adab*, 13:74, this scream was the sound caused by the beating of Gabriel's wings.

85 For the traditions in which the Prophet Muḥammad warns his followers against drinking the water from al-Ḥijr, see al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 250; Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 45–46; Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-nabawīyah*, 898–899; Guillaume, *The Life of Muḥammad*, 605; Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 136; Abū Dā'ūd, *Sunan*, 3088; al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-nubuwwah*, 6:297.

86 On the notion of the "prophetic cycle" of (1) God sending a prophet, (2) people not listening to the prophet and demanding signs, (3) signs given proving prophet but people still do not heeding the warnings, and (4) God destroying the people but saving the believers, see John Wansbrough, *Quranic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation* (Oxford, 1977), esp. 12–38. Although of heuristic value, an overly rigid application of this model can have unfortunate results in the glossing of important differences among the various Quranic narratives. The importance of the different types of punishments, and the distinctions among the prophets and peoples, especially using Hūd/'Ād and Ṣāliḥ/Thamūd as examples, are stressed in the earliest exegesis of the Quranic verses related to these narratives.

87 Other scholars associate the building of the pyramids with the Pharaoh. See, for example, Ibn Taghrībardī, *al-Najūm al-zāhirah fī mulūk Miṣr wa al-Qāhirah* (Cairo, 1929), 1:38; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawā'iz wa al-i'tibār bi dhikr al-khiṭāṭ wa al-athār* (Beirut, n.d.), 1:111–112. These references are mentioned in William J. Hamblin, "Pre-Islamic Arabian Prophets," in *Mormons and Muslims: Spiritual Foundations and Modern Manifestations*, ed. Spencer J. Palmer, Religious Studies Monograph Series 8 (Provo, 1983), 85–104, esp. 100n.10.

88 The symbolism of water in Israelite stories is a vast area of research with specialized treatments of specific narratives and traditions. Some more synthetic overviews include: (on Israel and Judaism) R. Patai, "The 'Control of Rain' in Ancient Palestine: A Study in Comparative Religion," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 14 (1939): 251–286; Germain Bienaimé, *Moïse et le don de l'eau dans la tradition juive ancienne: targum et midrash*, Analecta Biblica 98 (Rome, 1984); (Islam) M. Lings, "The Qoranic Symbolism of Water," *Studies in Comparative Religions* 2 (1968): 153–160; M. Lings, "Le symbolisme coranique de l'eau," *Études Traditionelles* 71 (1970): 237–247. J. Metral and P. Sanlaville, eds. *L'homme et l'eau I: l'homme et l'eau en Méditerranée et au proche orient* (Lyon, 1981) includes some information on the symbolism of water in the ancient Near East.

Some useful information on particular textual traditions can be found in M.A. Fishbane, "The Well of Living Water: A Biblical Motif and its Ancient Transformations," in *Sha'arei Talmon: Studies in the Bible, Qumran and the Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon,* ed. M. Fishbane and E. Tov (Winona Lake, 1992), 3–16; E.J. Jenkinson, "The Rivers of Paradise," *Muslim World* 19 (1929): 151–155.

89 See Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* in *Patrologia Graeca*, 6:37–40; Thomas B. Falls, trans., *Saint Justin Martyr* (New York), 178.

90 See al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 26:129.

91 See al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 26:129.

92 See al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 120–121; Thackston, *The Tales of the Prophets of al-Kisa'i*, 115–117.

93 Part of the agreement between Ṣāliḥ and the people of Thamūd was that the she-camel would be allowed to drink all of the water of the city every other day. On those days the people were to drink the milk of the she-camel instead of the water. See Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 136–137; al-Haythamī, *Majma' al-zawā'id*, 7:50; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 6164; al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 110–121; Thackston, *The Tales of the Prophets of al-Kisa'i*, 117–128.

94 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, on Q 2:57. See also Mahmoud Ayoub, *The Qur'an and its Interpreters*, vol. 1 (Albany, 1984), on Q 2:57.

95 For a thorough source-critical analysis of these Biblical traditions, see G. Coats, *Rebellion in the Wilderness*, 83–115. See also the more general work by V. Fritz, *Israel in der Wüste*, passim.

96 al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:57. See also Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 2:57 with reference also to Q 5:21–22. This is also mentioned in M. Ayoub, *The Qur'an and its Interpreters*, on Q 2:57.

In his history, al-Ṭabarī relates the Israelites' refusal to fight with their encounter of the giant Og ['Āj], also mentioned in Numbers 21:33. See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 498–501; Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 80–84.

97 On the providing of water in the wilderness, see R. du Mesnil du Buisson, "Le miracle de l'eau dans le désert d'après les peintures de la synagogue de Doura-Europos," *Revue des Histoire de Religions* 111 (1935): 110–117; C.-O. Nordström, "The Water Miracles of Moses in Jewish Legend and Byzantine Art," *Analecta Suecana* 7 (1958): 78–109; Bienaimé, *Moïse et le don de l'eau dans la tradition juive ancienne*, esp. 114–150.

98 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 498–499; Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 80–81; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 5:20–26. An overview of the Quranic verses and their exegesis concerning the Israelites in the Wilderness of Wandering can be found in Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 378–382. The giants in these accounts may be a reference to the "bnai 'anaq" mentioned in Numbers 13:32–33.

99 There are a number of traditions which recount how Moses killed one of the giants named Og ['Āj], also mentioned in Numbers 21:33, though they do not seem to fit the narrative in which the Israelites refuse to engage the giants in battle. See al-Ṭabarī *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 501; Brinner, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Prophets and Patriarchs*, 83–84.

100 For a source-critical analysis of Numbers 20:1–13 and the relation of this narrative to Exodus 15:22–27 and 17:1–7, see G. Coats, *Rebellion in the Wilderness*, 47–82.

101 Gressmann points out that this could not refer to the "tribe" of the Levites since Aaron himself was a Levite and had participated in the worship of the golden calf. See H. Gressmann, *Mose und Seine Zeit: Ein Kommentar zu den Mose-Sagen* (Göttingen, 1913), esp. 199–218. On the sin of Aaron and Miriam in Numbers 12:1–16, see Gressmann, 164–175. Compare also with Deuteronomy 9:8–10:10.

102 See al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 5:21–26.

Note that in Jewish and Christian exegesis, based on Deuteronomy 1:19–46, the forty years of wandering and death of the present generation was the punishment for the Israelites' worship of the golden calf. For an overview of this, see W.H. Propp, "The Rod of Aaron and the Sin of Moses," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 107.1 (1988): 19–26; J. Milgrom, "Magic, Monotheism and the Sin of Moses," in *The Quest for the Kingdom of God*, ed. H.B. Hoffman *et al.* (Winona Lake, 1983): 251–265; M. Margaliot, "Hēṭ Mōshe ve-Aharōn be-Me Merībā," *Beth Mikra* 19 (1974): 374–400.

103 According to Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 2:57, both Ibn 'Aṭiyah and al-Jawharī identify manna as being like honey, on the basis of Hudhaylī poetry. For the poetry associated with the Banū Hudhayl, see R. Jacobi, "Die Anfänge der arabischen Ġazalpoesie: Abū Du'aib al-Huḏalī," *Der Islam* 61 (1984): 218–250.

According to al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:57, al-Zajjāj claims that the term usually translated as "quails" [al-salwā] is to be understood as "honey." He also reports, on the authority of Mujāhid, that manna was like gum of trees, and it tasted like honey [al-shahd wa al-'asal].

James Kugel has noted that there is a fragment from a Sibylline Oracle, cited in Theophylus' *Letter To Autolycus*, 2:46–49, in which it is said that the manna in the Wilderness of Wandering was like the food in Paradise. See James Kugel, *The Bible as it Was* (Cambridge, 1997), 358.

104 See al-Kisā'ī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 145; Thackston, *The Tales of the Prophets of al-Kisa'i*, 242.

105 See, for example, the accounts mentioned in Babylonian Talmud, Sōtah 35a; Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 16:17; Midrash Tanḥuma, ed. S. Buber, 4:68; L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 3:271. According to other sources, it was honey which flowed from the rock struck by Moses, and the water of Miriam's well, closely associated with the water from the rock, is also said to have tasted like honey. See Babylonian Talmud, Sōtah 11b; Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer 42; *Sefer ha-Yashar* on Exodus 2:2; L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 3:320 and 3:65. Citations from the *Sefer ha-Yashar* are from the text edited by Lazarus Goldschmidt (Berlin, 1923).

106 For some of these traditions, see al-Bukhārī, Ashribah 12; Muslim, Jannah 26; al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ* (Beirut, n.d.), Ṣifat al-jannah 27; al-Dārimī, *Sunan al-Dārimī*, ed. Khālid al-Sab' al-'Alamī (Beirut, 1407), Riqāq 112.

107 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 2:57.

108 For those traditions which discuss the light of the two cities at the ends of the Earth as coming from Qāf and from the cities themselves, see Hermann Zotenberg, trans., *Chronique de Abou-Djafar-Mo'hammed-ben-Djarir-ben Yezid Tabari* (Paris, 1867), 1:33–36; Also reprinted as Zotenberg, trans., *Les prophètes et le rois: de la création à David* (Paris, 1984), 42–45. See also, Henry Corbin, *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth*, 73–74.

109 Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 2:57.

110 See the stories regarding the special organic clothing of Adam and Eve in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 105; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 276; Tha'labī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, 32. This tradition seems to be related to a comment in the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 3:21, and to the clothing of fingernails of Adam and Eve in the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan on Genesis 3:7 and 3:21.

For a wider-ranging analysis of the significance of the clothing of Adam and Eve, and in the garden of Eden, see Stephen Lambden, "From Fig Leaves to Fingernails: Some Notes on the Garments of Adam and Eve," in *A Walk in the Garden*, ed. Paul Morris and Deborah Sawyer, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplemental Series 136 (Sheffield, 1992), 74–91; Sebastian Brock, "Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition," *Typus, Symbol, Allegorie bei den östlichen Vätern und ihren Parallelen im Mittelalter*, ed. Margot Schmidt (Eichstatt, 1981), 11–40.

111 For some of the Jewish traditions regarding this notion, see Mekhilta de Rabbi Shimon, 75; Sifre on Numbers, 89; Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 76a; Yalqut Shimoni 1:258.

112 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 2:57.

113 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:57; al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:57; and Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 2:57. In his exegesis on Exodus 16:4–5, Rashi notes that the manna collected by the Israelites on Friday would only double after it had been returned to the camp, otherwise if the Israelites collected double on Friday there would be no test.

114 See the comments to this effect in al-Qurṭubī on Q 2:57 and referenced in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 2:57.

115 For an overview of some related traditions concerning the positive aspects of the wilderness and its connections to Eden, see S. Talmon, "The 'Desert Motif' in the Bible and in Qumran literature," *Biblical Motifs, Origins and Transformations*, ed. Alexander Altmann (Cambridge, 1966), 31–63.

116 The trial of the wilderness and God's providence is used in some of the well-known reports, relating how 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib challenged the Exlilarch [rās al-jālūt] of the Jews about the disobedience of the Israelites when God revealed the Torah, fed them manna and quails, made a dry path for them through the sea, and caused twelve springs to gush from a dry rock for all of the tribes. See al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159. A similar tradition is given by al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr fī tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr*, on Q 7:159.

117 al-Qazwīnī, *Athār al-bilād wa akhbār al-'ibād*, s.v. Jābarsā.

118 al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159 mentions an interpretation from Muqātil b. Sulaymān in which it is said that God removed the followers of Moses to a land in which there were wild animals, beasts, and predatory animals all mixing together.

119 See al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159 reports that among the followers of Moses, the men and the women live separately in the city. When one of the men needs his wife he goes to her in his time of need. There is another report that when 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib asked the Prophet Muḥammad about the inhabitants of Jābalq and Jābars, the Prophet Muḥammad explained that the people were not descendants of Adam, there were no women among them, and they had no desire for procreation. See al-Ba'lamī's Persian translation of al-Ṭabarī's history in Zotenberg, trans., *Chronique de Abou-Djafar-Mo'hammed-ben-Djarir-ben Yezid Tabari*, 1:35; Also reprinted as Zotenberg, *Les prophètes et le rois*, 44–45.

For the issue of sex in the garden of Eden, see the insights of Gary Anderson, "Celibacy or Consummation in the Garden? Reflections on Early Jewish and Christian Interpretations of the garden of Eden," *Harvard Theological Review* 82 (1989): 121–148.

120 al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159.

121 Corbin, *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth*, 73–74 states that al-Ba'lamī's Persian translation of al-Ṭabarī's *Ta'rikh* says the inhabitants of the two cities at the ends of the Earth only ate vegetables, or grasses growing wild, though this comment is not found in the Arabic of al-Ṭabarī.

122 al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159.

123 See, for example, al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159 given on the authority of Ibn Jurayj. Also al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159 where this is reported on the authority of an anonymous source.

124 See, for example, al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159; al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159; al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159 quoting al-Ṭabarsī.

125 According to al-Ba'lamī's translation of al-Ṭabarī's *Ta'rikh*, the people of the cities of Jābars and Jābalq do not know Satan, nor do they even know of his existence. See Zotenberg, trans., *Chronique de Abou-Djafar-Mo'hammed-ben-Djarir-ben Yezid Tabari*, 1:35; Also reprinted as Zotenberg, *Les prophètes et le rois*, 44–45.

126 A similar point is made in al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 7:159.

127 See al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q 17:1; al-Shawkānī, *Fatḥ al-qadīr*, on Q 17:1. In al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 17:1, it is related that the blessings refer to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, their lives, their strengths, their well-cultivated soil, and their plants.

128 See Zotenberg, trans., *Chronique de Abou-Djafar-Mo'hammed-ben-Djarir-ben Yezid Tabari*, 1:35; Also reprinted as Zotenberg, *Les prophètes et le rois*, 44–45. In al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 67–69; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 237–238, the dimensions of the two cities are said to by 10,000 by 10,000 parsangs. In his commentary on the *Gulshan-i rāz* of Maḥmūd Shabistarī, ed. Kayvān Samī'ī (Tehran, 1958), 134–136, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Lāhījī mentions the two cities as being included in historical accounts. See Corbin,

Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth, 131–134. In Lāhījī, *Gawhar-i murad* (Tehran, 1895), 3:4:2, it is said that each of these two cities has 1000 gates. See Corbin, *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth*, 173.

129 On these various accounts, see the overview in H. Busse, "Jerusalem in the Story of Muhammad's Night Journey and Ascension," esp. 10–21.

130 Note, al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 17:1, points out that the Prophet Muḥammad ascended to Paradise from the "rock" which is normaly identified with the rock under the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. There are also traditions which identify a sort of "world-rock" upon which Qāf rests. See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. Qāf, and Ibn al-Wardī, *Kharīdat al-'ajā'ib wa farīdat al-ghurā'ib*, 5–6.

131 According to Abū Ḥanīfah al-Dīnāwarī, Alexander died in Jerusalem. See also Niẓāmī, *Iqbālnāmah-yā khiradnāmah-yi Iskandarī*, 272–273.

For Alexander's attempts to enter the garden of Eden, see the notes to chapter 1. For further discussion of this stone, see the references in W. Hertz, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen*, 73–74. See also the traditions discussed in A.H. Krappe, "The Indian Provanance of a Medieval Exemplum," 499–502; M. Gaster, "The Legend of the Grail," 879–901.

132 See al-Nīsābūrī, *Asbāb al-nuzūl* (Beirut, 1989), on Q 18:83. According to al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 18:83, it was a group from the People of the Book [ahl al-kitāb] who came to the Prophet Muhammad who, after praying, told his challengers in advance that they had come to ask him about Dhu al-Qarnayn.

133 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 18:83. Ibn Kathīr also reports a tradition recorded by al-Ṭabarī in which it is a group of Jews who come to the Prophet Muhammad and ask him about Dhu al-Qarnayn. Ibn Kathīr considers the chain of transmission supporting this report to be weak. The theme of the Jews challenging the Prophet Muhammad [mihan al-Yahūd] is common in the explanations given for the revelation of certain verses, particularly those dealing with Biblical stories, and are usually understood to have been revealed in Medina, in response to challenges from the Jews of Medina. See al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itiqān fi 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 96–109, chapter 9.

134 A parallel account of the Israelites who transgressed the Sabbath, just before the account of the "red heifer" referring to Deuteronomy 21:1–9, is located in Q 2:65 also following an account of the Israelites worshipping the golden calf and in the Wilderness of Wandering (Q 2:54–61).

135 Ibn Hishām *al-Sīrah al-nabawīyah*, 264–266; A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, 182–183.

136 See Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-nabawīyah*, 267–268; A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, 184. On the attempts to move the interpretation of the life of the Prophet Muhammad away from a more "Biblical" model, see Uri Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder: The Life of Muḥammad as Viewed by the Early Muslims: A Textual Analysis*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam 5 (Princeton, 1995).

137 See Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-nabawīyah*, 264–266; A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, 182–184. The account concerning the description of Jerusalem is given on the authority of al-Ḥasan b. Abū al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, and the account with the description of the prophets is given by Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī on the authority of Sa'īd al-Musayyab.

138 Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-nabawīyah*, 265. A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, 183. In al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Ghusl, 226, there is a variant of this in which the Prophet Muhammad says that he stood up in the al-Ḥijr of Mecca and described Jerusalem to the Meccans while God displayed the city in front of him.

According to Ibn Isḥāq, Abū Bakr was given his honorific title "Ṣiddīq" on this occasion because he believed the Prophet Muhammad, but al-Ṭabarī reports that the title was given to Abū Bakr because he was one of the first to believe in Islam.

al-Tabarī also records that it was 'Alī b. Abī Tālib who first claimed that he was "al-Ṣiddīq al-Akbar" because he performed the prayer with the Prophet Muhammad seven years before any other man. See Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-nabawīyah*, 265. A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, 183; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 1160–1162; English trans. by W.M. Watt and W.V. McDonald, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Muḥammad at Mecca* (Albany, 1988), 81–83.

139 On the names of sūrahs in the Qur'ān, see al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itiqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 1:159–180, Chapter 17, esp. 1:173 on the name of Q 17. The name "Night Journey" [al-Isrā'] sometimes used for Q 17 is one of only a handful of instances where the name of the sūrah is a word not otherwise found in the Qur'ān, in this case derived from the verb [asrā] found in 17:1. Some sūrahs are named for words which occur at the beginning of the sūrah, and al-Suyūṭī reports that the first word of 17:1 [subḥān] is also used as a name for Q 17. Sūrah 18, "al-Kahf" which first occurs in v. 9, is also named for the theme of the sūrah, related to verses 9–22 said to have been revealed when the people of Mecca asked the Jews for a question to stump the Prophet Muhammad. See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 18:83. For an overview of the sūrahs names and abbreviations, see Rudi Paret, *Der Koran: Kommentar und Konkordanz* (Stuttgart, 1971), 545–559.

140 For some of the more helpful general overviews of apocalyptism, see P. Hanson, *Old Testament Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia, 1987); J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination* (New York, 1984); Y. Collins, *Crisis and Catharsis: The Power of the Apocalypse* (Philadelphia, 1984); D. Hellholm, ed., *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East* (Tübingen, 1983); P. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia, 1975).

On apocalypticism and visionary journeys, see C. Kappler, ed., *Apocalypses et vogages dans l'Au-Delà* (Paris, 1987); M. Himmelfarb, *Tours of Hell: An Apocalyptic form in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Philadelphia, 1983); I. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkvah Mysticism* (Leiden, 1980).

141 See al-Ḥalabī, *Insān al-'uyūn fī sīrat al-amīn al-Ma'mūn* (Cairo, 1962), 1:240; 'Alī b. Rabban al-Ṭabarī, *al-Dīn wa al-dawlah*, ed. 'Alī Nuwayḥid (Beirut, 1973); M. Kister, "Sanctity Joint and Divided: On Holy Places in the Islamic Tradition," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 20 (1996): 18–65; "H. Busse, The Destruction of the Temple and its Reconstruction in Light of Muslim Exegesis of Sūra 17:2–8," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 20 (1996): 1–17, esp. 10–11.

142 According to al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 2360, the original name of Jerusalem was Iliyā' madīnat bayt al-maqdis, the Iliyā' derived from the Latin Aelia Capitolina. The use of the term "bēth maqdeshā" in Aramaic referring to Jerusalem is also attested. See S.D. Goitein, "al-Ḳuds," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed., 5: 332–339. 2 Chronicles 36:7 uses the Hebrew phrase bēt miqdāsh to refer to the temple in Jerusalem, and post-Biblical Hebrew literature commonly uses the term "bēt ha-Miqdāsh" to refer to the temple. See Carol Meyers, "Temple, Jerusalem," in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6: 350–369.

143 See Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātiḥ al-ghayb*, on Q 17:1. Note, also that the identification of Jerusalem as the "farthest" place of prayer seems to be contradicted by the identification of Jerusalem and Syria as the "land close by" in which the Romans are said to have been defeated in Q 30:2–3. According to B. Schrieke, J. Horovitz, and R. Hartmann, this is to be taken as evidence that the destination of the Prophet Muhammad's journey was not Jerusalem or the temple, but a celestial sanctuary. See B. Schrieke, "Die Himmelreise Muhammeds," *Der Islam* 6 (1916): 1–30; J. Horovitz, "Muhammeds Himmelfahrt," 159–183; R. Hartmann, "Die Himmelreise Muhammads und ihre Bedeutung in der Religion des Islam," in *Vorträge der bibliothek Warburg*, ed. F. Saxl (Leipzig, 1930), 42–65. This is also noted in Busse, "Jerusalem in the Story of Muhammad's Night Journey and Ascension," 1–2.

144 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 69–74; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 238–243. All of this long report is given on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, though first 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib asks the Prophet Muhammad a question, followed by 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Mu'ādh b. Jabal, Ubayy b. Ka'b, and Ḥudhayfah b. al-Yamān.

145 See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 69–74; Rosenthal, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: From the Creation to the Flood*, 238–243. On the signs and events preceding the Day of Judgment, see al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Imān 37, 'Ilm 2, 21, 24, Istisqā' 27, Zakāt 9, Jihād 95–96, Jizya 15, Anbiyā' 1, Manāqib 7, 25, Manāqib al-Anṣār 51, Tafsīr al-Qur'ān Q 2:6, Q 31:2, Nikāḥ 110, Ashribah 1, Isti'dhān 53, Riqāq 35, 40, Ḥudūd 20, Istitābat al-Murtaddīn 8, Fitan 5, 24–25; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Imān 1, 5, 7, 248–250, Zakāt 58–62, al-Dhikr wa al-du'ā' 8–10, Fitan 39–43, 118, 128, 129; Abū Dā'ūd, *Sunan*, Fitan 1, Malāḥīm 12–13, Sunnah 16; al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi' al-ṣaḥīḥ*, Fitan 21–23, Imān 4, Manāqib 69; al-Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, Buyū' 3, Qaṭ' al-sāriq 5–6; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, Fitan 25–32.

146 On these two references, see also the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 9:12. Muslim exegesis provides different accounts of how many people were saved on Noah's Ark. See, for example, al-Qurṭubī, *Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, on Q 11:40.

147 On this reference and the tradition of the righteous, 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, 1971), 251–256.

148 The dating of this text is far from certain. One of the Syriac manuscripts (D, in British Museum, dated to the twelfth century) claims that it was translated from the Hebrew into Greek and from Greek into Syriac by Mar Jacob of Edessa. The other three Syriac manuscripts (A, B, C) are dated to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. For an English translation, based on the Syriac, see J.H. Charlesworth, "History of the Rechabites," *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2: 443–461. An English translation of the Ethiopic text was published in E.A.W. Budge, *The Life and Exploits of Alexander the Great*, 2: 555–584. An English translation of the Greek was published by W.A. Craigie, "The Narrative of Zosimus concerning the Life of the Blessed," in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to AD 325* (Edinburgh, 1868–1872; revised, Grand Rapids, 1950–1952), 10:220–224 and by Charlesworth, *The History of the Rechabites: The Greek Recension*, Texts and Translations 17, Pseudepigrapha Series 10 (Chico, 1982). The Greek text can be found in M.R. James, "On the Story of Zosimus," *Apocrypha Anecdota* (Cambridge, 1893): 86–108. There is also a French translation of the Syriac in F. Nau, "La Légende inédite des fils de Jonadab, fils de Réchab, et les îles fortunées," *Revue Sémitique* 7 (1899): 136–146. The Armenian is examined in A. Zanolli, "La leggenda di Zosimo secondo la redazione armena," *Giornale della Societa Asiatica Italiana*, n.s. 1 (1924): 146–162.

Unfortunately, there is very little analysis of this text, either in light of Hellenistic Judaism and apocalyptic traditions, or Islamic exegesis. Some work has been done on the former in J.-C. Picard, "L'Histoire des bienheureux du temps de Jérémie et la narration de Zosime: Arriere-plan historique et mythique," in *Pseudépigraphes de l'Ancien Testament et manuscript de la Mer Morte*, ed. M. Philonenko *et al.* (Paris, 1967), 27–43.

149 See, in particular, the explanation given in Chapter 8. The account of the angel's guidance and the unusual animal can be found in Chapter 2.

150 Some of these points are emphasized in E.G. Martin, "The Account of the Blessed Ones: A Study of the Development of an Apocryphon on the Rechabites and Zosimus," PhD Dissertation, Duke University, 1979.

151 For the accounts of Commodian, see his *Instructiones*, published by A. Salvatore, *Instructiones: Libro Secondo; Testo Critico, Traduzione, et Note Esegetiche*, Coll. di Stu. Latin 17 (Naples, 1968), and his *Carmen* published as J. Martin, *Commodiani*

Carmina, CCSL 128 (Turin, 1960). For the Ethiopic Acts of St Matthew, see E.A.W. Budge, *The Contendings of the Apostles*, 2 vols. (London, 1889–1901).

The similarities between these accounts of the "Lost Tribes" and the "History of the Rechabites" has caused some scholars to see a common source. See, for example, M.R. James, "The Lost Tribes," in *The Lost Apocrypha of the Old Testament* (London, 1920), 103–106. The Christian notion of the Parousia might also have relevance in this context. See, for example, the discussion in C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven* (London, 1982) and A.L. Moore, *The Parousia in the New Testament* (Leiden, 1966).

152 See the overview of these themes in James Charlesworth, "The Lost Tribes," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, s.v.

153 Similar references can be found in the Midrash Rabbah on Genesis 30:24 and the Midrash Tanḥuma ha-Qedem va ha-Yashon 1:203 and 4:79. The Midrash Rabbah on Numbers 14:14 identifies the place of the Lost Tribes as the "mountains of darkness" a parallel with the location of the water of life in the Alexander Romance.

154 This citation is taken from the translation of M. Gaster, trans., *Chronicles of Jerahmeel* (London, 1899; reprint, New York, 1971), 188–189. For a closely related text which is associated with the accounts of Eldad ha-Dani, see A. M. Habermann's edition of *Kitve Rabbi Abraham Epstein* (Jerusalem, 1964), 1:88–90. The account of Eldad ha-Dani is preserved in the *Sefer ha-Zichrōnōt* in section 63 although the name Elhanan ha-Soher is used instead. See the Hebrew original of this text in *Kitve Rabbi Abraham Epstein*, 1: 91–94.

155 For the Agadata de-Bnai Mōshe, see Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch*, 6:15–18. Three different Eldad ha-Dani accounts can also be found in Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch*, 2:102–113, 3:6–11, 5:17–21. For further information on Eldad ha-Dani, see A. Epstein, *Eldad ha-Dani* (Pressburg, 1891) and D.H. Miller, *Die Recensionen und Versionen des Eldad Ha-Dani* (Vienna, 1892).

156 Unfortunately, the few studies that have examined the traditions of the "Lost Israelites" or "Sons of Moses" in Islamic contexts have not taken account of pseudepigraphic works or explained the connections with the exegesis on Q 17:1. For some discussion of the "Lost Tribes" in relation to Q 7:159, see Uri Rubin, *Between Bible and Qur'ān: The Children of Israel and the Islamic Self-Image*, esp. 26–30, 46–48. Some of the apocalyptic overtones are referenced in Wilferd Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies in Ḥims in the Umayyad Age," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 31 (1986): 141–185.

157 For an overview of this river and its place in Hebrew sources, see E. Loewenthal, "La storia del fiume Sambaṭion: Alcune note sulla tradizione ebraica antica e medievale," in *Biblische und Judaistiche Studien: Festschrift für Paolo Sacchi*, Judentum und Umwelt 29 (Frankfurt, 1990), 651–663. Loewenthal traces the name back to Deuteronomy 32:26 citing Ramban's exegesis of the verse where he identifies the river as the "Sabaṭion."

158 See the reference in Josephus, *The Jewish War*, trans. J. Thackeray (Cambridge, 1957), 7:5.1. The same river is also mentioned in Pliny, *Natural History*, 31:11. For the various attempts to identify this river and to trace its literary origins, see the many references in Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 6:407–408; Haim Schwarzbaum, "Prolegomenon" to *The Chronicles of Jerahmeel*, 69–71.

159 See Israel Friedländer, "Jewish-Arabic Studies," *Jewish Quarterly Review*, n.s. 1 (1910–1911): 249–252 and Wasserstrom, *Between Muslim and Jew*, esp. 60–64. Also related to this is the discussion of the "Banū Mūsā" in Muslim heresiographical literature. See, for example, Shāhrastānī, *Kitāb al-milal wa al-niḥal* (Cairo, 1910), 168–170. This is also discussed in Wasserstrom, "Species of Misbelief: A History of Muslim Heresiography of the Jews," PhD Dissertation, Univerity of Toronto, 1985.

160 For the text of the Secrets [Nistorōt] of Rabbi Shim'ōn ben Yōḥai, see Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch*, 3:78–82. A partial translation and discussion can be found in B. Lewis,

"An Apocalyptic Vision of Islamic History," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 13 (1950): 305–338. There is a useful discussion of the Jewish reaction to Islam in Wasserstrom, *Between Muslim and Jew*, 48–54. For the reactions of Christians, see Walter Kaegi, "Initial Byzantine Reactions to the Arab Conquest," *Church History* 38.2 (1969): 1–11 and Sebastian Brock, "Syriac Views of Emergent Islam," in *Studies on the First Century of Islamic Society*, ed. G.H.A. Juynboll (Carbondale, 1982). The "Secrets" is also discussed in Patricia Crone and Michael Cook, *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World* (Cambridge, 1977), esp. 4–6 and 35–38.

161 That there were Jews who expected the Muslim conquests to improve their conditions from what they had been under the Christians, see S.D. Goitein, "Jerusalem in the Arab Period (638–1099)," *Jerusalem Cathedra* 2 (1946): 168–196; and Moshe Gil, *A History of Palestine*, esp. 65–74. On the rebuilding of the temple in particular, see Sebastian Brock, "A Letter Attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem on the Rebuilding of the Temple," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 40 (1977): 267–286.

162 For a discussion of this exegesis and polemic, see Leivy Smolar and Moshe Aberbach, "The Golden Calf Episode in Post-Biblical Literature," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 39 (1968): 91–116. Some of the related polemic on this issue can be found in M. Simon, *Verus Israel* (Paris, 1948) and B. Blumenkranz, "Les auteurs Chrétiens latins du Moyen Age sur les Juifs et le Judaisme," *Revue des Etudes Juives* 13 (1948): 38–43. On the golden calf episode from a text-critical perspective, see I. Lewy, "The Story of the Golden Calf Reanalysed," *Vetus Testamentum* 9 (1959): 318–322.

163 On the views of Barnabas, see Pierre Prigent, *Les testimonia le Chréstianisme primitif: Épître de Barnabé i-xvi et ses sources* (Paris, 1961); L.W. Barnard, *Studies in the Apostolic Fathers and their Background* (Oxford, 1966), Chapter 9; K. Wengst, *Tradition und Theologie des Barnabasbriefes* (Berlin, 1971). For an overview of the golden calf episode in the Biblical context, see G.W. Coats, *Rebellion in the Wilderness*, passim and I. Lewy, "The Story of the Golden Calf Reanalyzed," 318–322. See also the Biblical references in Jeremiah 8 and Ezekiel 20.

164 For background on rabbinic views of Israel's election and response to Christian claims, see E. Mihaly, "A Rabbinic Defense of the Election of Israel," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 35 (1964): 112-; B.W. Helfgott, *The Doctrine of Election in Tannaitic Literature* (New York, 1954). Also useful is Y. Baer, "Israel, the Christian Church, and the Roman Empire from the Time of Septimus Severus to the Edict of Toleration of AD 313," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 7 (1961): 79–149.

165 On the various legends associated with Bukht-Naṣar in Islam, see al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*,; See also J. Pauliny, "Islamische Legende über Bukht-Nassar (Nebukadnezar)," *Graecolatina et Orientalia* 4 (1972): 161–183. For the legends of Bukht-Naṣar and John the Baptist, see Heinrich Schützinger, "Die arabische Legende von Nebukadnezar und Johannes dem Täufer," *Der Islam* 40 (1965): 113–141.

166 It is not necessary to claim, as Busse does (3–4), that one of, if not the main, purpose of traditions regarding the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple was to forward the Muslim claim to the area known as the Ḥaram al-Sharīf or Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

In the Midrash Rabbah on Song of Songs 1:6, *Midrash shīr ha-shīrīm rabbah* (Wilna, 1889), 1:38, God tells Elijah that Israel has killed the prophets of God. In the Abōt de Rabbi Nathan 43:121, there are eighteen names mentioned as "servants of God" including Abraham, Jacob, Israel, the Messiah, Moses, Joshua, Caleb, David, Isaiah, Eliakim, Job, Daniel, Hanniah, Mishael, Azariah, Nebuchadnezzar, Zerubbabel, and the angels. Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Jerusalem is interpreted as an act of God. See Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 4:200 and 5:381.

167 See, for example, the long account given on the authority of Ibn Isḥāq and Wahb b. Munabbih in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 658–667; Moshe Perlmann,

The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Ancient Kingdoms, 55–62. On the expansion of stories concerning Nebudchadnezzar, see R.H. Sack, "Nebuchadnezzar and Nabonidus in Folklore and History," *Mesopotamia* 17 (1982): 67–131.

168 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:246. In his exegesis of this verse, Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, reports that the Torah had been taken from their hands, and only a few people who knew the Torah remained among the Israelites. Prophethood was cut off from the tribes, and only one pregnant woman survived from the tribe of the Levites. The people took and imprisoned her hoping that God would give her a son who would be a prophet for them. Her son is Samuel, the prophet mentioned in Q 2:246.

The absence of the Torah is paralleled to the loss of the Ark of the Covenant, the return of which is mentioned in Q 2:248. According to al-Ṭabarī's exegesis of Q 2:246–248, the presence of God, the "Sakīnah" was absent from the Israelites as long as they lacked the Ark of the Covenant. In the Midrash Rabbah on Numbers 35:33, the Israelites' shedding of blood is what drove away the presence of God [shekhīnah], and the temple was destroyed because there was no longer need of it with the absence of God. See Busse, "The Destruction of the Temple and its Reconstruction in the light of Muslim Exegesis of Sūra 17:2–8," esp. 2–3. *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 20 (1996): 1–17.

169 See, for example, Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 17:2–8. See also Busse, "The Destruction of the Temple and its Reconstruction in the light of Muslim Exegesis of Sūra 17:2–8," passim.

170 For the report on the authority of al-Suddī, see the mention in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 657; Moshe Perlmann, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Ancient Kingdoms*, 55. The report on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās can be found in several of the exegetical accounts on Q 17:4–8.

171 For an overview of the Biblical notion of an eschatological army, see E.M. Yamauchi, *Foes From the Northern Frontier* (Grand Rapids, 1982). Magog is mentioned, in Genesis 10:2 and 1 Chronicles 1:5 as one of the descendents of Japeth which include Meschech and Tubal. In Ezekiel 38:2, Gog is identified as the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, from the land of Magog. The Apocalypse of John 20:8 describes both Gog and Magog as peoples. Attempts to explain the origin of the names Gog and Magog are reviewed in Kenneth H. Cuffey, "Gog," and Mitchell G. Reddish, "Gog and Magog," in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 2:1056.

172 For the rabbinic tradition interpreting Hezekiah in the rôle of the Messiah, and Sennacherib and his armies as Gog and Magog, destroyed by God before they could defeat Jerusalem, see the Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 94a and Midrash Rabbah on Song of Songs 4:8.

173 On the Dajjāl not entering Mecca, see al-Bukhārī: Faḍā'il al-Madīnah 9; Muslim: Fitan 119. On Jerusalem being protected from the anti-Christ, see Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, 5: 434–435.

174 Jon Levenson, *Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezekiel 40–48*, p. 25, notes the correspondence among the terms "very high mountain" here in Ezekiel 40:2, "high and steep mountain" in 17:22, the "mountain of the heights of Israel" in 17:23, and "my holy mountain" in 20:40.

175 J. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 115–120 and W. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia, 1979), 1:174–175 argue that the term should be interpreted as "navel" of the earth. Shemaryahu Talmon contends that the term means "high plateau" of the land. See Sh. Talmon, "Ṭabbūr ha-areẓ ve ha-shiṭah ha-meshwūh," *Tarbiz* 45 (5736/1976): 163–177; Sh. Talmon, "HR/GB'H," *Theologische Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament* 2: 472–475.

176 In addition to the sources cited above, see the still useful overview of A.J. Wensinck, "The Ideas of the Western Semites Concerning the Navel of the Earth," passim. See

also S. Terrien, "The Omphalos Myth and Hebrew Religion," *Vetus Testamentum* 20 (1970): 315–338.

177 For the origins of "Eden" in the Akkadian ['edinu], from the Sumerian word for "steppe" ['edin], see E.A. Speiser, *Genesis*, Anchor Bible (New York, 1964), p. 16. Although a number of scholars have accepted this etymology with caution, there are some difficulties with this explanation. See the explanations in A.R. Millard, "The Etymology of Eden," *Vetus Testamentum* 34 (1984): 103–106 and Howard Wallace, *The Eden Narrative*, Harvard Semitic Museum, Harvard Semitic Monographs 32 (Altanta, 1985).

Whether or not the etymology holds, the notion that Eden was situated on an elevated plateau is evident from the account in Genesis 2:8–14, as has been noted by a number of commentators. See, for example, H. Gunkel, *Das Märchen im Alten Testament* (Tübingen, 1921), 45; Gunkel, *Genesis*, 6d ed. (Göttingen, 1964), 36; C. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Commentary*, trans. J. Schullion (London, 1984) and U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis: From Adam to Noah (Genesis I–IV, 8)* (Jerusalem, 1961). For a slightly different interpretation, see Jonas Greenfield, "A Touch of Eden," in *Orientalia J. Duchesne-Guillemin emerito oblata*, Acta Iranica 23 (Leiden, 1984), 219–224.

178 Other associations of Zion with Eden in Ezekiel include the mention of the trees fed by the subterranean waters in Ezekiel 31 and the water of life in Ezekiel 47, both of which are discussed in J. Levenson, *Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezekiel 40–48*, 25–36.

179 On Ezekiel's critique of the Israelites in the Wilderness of Wandering, see C. Barth, "Zur Bedeutung der Wüstentradition," *Supplements to Vetus Testamentus* 15 (1968): 14–23. There is a useful review of some of the older redaction-critical studies of the wilderness tradition in Simon J. DeVries, "The Origin of the Murmuring Tradition," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 87 (1968): 51–58.

180 J. Levenson, *Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezekiel 40–48*, 37–53 notes that the only laws from the Priestly source not paralleled, are those which deal with vows (Num. 30), the raid on Midian (Num. 31) and the stations of the Exodus (Num. 33:1–50).

181 This is following the Massoretic Text. The LXX reads "making them sacrifice all their first-born, which was to punish them, so that they would learn that I am Yahweh."

182 See the discussion of these verses and the description of the Torah as a punishment upon the Israelites in al-Zamakhsharī, *Kashshāf*, on Q 3:93. For further discussion of the food laws applicable to Jews and Muslims, see Michael Cook, "Early Muslim Dietary Law," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 7 (1986): 217–277.

183 On the Quran as the "new" Torah, see al-Dārimī, *Sunan*, Fadā'il al-Qur'ān 1. A similar statement is found in al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itiqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 1:115 in Section 17 on the "Names of the Qur'ān and the names of the sūrahs." This phrase is also mentioned in Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, 25.

184 On the revelation of special verses to the Prophet Muhammad which had not been revealed to any prophet previously, see al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itiqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Section 6, 74–75. On the revelation of the Quran during the Night Journey, see Geo Widengren, "Muḥammad, the Apostle of God, and his Ascension," *Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift* 1955:1.

185 On this important account, see the reports included in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Bad' al-waḥy 1. It is also found in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Anbiyā' 22 Tafsīr on Q 96:1; Muslim, *Jāmi' al-ṣaḥīḥ*, Imān 252 and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, 2:223, 233. See also the account of the Quran and its relation to the Torah and Gospel in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīm*, on Q 28:48–49.

186 In his exegesis of Q 2:47–48, al-Qurṭubī mentions the opinion of Sa'īd b. Jubayr and Abū Mālik who claim that the verses are directed toward the Muslims as a warning.

Despite the reference to the Israelites being "kings" in Q 5:20, suggesting a later context for the speech of Moses, Ibn 'Abbās and Mujāhid, along with others, maintain that Q 5:20–26 refers to the Israelites in the Wilderness of Wandering, not later in Jerusalem.

187 See al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:47–48. This edition includes 33 pages of exegesis on these two verses in which al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī demonstrates the Quranic meaning of intercession [shafā'ah] from its many usages in the Quran and applies it to this condemnation of the Israelites.

188 See Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 16 (25:4–5); Tosefta Sōtah 4:2–6; Babylonian Talmud, Baba Mezia 86b; Midrash Pesiqta Rabbati 14. See also the account in Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 3:43 and the references in 6:16.

189 The comparison of the Prophet Muhammad with Moses on the basis of the Night Journey and Ascension is discussed in al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 17:1–3.

Conclusion

1 This is the second of two reports of this episode given in Ibn Hishām on the authority of Ibn Isḥāq. See Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-nabawīyah*, 1:302–303; Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, 72. For the report in Ibn Sa'd, see his *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, 1:119. For the report in al-Ṭabarī, see his *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 1157–1158. The other version, given on the authority of Ibn Isḥāq in Ibn Hishām can also be found in al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, 972. There are several versions in Muslim Bad' al-waḥy 72, all of which precede the Isrā' and Mir'āj.

There is a lengthy textual analysis of this and related reports on the washing of the Prophet Muhammad's heart in Harris Birkeland, *The Legend of the Opening of Muhammed's Breast*, Avhandlinger Utgitt av Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo, II. Hist.-Filos. Klasse. 1955:3 (Oslo, 1955). It should be noted that Birkeland's concerns are with his reconstruction of the origins of the "legend," but it is not entirely clear that one should accept his dating of the sources or his assumptions regarding the development of the accounts and their trajectory.

2 On the motif of weighing, see Albrecht Noth and Lawrence Conrad, *The Early Islamic Historical Tradition: A Source Critical Study* (Princeton, 1994), 170. Note that the Muslim exegetes do not normally use this to suggest the divinity of the Prophet Muhammad as is stated by Birkeland. See, for example, his statement that the legend of the opening of the chest "to a Muslim ... is more a sign of Muhammed's divine quality than a consecration" (9).

3 On this, see Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, Introduction, 10. Also note the similarities with ancient Egyptian practices. There is mention of a balance in other Muslim theological texts relating to descriptions of the judgment of souls after death. On the judgment of Hārūt and Mārūt, see al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:102; E. Littmann, "Harut und Marut," in *Andreas-Festschrift* (Leipzig, 1916), 70–87; P.J. de Menasce, "Une légende indo-iranienne dans l'angélologie judéo-musulmane: à propos de Hārūt et Mārūt," *Études Asiatiques* (1947): 10–18.

4 For an overview of some of the traditions relating to the Prophet Muhammad's childhood stories, see J. Horovitz, "Zur Muhammed-legende," *Der Islam* 5 (1914): 41–53.

5 Earlier students of the heart washing motif consider its connection with the Night Journey to be primary. See, for example, Schrieke, "Die Himmelreise Muhammeds," *Der Islam* 6 (1915): 1–30; Bevan, "Muhammed's Ascension to Heaven," *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 27 (1914): 49–61. J. Horovitz, "Muhammeds Himmelfahrt," *Der Islam* 9 (1918–1919): 159–183. Others have

argued that the association with the Night Journey is secondary. See Birkeland, *The Legend of the Opening of Muhammed's Breast*, passim; Busse, "Jerusalem in the Story of Muhammad's Night Journey and Ascension," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 14 (1991): 1–40. On the evolution of the motif as a whole, see the analysis in Uri Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder*, 59–75 where it is analyzed as an initiation narrative.

There are some notable exceptions to this, such as al-Ṣaliḥī, *al-Sīrah al-Shāmīyay* (2:82–86) who collects the different references to the heart washing and claims that the event took place four different times.

6 On the washing of the heart and the Night Journey linked to the origins of Muhammad's prophethood and Islam, see R. Hartmann, "Die Himmelsreise Muhammads und ihre Bedeutung in der Religion des Islam," 42–65.

Other collections also preserve this account of the washing and weighing, specifically tying it to the Prophet Muhammad's first revelation. See al-Ṭayālisī, *Musnad*, ed. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Muḥsin (Cairo, 1999), 1539; Abū Nu'aym, *Dalā'il al-nubūwah* (Hyderabad, 1977), 163; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, 6:409. In these accounts, the event takes place when Muhammad and Khadijah are on Ḥirā during Ramaḍān in seclusion.

7 This citation is taken from Mālik b. Anas, *Muwaṭṭa'*, ed. Muḥammad Fū'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī (Beirut, n.d.), 2:28. It is also cited in Muslim, Ṭahārah 12. A fuller explanation of the terms and their meanings can be found in Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Bāqī al-Zurqānī, *Sharḥ al-Zurqānī 'alā Muwaṭṭa' al-Imām Mālik* (Beirut, n.d.), 2:14, pp. 93–97.

8 On Muslim rites of purification and expiation in relation to a wider cultural and religious milieu, see Goldziher, "Wasser als Dämonen abwehrendes Mittel," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 13 (1910): 20–46; Karl Voller, "Die Symbolik des masḥ," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 8 (1905): 97–103; Wensinck, "Die Entstehung der muslimischen Reinheitsgesetzgebung," *Der Islam* 5 (1914): 62–80 and "Animismus und Dämonenglaube im Untergrunde des jüdischen und islamischen rituellen Gebets," *Der Islam* 4 (1913): 219–235.

9 This is taken from Mālik b. Anas, *Muwaṭṭa'*, 2:31. It is also cited in Muslim, Ṭahārah 11. See also al-Zurqānī, *Sharḥ al-Zurqānī*, 2:14, pp. 102–103. Another similar report, given on the authority of 'Abdallāh al-Ṣunābiḥī, is cited in Mālik b. Anas, *Muwaṭṭa'*, 2:30, and is also found in al-Nasā'ī 1:85 and Ibn Mājah 1:6. See the commentary in al-Zurqānī, *Sharḥ al-Zurqānī*, 2:14, pp. 100–102.

10 For these references and a brief discussion of the thing removed from the Prophet Muhammad's heart, see Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder*, 61 and Birkeland, *The Legend of the Opening of Muhammed's Breast*, 7.

11 For the accounts of the "seal" representing the "pommel of the Hajalah bird" and the "body of a white pigeon," see the report in al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-nubūwah*, 1:259–267. For the relation of this to the opening of his heart, see al-Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-nubūwah*, 2:7–8.

12 See W. Madelung, "'Iṣma," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed., 4:182–184. On the specific relation of this notion to the Prophet Muhammad, see Birkeland, *The Lord Guideth* (Uppsala, 1956), 29–32 and Tor Andrae, *Die Person Muhammeds in Lehre und Glauben seiner Gemeinde* (Uppsala, 1917), 124–174.

13 On "grace" defined as something given by God to people who have not earned it or do not deserve it, see D. Bakker, "Sin and Grace in Mohammedanism," *Muslim World* 6 (1916): 394–400; F.J. Barny, "The Koranic Doctrine of Redemption," *Muslim World* 2 (1912): 60–65; Habib Belhkhodja, "Le point de vue de l'Islam sur le travail," *Cahiers Tunis* 20 (1977–1978): 135–149; Uthman Yahya, "Man and his Perfection in Muslim Theology," *Muslim World* 49 (1950): 19–29.

A wider-ranging category is "forgiveness" and its place in Muslim tradition. On this, see Mahdi Allam, "The Theory of Forgiveness as Expressed in the Quran," *Third Conference of the Academy of Islamic Research* (1966): 511–527; idem, "The Concept

of Forgiveness in the Qur'ān," *Islamic Culture* 41 (1967): 139–153; R.A. Blasdell, "The Muslim Attitude Towards Sin," *Muslim World* 31 (1941): 145–148.

In much of these studies there is a strong emphasis upon a confessional or theological evaluation of certain soteriological ideas in Muslim tradition, but there has been very little systematic study of the various approaches found in different Muslim thinkers and texts. For a useful although dated overview of what systematic study has been done, see M.M. Bravmann, "On the Spiritual Background of Early Islam and the History of its Principal Concepts," *Le Muséon* 64 (1951): 317–356. More recently, see the brief work of Frederick Denny, "The Will in the Qur'ān," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 40 (1981): 253–257. Denny, "The Problem of Salvation in the Quran: Key Terms and Concepts," in *In Quest of an Islamic Humanism* (1984): 196–210 is useful for the lexical range of direct terminology found in the text of the Quran.

14 al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 108:1.

15 See the references in Geoffrey Bibby, *Looking for Dilmun* (New York, 1969).

16 See, for example, some of the reports given in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 108:1. Similar descriptions are given in the exegesis of Q 47:15, 77:41–45, and 88:8–16.

17 See the account in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, al-Ḥarth wa al-muzāra' 227. For a Persian variant in which the three liquids are water, milk, and wine, see Blouchet, "Études sur l'histoire religieuse de l'Iran," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 60 (1899): 223–236. This is translated into English in G. Widengren, "Appendix No. 2," in his *Muḥammad, The Apostle, and His Ascension*, 220–226.

18 On the rivers of Paradise and their relation to the water of life, see D. Neiman, "Gihon and Pishon: Mythological Antecedents to the Two Enigmatic Rivers of Eden," in *Proceedings of the Sixth Congress of Jewish Studies* (Jerusalem, 1977), 1:321–328; M. Görg, *Das Zeit der Begugnung: Untersuchung zu den sakralen Zeittraditionen Altisraels*, passim; A. Lemaire, "Le pays d'Eden et le Bet-Adini: aux origines d'un mythe," *Syria* 58 (1981): 313–330.

19 This is given on the authority of 'Abdallāh b. 'Amr and is taken from the many reports cited in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Riqāq 52.

20 See, for example, the report cited on the authority of Anas b. Mālik in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Riqāq 52. Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, on Bukhārī Riqāq 52 provides an extensive discussion of related reports on the location and description of the Prophet Muhammad's Pool with particular reference to its identification with the other waters and rivers of Paradise.

21 It may be that this is supposed to be taken as a reference to older Biblical references to the temple as a place where God feeds his people, such as Psalm 36:8–10 where the source of food and drink is the water of life. On this reference, see Greenfield, "A Touch of Eden," 220–221.

22 See al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Janā'iz 73, Shirb 10, Jizya 4, Manāqib al-Anṣār 8, Maghāzī 17; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Ṭahārah 36–90, Ṣalāt 53–54; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, Zuhd 36. There is a brief discussion of Muhammad at the heavenly pool in Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed: Its Genesis and Historical Development* (Cambridge, 1932), 231–232.

23 See, for example, the report given on the authority of 'Aqabah b. 'Āmir in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Riqāq 52. There is a rich study of the notion of the ancient Near Eastern king symbolized as the "Gardener" with the tree and water of life in Widengren, *The King and the Tree of Life in Ancient Near Eastern Religion*, passim. Although the association of these symbols with the Prophet Muhammad is a major implication of Widengren's work, he does not develop fully the idea with references to Muslim sources.

In other contexts, possibly derived from the reference to "God's favor" in Q 3:15, the "treasurer of Paradise" mentioned here, is identified as "Riḍwān" who serves the righteous dead from the waters of life upon their entrance into paradise. On this, see W. Raven, "Riḍwān," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2d ed., 8:519.

24 On these links, see the report in Ibn Mājah, *Sunan* Zuhd 36 which identifies the location of the water specifically with the Ka'bah and the temple in Jerusalem.

25 Several reports in al-Bukhārī mention the virtues of giving water to people, especially during the pilgrimage to Mecca. See, for example, al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Shirb 10. It is also reported that among the three types of sinners that God will not allow into heaven is the person who refused to give water. See al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Shirb 11. The drinking of Zamzam itself is prescribed with a special ritual which includes thanking God as in the directions Abraham gives to his guests when offering them food and water in the sanctuary he establishes in Beersheba. On this ritual, see Ibn Mājah, *Sunan* Manāsik 78.

For some of the possible historical background to the significance of water and giving water in Arabian rituals, see J. Ryckmans, "Un rite d'istisqâ'," *Annales Institute philologique et historique* 20 (Bruxelles, 1973): 379–388.

26 Jon Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*, 230.

27 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 5:25. This report is also found in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 5:25 and in al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr fī al-tafsīr al-ma'thūr*, on Q 5:25.

28 See al-Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 5:25.

29 For some of the analyses of Moses' conflicts with the Israelites, see DeVries, "The Origin of the Murmuring Tradition," 51–58; R.P. Carroll, "Rebellion and Dissent in Ancient Israelite Society," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 80 (1977): 176–204; Pierre Buis, "Les conflits entre Moïse et Israël dans Exode et Nomres," *Vetus Testamentum* 28 (1978): 267–270. M. Vervenne, "The Protest Motif in the Sea Narrative," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovaniensis* 63 (1987): 257–271 provides an overview of the conflict tradition but focuses mostly on Exodus 14:11–12 and related passages.

30 Related to this interpretation of the "sin" is the idea that on the rock was inscribed the name of God. See Sefer ha-Zohar on Numbers 20:12. A number of the different traditions regarding this episode are presented in Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 3:311–314.

31 For some interesting insights on the sin of Moses from a source-critical perspective, see W.H. Propp, "The Rod of Aaron and the Sin of Moses," 19–26. Propp plays on what he sees as the scribal addition of "his" in the MT to "the rod" found in the LXX. Also on this issue of Aaron's rod, see G.J. Wenham, "Aaron's Rod (Num. 17:16–28)," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 93 (1981). For another text-critical analysis, see K.D. Sakenfeld, "Theological and Redactional Problems in Numbers 20:2–13," in *Understanding the Word*, ed. J.T. Bulter, *et al.*, JSOT Supplement 37 (Sheffield, 1985), 133–154.

See also M. Margaliot, "Hēṭ Mōshe ve Aharōn be-Me Merībah," *Beth Mikra* 19 (1974): 374–400; J. Milgrom, "Magic, Monotheism and the Sins of Moses," in *The Quest for the Kingdom of God*," ed. H.B. Huffman, *et al.* (Winona Lake, 1983), 251–265.

32 See Rashi on Numbers 1:20.

33 Others have seen in Exodus 32:20 a parallel with the ordeal described in Numbers 5:11–31. This is paralleled by a description of the red cow sacrifice given on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, on Q 2:67–73. The "golden" color of the calf would also parallel the "red" or "rust" color of the cow being sacrificed. On the red cow sacrifice, see J. Milgrom, "The Paradox of the Red Cow," *Vetus Testamentum* 31 (1981): 62–72 and David Wright, "Purification from Corpse Contamination in Numbers XXXI: 19–24," *Vetus Testamentum* 35 (1985): 213–223.

34 See Rashi on Numbers 20:2.

35 On this particular significance of the water, see Philippe Reymond, *L'eau, sa vie, et sa signification dans l'ancien testament*, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 6 (Leiden, 1958), esp. 212–234.

36 On this point, see the conflicting Christian interpretations of Moses as both the prophet who prefigures Christ in sacrificing himself for his sinful people, and the mere human whose inability to lead underlines the fact that a man could not redeem Israel but that it required God himself in human form. For some of these traditions related to Moses as the "Mann-Gottes," see G. Widengren, "What Do we Know about Moses?" in *Proclamation and Presence: Old Testament Essays in Honour of Gwynne Henton Davies*, ed. John Durham and J.R. Porter (Richmond, 1970), 21–47; Victor Turgman, *De l'autorité de Moïse: Ex 15, 22–27* (Eilsbrunn, 1987). On Moses as the "jus primae noctis," see Gressmann, *Mose und Seine Zeit*, esp. 66–89.

37 See, for example, the references in Acts 3:22–26 and 7:37. For some of the early Christian praises of Moses prefiguring Christ as the defender of sinners, see 1 Clement 53:3 and Clement, *Stromata*, 4:19. See also the Homilies of John Chrysostom, No. 13 on John 1:15 and No. 12 on Acts 7:35.

38 For an overview of the Jewish and Christian focus upon the expiatory aspect of Abraham's sacrifice, see Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*, 173–199 (Jewish) and 200–219 (Christian).

39 On the Muslim use of these passages in the description of the Prophet Muhammad, see Guillaume, *New Light on the Life of Muhammad*, Journal of Semitic Studies, Monograph Series 1 (Manchester, 1956), esp. 32–33. For a more indepth discussion of the use of Isaiah in Muslim exegesis, see Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, 78, 83–88.

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, 1956), esp. 6–22. See also *The Isaiah Targum*, trans. Bruce Chilton, The Aramaic Bible 11 (Wilmington, 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, 1979), esp. 123–177. 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, 1873).

40 This is taken from Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā*, 32, s.v. on Adam. This report is also found in al-Ḥākim, al-Bayhaqī and Ibn 'Asākir.

41 For an example of how the Quran is equated with the return of Adam's descendants to Eden, see Muqātil b. Sulaymān, *Tafsīr Muqātil b. Sulaymān*, ed. 'Abdallāh Maḥmūd Shiḥātah (Cairo, 1979), on Q 2:37 where the rituals and cultic acts of Islam are specified.

42 On these final verses see, for example, the comments in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*, on Q 18:110 and Suyūṭī *al-Durr al-manthūr fī tafsīr al-ma'thūr*, on Q 18:109–110.

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