

THE
SOURCES OF ISLAM

AN ABRIDGED REPRINT

BY THE
REV. W. ST. CLAIR-TISDALL, M.A.
C.M.S. MISSIONARY FROM JULFA

TRANSLATED BY
SIR WILLIAM MUIR, K.C.S.I. D.C.L., LL.D., PH. D.

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PREFACE

This remarkable book has been written by the Rev. W. St. Clair-Tisdall, Missionary, C.M.S., Julfa, Persia. It takes up a subject never as yet brought properly under discussion either by Muslims or Christians - namely, the origin of the Koran, and the Sources from which both it and Tradition have been derived. By the teaching of Mohammed the Koran is of divine origin, and was brought down, as Tradition tells us, word by word by Gabriel to the Prophet's ear. The original is "written on a Tablet, kept in Heaven,"¹ "sent down on the night of al Cadr"² by the Almighty. Thus the Koran comes from God alone, heavenly, divine, and uncreate from all eternity. Now if it be shown that much of this grand book can be traced to human Sources existing daily around the Prophet, then Islam falls to the ground. And this is what the Author proves with marvelous power and erudition.

Such Sources as were derived from the Arabs themselves are treated first (chap. 2). The shadow of divine unity still subsisted among them. There were a multitude of gods and idols, of which each tribe had its special ones, as Lilt and Ozza for the Quraysh. The intercession of these was sought; but above and beyond them all was the ancient memory of one great God, Allah - the Al ("the") a proof of sovereign unity. Curious that the word occurs in the Prophet's family, his father and uncle being called Abdallah and Obeidallah. There was thus a local Source to build upon. Then we have the multitude of national habits and practices, as the Hajj, the Kabah, etc., maintained in the new faith, though all of earthly origin. It was indeed the Prophet's endeavor to pull down all purely idolatrous worship;³ and so he did, except the kissing of the Black stone, too popular a practice to be abandoned. A curious example of a purely local Source may be found in a number of verses of the Koran which are shown to be

1 Sura lxxxv. 21; vi. 19.

2 Sura xcvi. 1. Sent down, the, as they say, to the lowest Heaven, and thence by Gabriel communicated to the Prophet, bit by bit, as occasion required.

3 "What think ye of Allat and Al Uzza and Monat, the other third? ... They are but empty names which ye and your fathers have named Goddesses." Sura liii. 19.

taken from the Moallaqit, a plagiarism rather difficult for the Muslim to conjoin with the heavenly origin of his Revelation.

Chapter 3 explains the influence of Judaism. And first we are told that the Five times of prayer were borrowed from the Sabeans. The Jews were numerous and powerful throughout Arabia, and Mohammed, having sought their conversion in vain, at last fought against them and banished them from the country. But in the meantime he had taken much of his teaching from their books, the Talmud, their Commentaries, etc. The first Qibla was Jerusalem, and the marvellous tales thus derived cannot be read without astonishment. Thus there is the story of Cain and Abel, and of their parents weeping while the raven showed how to bury the dead; Abraham cast by Nimrod into the fire unhurt;⁴ the Queen of Sheba uncovering her legs as she walked before Solomon over the glass floor, which she takes for a sheet of water; the descent of Harut and Marut and other spirits from above to tempt mankind; Sammael the Angel of Death speaking out of the Golden Calf - and other fictitious tales too numerous to mention. It is strange that though the Jewish and Christian Scriptures are spoken of throughout the Koran with the utmost devotion, only one passage is quoted from them, namely, "The meek shall inherit the earth." In respect also of the Tables of the Testimony put by Moses into the Ark, the Muslims, following the extravagant notions of the Jews who fancied that all their sacred books with the Talmud were also in the Ark, place on the "Preserved Table" their own Koran! A vast emerald mountain has also arisen out of the word Cau in the Talmudic explanation of Thohu, Genesis i. 2; of which it takes 2000 years to make the circuit, and 500 the ascent. Such are the wild vagaries of Muslim tradition and the Sources whence they come.

Chapter 4 next shows the apochryphal Christian sources from which Islam has so largely borrowed. There were many Christian tribes in Arabia belonging to unorthodox sects who had sought refuge there from persecution in Roman lands. Little versed in their own Scriptures, they spent the time in fables. The Prophet, longing for a universal faith, listened gladly to such stories, which thus became the Source of much we find in the Koran.

First we have the fairy tale of the Cave wherein the seven Sleepers slumbered for ages, fearing persecution.⁵ Next we have endless stories of the

4 The story arises out of the strange mistake of Ur of the Chaldees (Gen. xv. 7) for the same word signifying an oven or fire.

5 It is worth the while of anyone not familiar with the Koran to read this at length, as given in Sura xviii. 8 24

PREFACE

Virgin Mary, both in the Koran and with vast detail also in Tradition; her mother Hannah, her childhood as fed by angels in the Temple; Joseph chosen by a miraculous rod, etc., much as in the ProtoEvangelium and other Egyptian and Coptic writings.⁶ Then there are the tales of Jesus, as of his speaking in the cradle, breathing life into birds of clay, etc.⁷ These the Prophet learned probably from Mary his Coptic concubine, as they are all contained in such Coptic books as the Gospel of St. Thomas.⁸ Thus we have the descent of the Table from Heaven (derived no doubt from the table of the Lord's Supper); the promise by Jesus of a prophet to come, called Ahmed,⁹ which was apparently caused by the mistake of *periklytos* for *parakletos*; the notion that the resemblance only, and not the real person, of Christ was slain,¹⁰ derived from the heretic Basilides, etc. Passing over much of interest, we may close our review of Christian sources by notice of the Balance, briefly mentioned in the Koran¹¹, but surrounded by a vast variety of Coptic tales. Two Egyptian books (one of ancient date placed in the tombs to be read by the dead) are quoted at length; a wonderful Egyptian picture exhibits how the Balance weighs the spirits, good and bad; and strange sights are given of Adam and Abraham in the Heavens beyond.

Chapter 5 relates many things from ancient Zoroastrian and even Hindu writings. Persia, far ahead of Arabia, had a sensible influence upon it, and much of what is Oriental in the Koran and Tradition is evidently derived from Pehlavi and other Eastern sources. Thus we have the marvels of the Seven heavens, seen by the Prophet on his ascent from Jerusalem; the Houries; Azazil and other spirits coming up from Hades; the Light of Mohammed, the bridge of Sirat, etc. - all illustrated by the author's marvellous knowledge of Eastern literature, beliefs, and history. The Prophet must have learned all these things from the foreigners who frequented Medina. Suspected of this, he indignantly replied that his tongue was not foreign, but pure Arabic alone.¹²

6 Aaron's sister Maryam is confused with Mary of the Gospel.

7 Sura iii. 41; v. 19.

8 Sura v. 121.

9 Sura lxi. 6.

10 Sura iv. 156.

11 Sura xlii. 16; ci. 5 and 6: "He whose balance is heavy shall live in pleasure; but whose balance is light, his dwelling -place shall be hell fire."

12 Sura xvi. 103: "They say a certain man teacheth him; but the tongue of him whom they mention is foreign, while this is simple Arabic" - hardly an answer in point!

The concluding chapter tells us of a few inquirers in Arabia, called Hanifs, just before the time of Mohammed. There were four at Mecca, of whom one became a Christian, another a Muslim, and a third joined Caesar. The fourth, Waraca, was first a Jew and then a Christian. One of these, a pious devotee, worshipped yearly in a cave near Mecca, and no doubt influenced the Prophet, who used to visit the same place for quiet and lonely contemplation.

The Sources of Islam, our Author in conclusion shows, have been altogether human and misleading. They all passed through the Prophet's mind as he composed the Koran, which thus bears throughout the impress of his own heart and character. One good thing there is in it, namely, a thorough testimony to the Gospel and "Torah"; all true Muslims are accordingly invited to study both, and thus through our Saviour Christ obtain the true promises of their father Abraham.

The Sources is a noble work, and reflects high distinction on the writer. Hitherto much labour has been spent in showing the falsity and errors of Islam, as has been ably done by Pfander and others. It has remained for our Author not only to conceive anew, and perhaps more thorough and effective, mode of treating the so-called divine and eternal faith, but also in doing so to prove its Sources to be of purely human origin; and that in so masterly and effective a way that it seems impossible for good Muslims to resist the conclusion drawn. And for all this the thanks of the Christian world are eminently due to the Rev. W. St. Clair-Tisdall.

W. MUIR.

PREFACE

INTRODUCTION

Since every religion must have had a Source from which it sprung, so this last faith, Islam, must like all others have had its originating cause. Accepted neither by Jews nor Christians, many treatises have been written to convert it. These have been answered by Muslims in such Works as the *Mizan ool Mavazfn*; but unfortunately the learning of the Authors of these defenses of Islam has not been equal to their zeal. The Object of the present work is to investigate the various theories which have been put forward as to the origin of Islam. The Author first states briefly the Muslim view, and then examines the claim of those who hold that Islam has a human and not a divine origin.

In this new endeavor, it has been the Author's object, by God's help, to show from whence the Muslim faith has risen, its foundation and origin, in other words, its Source. And he trusts that those who study the following pages, having learned the origin of the Faith, may not lose sight of those Sources whence has arisen the vast stream which has overflowed so many nations of the East.

NOTES

This book is a devastating attack on the "divine" origins of the Koran and Islam. Nearly all of the ideas that are found in Islamic doctrine were taken from the surrounding cultures. The only original ideas are that Mohammed is the prophet of Allah, and if you do not believe this then jihad can be used to convince you. Everything else is derivative.

It is a sad comment on modern Islamic scholarship that we have to reproduce a text that is over a century old to see the sources of the Koran. Unfortunately, the universities of today are no longer capable of adding to the body of knowledge about Islam.

This book is a reprint, but it is not an exact reproduction of the original. The spelling of words has been modernized to some degree. Also, the formatting has been changed for easier reading.

Since this book was scanned and then optical character recognition used to create the text, there are undoubtedly errors that have been introduced.

Bill Warner



THE MUSLIM VIEW OF THE SOURCES OF ISLAM

Chapter 1

Muslims hold that their Faith came direct from heaven. The Koran and all their tenets were sent down by Gabriel from God himself to Mohamed. Much of their faith is also built upon Tradition handed down by the Prophet's followers. But the Shi'ite differ from the Sunni as to much that is told us by Tradition; and the Author, therefore, has based his arguments mainly on the Koran which is accepted as divine by every Muslim, and on such tradition as is comfortable thereto. As for the Koran, it is held to be of eternal origin, recorded in heaven, and lying as it does there upon the "Preserved Table" (Sura lxxxv. 21).¹ Thus God alone is held to be the "Source" of Islam; and if so, then all effort to find a human origin for any part of it must be in vain. Now, if we can trace the teaching of any part of it, to an earthly Source, or to human systems existing previous to the Prophet's age, then Islam at once falls to the ground.

It therefore behooves every true and earnest Believer, with the utmost diligence to test whether this claim be true or not. If their opponents can bring to light no human Source, they may contend that by admission Islam is indeed divine; but if otherwise, they cannot but perceive what fatal conclusion must be drawn. Let us then test the assertions of those who hold to the existence of human Sources, and see whether any portion of the doctrines and tenets of Islam can be traced to other Faiths or Sources preceding the Prophet's age, or existing at the time.

1 See also Sura vi. 19 and xcvi. 1. Also Ibn Khaldun, i. 194 and ii. 458.

ARAB CUSTOMS MAINTAINED IN ISLAM

Chapter 2

Some hold that these are its initial Source. When the desire arose in the mind of Mohammed to draw his people from the worship of idols to that of God Almighty; and when he remembered that their forefathers in the days of Abraham believed in the divine Unity; and further that they inherited many of the beliefs and customs of their pious forefathers; he was unwilling to force abandonment of them all, but desired rather to purify their faith, and to maintain such ancient practices as he thought good and reasonable. And so we find this passage in the Koran:

Koran 4:124 Who is better than he that resigneth himself to God, and worketh righteousness, and followeth the religion of Abraham the faithful? and truly God took Abraham for his friend.

And again:

Koran 3:89 Say, The Lord speaketh truth; follow ye, therefore, the faith of Abraham the righteous; for he was no idolator.

And yet once more:

Koran 6:89 Say, Verily my Lord hath directed me into the right way, the true faith, the religion of righteous Abraham, and he was no idolater.

Hence it came to pass that (excepting the worship of idols, a plurality of gods, the killing of daughters and other such evil practices), many of the ideas and customs subsisting among the Arabs from the time of Abraham were retained by the Prophet, and form part of his religion. Although some of the Southern and Eastern tribes became mixed up with the children of Ham, yet we learn, as much from the Torah as from Ibn Hisham, Tabari and others, that the North and West of the country was occupied by the progeny of Shem. Some tribes were descended from Joktan, others from Hagar, Ketura, and Ishmael. Among the latter was the tribe of the Quraysh, itself among the descendants of Abraham. Now, although the children of Shem had greatly lost the purity of their faith from mixing with the tribes of Syria, yet when all the people of those parts, except the Jews, had altogether forgotten the Unity of God, still the dwellers in the North and West of the Peninsula retained a certain knowledge of the Unity divine. There is every reason to believe that in the days of Job, the

stars, sun, and moon were worshipped in those parts of Arabia; 1 and Herodotus, more than four centuries before Christ, tells us that the Arabs of his day had only two gods, Orotal and Alitat, 1evidently meaning Allah-tainii and Allat, though as a foreigner he was not exactly acquainted with the local form of the names. The term Allah itself is repeatedly found in the seven Moallaqat, whose authors lived before the ministry of Moham-med, and also in the Dewan of Labid.

Still more, we know that the Kabah was of old the holy Masjid of the Arab tribes at large; for we learn from Diodorus Siculus, sixty years before the Christian era, that it then existed (Bk. iii.). From the use of *al* (or the) in Allah it is manifest that the Unity of God was never forgotten by the Arabs. The Koran, indeed, calls them idolators for giving other gods the worship due to Him alone. But they never held those other gods on an equality with the great God above, whom by their adoration they sought specially to propitiate. The following story from early Muslim writers makes this all the more clear: "Some of the Abyssinian Refugees returned to Mecca this verse was read:

Koran 53:19, *What think ye of Allat and Al Uzza and Manat the other, the third?*

Satan cast these words into the reader's lips: 'These three noble ones whose intercession is to be hoped for.'

When the Sura ended, the whole company bowed down in adoration; and the Idolators together with them, thinking that their gods had been thus graciously acknowledged. The strange episode was spread abroad by Satan, and the Refugees hastily returned to Mecca expecting to find the whole city converted." Beidhawi and others are the more inclined to believe this tale:

Koran 22:51 *Truly we have sent no Apostle or Prophet before thee, but when he read, Satan suggested some (error) in his reading; but God shall make void that which Satan suggested.*

Along with the early spread of idolatry, there still survived throughout Arabia the consciousness of One true God. Shahrastani tells us this, and gives a long list of the local deities, and also of the customs retained by the Prophet. Some denied a future life as well as a Creator, while others admitted both.² He then mentions a variety of tribal gods, and gives the name and

1 Job xxxi. 26-28. 2 Bk. iii. 8.

2 To these the Koran replies, Sura 1. 14: Is our power exhausted by the first creation; for these are in perplexity as to a first creation.

place of eleven, including Ozza of the Quraysh, Hobal aloft on the Kabah, etc.; also angels, *genii*, and heavenly bodies adored by the Sabaeans. We are then informed of a variety of local customs in vogue among the heathen Arabs, some retained in Islam, as family restrictions in marriage, Hajj to the Kabah with its various practices, visiting Safa and Marwa, throwing stones in Wady Mina, ablution, and several minor matters. Very similar is the testimony of Ibn Ishaq, and the Sirat al Rasfil, that notwithstanding the idolatry into which the Arabs fell when they lost the faith of Abraham and Isaac, yet throughout it all they never forgot the great God above all other gods. Thus at the new moon, the Beni Kinana and Quraysh would cry aloud "Labbeik, Allah Labbeik! Thou hast no Companion, but rulest over all"; - acknowledging thus the oneness of Him they called upon; and while joining their idols in worship with the Highest, they yet placed them all under his hand. Then the Unity is thus expressed in the Koran:

Koran 10:3 *Verily your Lord is God who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then ascended the throne to rule over all things. There is no intercession but by his permission. God is your Lord, wherefore serve him. Ah! will ye not consider?*

From all this we perceive that while the Arabs up to the Prophet's time worshipped idols, they did so regarding them as intercessors with the great God whom they held supreme.³ The truth was so well known in Mohammed's own household, that his father and uncle bore the names Abd-Allah and Obeid-Allah, - "Al," as we have seen, signifying The One. Hence we are sure that the Unity was acknowledged long before the Prophet's mission, as well as the various Meccan customs still in current use. Circumcision also was practised from of old, as we learn from the Epistle of Barnabas written about two centuries after Christ. Multitudes of idols being all around Mecca,⁴ certainly little inspiration was needed to shew how false the system was, and the task was well carried out by Mohammed. While so many of the ancient places, rites, and customs were maintained, only one quasi-idolatrous practice has been kept up, namely, the Kissing of the Black Stone, which was then worshipped as of heavenly descent; the habit was so loved by the people, that it could not be forbidden, and indeed is still observed.

3 Our Author pithily remarks that the Muslims of today who seek forgiveness through the intercession of their holy men are as much polytheists as these old Arabs were.

4 Some say there were 360 around the Kabah. But Ibn Ishik gives authorities for only fifteen generations of idolators before the Prophet's time.

In conclusion, then, we find that the first "Source" of the Koran and Tradition consisted of the notions, customs, and religious beliefs, existing around Mohammed. And we know of no other answer as to the adoption of these, than they were assumed to exist in the time of Abraham, and therefore were continued by the Prophet. Now, although we are told in the Torah that the doctrine of the Unity, as well as circumcision, were of Abraham's time, yet in the Holy Scriptures we find no mention of Mecca, procession round the Kabah, the Black Stone, the other Holy Places, etc.; nor can there be any doubt that all these things were the gradual creation of idol worshippers, and had no connection whatever with the faith and tenets of Father Abraham.

It is interesting also to note that some verses of the Koran have without doubt been taken from poems anterior to Mohammed's assumption of the prophetic office, in proof of which two passages in the Sabaa Moallaqat of Imra'ul Cays etc. are quoted, in which several verses of the Koran occur, such as, "The hour has come, and shattered is the moon."⁵ It was the custom of the time for poets and orators to hang up their compositions upon the Kabah; and we know the Seven Moallaqat were so exposed. We are told that Fatima, the Prophet's daughter, was one day repeating as she went along, the above verse. Just then she met the daughter of Imra'ul Cays, who cried out: "O that's what your father has taken from one of my father's poems, and calls it something that has come down to him out of heaven"; and the story is commonly told amongst the Arabs until now.

The connection between the poetry of Imra'ul Cays and the Koran is so obvious that the Muslim cannot but hold that they existed with the latter in the Heavenly Table from all eternity! What then will be the answer? That the words were taken from the Koran and entered in the poem, - an impossibility. Or that their writer was not really Imra'ul Cays, but some other who, after the appearance of the Koran, had the audacity to quote them there as they now appear; rather a difficult thing to prove!

In concluding this chapter we have no difficulty in asserting with every confidence that the customs, rites, and beliefs of the ancient Arabs, formed one of the most important Sources of the Koran.

5 The two passages given by our Author from the Sabaa Moallaqat contain several verses, more or less similar to the Koran: - Sura liv. 1, xxix. 31 and 46, xxxvii. 59, xxi. 96, xciii. 1; this last, - By the brightness of the morning; and by the night when it groweth dark. The passages noted are the same in both, with occasionally a few verbal differences.

JEWISH AND SABAEAN SOURCES

Chapter 3

There were three religions in the Peninsula - the Sabaean, Jewish, and Christian - each of which, as we hope to shew, helped to nurse Islam, which at the first lay like an infant in its cradle.

The SABAEANS have disappeared. No trace of them anywhere remains, and even of their history but little is known. We are told by Eastern authorities¹ that they were the first of all peoples who inhabited Syria; that they derived their faith from Seth and Idris; and that they possessed a book called *Pages of Seth*, in which were inculcated righteousness, truth, bravery, care of the poor, and avoidance of evil. They had seven times for prayer, five of which were at the same hour as chosen by the Prophet. They prayed also for the dead, but without prostration; fasted thirty days from night to sunrise, and also if any new moon rose badly, for the remaining day of the month; observed Eid from the setting of their five stars; and venerated the Kabah. Hence we see that the Sabaeans kept many observances still in force among the Muslims.

We turn to the Jews. Of Course it is known to all how numerous and powerful the race was in Arabia at the time of Mohammed, and especially before the Hegira. Amongst their chief tribes were the Beni Coreitza, Cainucaa, and Nadhir, having their three villages in the vicinity of Medina.

When it became manifest that the Jews would in no wise recognise the prophetic office of Mohammed, he fought several severe battles with them and, not without difficulty, either took them prisoners and slew them with the sword, or at last expelled them from the land. Now, these Jews possessed and carefully preserved the Torah, the Psalms, etc., and were called (as also the Christians) *The People of the Book*. Though the nation at large knew little or nothing of Hebrew, yet they were familiar with the stories of the Talmud and other sources.

The ignorant Arabs of the day looked upon their neighbors the Jews with honour and respect as being of the seed of Abraham, and possessed of the Word of God. Hence when the Prophet turned aside from idols as hateful to the Almighty, and sought to bring his people back to the faith

¹ What follows is from Abul Feda, who quotes from Abu Isa al Maghra-bi.

of Abraham, he betook himself with the utmost care to learn in what the teaching, customs, and obligations of that Faith consisted. Comparing these with the Koran and Tradition, we find the closest similarity between the two. Thus the Koran throughout bears witness to the faith of Abraham, to the truth of the Jewish religion, and the heavenly origin of their divine books. The following passages will be found to that effect:-

Koran 7: 156 Dispute not with the People of the Book, but in the mildest way, excepting such as behave injuriously; and say, We believe in that which hath been revealed unto us, and in that which hath been revealed unto you; our God and your God is One, and to Him we are resigned. And again:- Say, We believe in God, and in that which hath been sent down unto us, and in that which was sent down unto Abraham and Ishmael, and Isaac and Jacob, and the Tribes; and in that which was delivered unto Moses and Jesus, and in that which was delivered to the Prophets from the Lord. We make no distinction between any of them; and to Him we are resigned. At this period, also, Mohammed made the Holy House (Jerusalem) the Qibla of his followers, being then, (as it has since remained) the Qibla of the Jews.

To this it might be objected that Mohammed, as the “illiterate prophet,” must have been unable to read,² and how then could he have gained all this knowledge from Jewish literature? But even admitting it to have been so, it must still have been easy enough for him to have learned all about their beliefs and customs and tales from his companions, such as Obeidallah, Waraca, or even himself from his Jewish friends. For these people, though they had but an imperfect knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures, yet well knew the tales current amongst the Jewish nation. And now, if we compare the Koran with the tales in the Talmud and other books still current among the Jews, it becomes evident that although the Koran speaks of Abraham and many others of whom we read in the Torah, still all the wild stories it tells us are taken from Jewish traditional Sources. And we shall now give a few specimens to prove that it is so.

² Sura vii. 156. The word used for illiterate is Ummi. R. Geiger’s view is that this word has an altogether different meaning - viz. that Mohammed held he was of the Ummat or Arab people, and not an Ajemy or non-Arab, as a Jew would be held to be. But seeing that the word has been universally held to mean unlearned (and unable to read), I think we must accept that interpretation. It does not, however, much matter in the present argument.

CAIN AND ABEL

We have the following passage:-

Koran 5:35 *And tell them the story truly of the two sons of Adam. When they offered up their sacrifice, and it was accepted from one of them, and not accepted from the other, Cain said "I will kill thee." Abel answered, "God accepteth (offerings) of the pious alone. If thou stretchest forth thine hand against me to kill me, I will not stretch forth my hand to kill thee; for I fear God, the Lord of all worlds. I desire that thou shouldst bear my sin and thine own sin, and become a dweller in the Fire, for that is the punishment of the oppressor." But the soul of Cain inclined him to slay his brother, and he slew him; then he became one of the destroyed. And God sent a raven which scratched the earth to shew him how he should hide his brother's body. He said, "Woe is me! I am not able to be like the raven"; and he became one of those that repent (v. 35). For this cause we wrote unto the children of Israel that he who slayeth a soul, - without having slain a soul or committed wickedness in the earth, - shall be as if he had slain all mankind; and whosoever saveth a soul alive, shall be as if he had saved all mankind.*

Now this conversation and affair of Cain and Abel, as given above in the Koran, has been told us in a variety of ways by the Jews.¹ Thus when Cain, according to them, said there was no punishment for sin and no reward for virtue, Abel, holding just exactly the reverse, was killed by Cain with a stone. So also in the book *Pirke Rabbi Eleazer*, we find the Source of the burying of Abel as described in the Koran, there being no difference excepting that the raven indicates the mode to Adam instead of to Cain, as follows: - Adam and Eve, sitting by the corpse, wept not knowing what to do, for they had as yet no knowledge of burial. A raven coming up, took the dead body of its fellow, and having scratched up the earth, buried it thus before their eyes. Adam said, Let us follow the example of the raven, and so taking up Abel's body buried it at once.

If the Reader will look at the last verse (35) in the quotation above from Sura v. of the Koran, he will see that it has no connection with the one preceding. The relation is explained thus in the Mishnah Sanhedrin, where in quoting from Genesis the verse,

Genesis 4:10 *The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground,*²

1 Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziah; also the Targum of Jerusalem. In Arabic Cain is called Cabil.

2 Gen. iv. 10, "Bloods" in the margin for blood.

- the Commentator writes as follows:- “As regards Cain who killed his brother, the Lord addressing him does not say, ‘The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth out,’ but ‘the voice of his Bloods’; - meaning not his blood alone, but that of his descendants; and this to shew that since Adam was created alone, so he that kills an Israelite is, by the plural here used, counted as if he had killed the world at large; and he who saves a single Israelite is counted as if he had saved the whole world.” Now, if we look at the thirty-fifth verse of the text above quoted, it will be found almost exactly the same as these last words of this old Jewish commentary. But we see that only part is given in the Koran, and the other part omitted. And this omitted part is the connecting link between the two passages in the Koran, without which they are unintelligible.

ABRAHAM SAVED FROM NIMROD’S FIRE

The story is scattered over various passages of the Koran, chiefly in those noted below.³ Now whoever will read these, as well as the Traditional Records of the Muslims,⁴ will at once perceive that the tale as there told has been taken from one of the ancient Jewish books called Midrlish Rabbli. To bring this clearly to view, we must first shew the history as given in the Koran and Muslim writings, and then compare it with the Jewish tale in the above book.

In a work of Abdul Feda we have the Muslim story as follows.⁵ Azar, Abraham’s father used to construct idols, and hand them over to his son to sell Abraham would go about crying, “Who will buy that which will hurt and not benefit him?” Then when God Almighty commanded him to call his people to the Divine unity, his father refused the call, and so did his people. Thus the matter spread abroad till it reached Nimrod, son of Cush, king over the country who took Father Abraham, and cast him into a fierce fire; but the fire grew cool and pleasant unto Abraham, who came out of it after some days. And thereupon his people believed in him.

Again, in the Ariiish al Majiilis we read: Before this, when Abraham one night came up out of his cave and saw the stars before the moon arose, he said:

Koran 6:76-80 *This is my Preserver. And when the night overshadowed him, he saw a star, and said, This is my Lord; and when it set, he said, I love not*

3 Sura ii. 260, vi. 74-84, xxi. 52-72, xix. 42-50, xxvi. 69-79, xxix. 15, 16, xxxvii. 81-95, xliii. 25-27, Ix. 4, and other passages.

4 Such as the Qissas al Anbia and Arfush al Majiilis.

5 3 Ancient History from the Mukhtasar fi Akhbiir il Bashar.

those that set. And when he saw the moon rising, he said, This is my Lord; but when it set, he said, Verily if my Lord direct me not, I shall be of those that go astray. And when he saw the sun rising, he said, This is my Lord; this is the greatest. But when it set, he said, O my people! Verily I am clear of that which ye associate together with God. Verily I direct my face unto him who hath created the heavens and the earth. I am orthodox, and not one of the idolators.

They say that Abraham's father used to make idol images and give them to Abraham to sell. So Abraham taking them about would cry: "These will neither hurt nor help him that buys," so that no one bought from him. And when it was not sold, he took an image to the stream, and striking its head, would say, Drink, my poor one! in derision, for his people and the heathen around him to hear.

Koran 6:80-85 So when his people objected, he said, Ah! do ye dispute with me concerning God, and verily God hath directed me And this is our argument wherewith we furnished Abraham for his people. We raise the dignity of whom we wish, for thy Lord is wise and knowing.

And so in the end Abraham overcame his people by such arguments. Then he called his father Azar to the true faith, and said: O my father, wherefore dost thou worship that which neither hears nor sees, nor yet doth profit thee in any way, and so on to the end of the story.¹ But his father refused that to which Abraham called him; whereupon Abraham cried aloud to his people that he was free from what they worshipped, and thus made known his faith to them.

Koran 26: 75-77 He said, What think ye? That which ye worship, and your forefathers also, are mine enemies, excepting only the Lord of the worlds.

They said, Whom then dost thou worship? He answered, "The Lord of all worlds." "Dost thou mean Nimrod?" "Nay, but he that created me and guideth me," and so on. The thing then spread abroad among the people, till it reached the ears of the tyrant Nimrod, who sent for him, and said: "O Abraham! Dost thou hold him to be thy god that hath sent thee; dost thou call to his worship and speak of his power to those that worship other than him? Who is he?" Abraham:

Koran 2:260 "My Lord, he that giveth life, and giveth death."

1 Sura xix. 40.

N. "I give life, and cause to die." A. "How dost thou make alive, and cause to die?" N. "I take two men who at my hands deserve death, one I kill, who thus dies; the other I forgive, who thus is made alive." Whereupon Abraham answered,

Koran 2:260 *"Verily God bringeth the sun from the East, now do thou bring him from the West."*

Thereupon Nimrod was confounded, and returned him no reply. The people then went away to celebrate their Eid, and Abraham, taking the opportunity, broke all the idols but the biggest, and then the story proceeds as follows: -

When they had prepared food, they set it before their gods and said, "When the time comes we shall return, and the gods having blessed the meat we shall eat thereof." So when Abraham looked upon the gods, and what was set before them, he said derisively.

Koran 37:90 *"Ah! ye are not eating"; and when no answer came, "What aileth you, that ye do not speak?" and he turned upon them and smote them with his right hand.*

And he kept striking them with a hatchet in his hand, until there remained none but the biggest of them, and upon its neck he hung the axe.² Now when the people returned from their Eid to the house of their gods, and saw it in such a state, they said, Who hast done this to our gods? Verily he is a wicked one. They answered, We heard a young man speaking of them; They call him Abraham. He it is, we think, who hath done it. When this reached the tyrant Nimrod and his chief men, They said, Bring him before the eyes of the people; perhaps they will bear witness that he hath done this thing. And they were afraid to seize him without evidence.³ So they brought him and said: Hast thou done this unto our gods, O Abraham? He answered, Nay but that big one hath done it; he was angry that ye worshipped along with him these little idols, and he, so much bigger than all; and he brake the whole of them in pieces. Now ask them if they can speak?⁴ When he had said this, they turned their backs, and said (among themselves), "Verily it is ye that are the transgressors. We have never seen

² Here the text is quoted: He brake them all in pieces except the biggest, that they might lay the blame on it (Sura xxi. 59).

³ Cotada and Al Sidy are quoted here; and it is added from Al Dzahhiik, "Perhaps they may give evidence as to what we should do, and punish him."

⁴ A note is here added to the following purport:- Mohammed on this remarked that Abraham in all told three lies, allan behalf of the Lord, namely,

him but telling us that we transgress, having those little idols and this great one." So they broke the heads of them all, and were amazed that they neither spake nor made any opposition. Then they said (to Abraham), Certainly thou knowest that they speak not. Thus when the affair with Abraham was ended, he said to them: Ah! do ye indeed worship, besides God, that which cannot profit you at all, nor can it injure you. Fie on you, and on that which ye worship besides God! Ah, do ye not understand?

When thus overthrown and unable to make any answer, they called out, Burn him, and avenge your gods if ye do it. Abdallah tells us that the man who cried thus was a Kurd called Zeinun; and the Lord caused the earth to open under him, and there he lies buried till the day of Judgment. When Nimrod and his people were thus gathered together to burn Abraham, they imprisoned him in a house, and built for him a great pile, as we read in Sura Saffat: *They said, Build a pile for him and cast him into the glowing fire. Then they gathered together quantities of wood and stuff to burn; and so, by the grace of God, Abraham came out of the fire safe and sound, with the words on his lips, - God is sufficient for me* (Sura xxxix. 39); and *He is the best Supporter* (Sura iii.37). *For the Lord said, O Fire! be thou cool and pleasant unto Abraham.*¹

Now, let us compare the story of Abraham as current amongst the Jews, with the same story in Koran and Tradition as given above, and see how they differ or agree. The following is from the *Midrash Rabbah* on Abraham brought out of Ur (Gen. xv. 7).

Terah used to make images. Going out one day, he told his son Abraham to sell them. When a man came to buy, Abraham asked him how old he was. Fifty or sixty years, he replied. Strange, said the other, that a man sixty years of age should worship things hardly a few days old! On hearing which the man, ashamed, passed on. Then a woman carrying in her hand a cup of wheaten flour said, Place this before the idols. On which, Abraham, getting up, took his staff in his hand, and having broken the idols with it, placed the staff in the hand of the biggest. His father coming up, cried, "Who hath done all this?"

"I am sick"; "the big one hath done this"; and what he said to the King regarding Sarah, "She is my sister."

1 1 In the last few pages the quotations from the Koran are all from Suras xxi. and xxxvii., and the verses being so numerous and detached are not numbered in detail; but they will be found in passages succeeding verse 52 of the former, and verse 84 of the latter Sura. The Koran passages are throughout printed in italics.

Abraham said, "What can be concealed from thee? A woman carrying a cup of wheaten flour asked me to place it before the gods; I took and placed it before them; one said, I will eat it first, and another, I will eat first. Then the big one took the staff, and broke them all in pieces." His father: "Why do you tell such a foolish tale to me? Do these know anything?" He answered, "Does thine ear hear what thy mouths speaks?" On this his father seized and made him over to Nimrod, who bade him worship Fire. Abraham: "Rather worship Water that putteth out Fire." N. "Then worship Water." A. "Rather worship that which bringeth Water." N. "Then worship the Cloud." A. "In such case, let us worship Wind that drives away the Cloud." N. "Then worship Wind." A. "Rather let us worship Man that standeth against the wind." On this Nimrod closed: - "If thou arguest with me about things which I am unable to worship other than Fire, into it I will cast thee; then, let the God thou worshippes deliver thee there from." So Abraham went down into the flames, and remained there safe and unhurt.

Comparing, now, this Jewish story with what we saw of it in the Koran, little difference will be found; and what there is no doubt arose from Mohammed hearing of it by the ear from the Jews. What makes this the more likely is that Abraham's father is in the Koran called Azar,² while both in the Midrash and Torah he is called Terah. But the Prophet probably heard the name in Syria (where, as we learn from Eusebius, the name had somewhat of a similar sound), and so remembered it.

The Muslims, of course, hold that their Prophet gained the tale of Abraham's being cast into the fire neither from Jews nor Christians, but through Gabriel from on high; and as the Jews, being children of Abraham, so accepted it, the Koran, they say, must be right. But it could only have been the common folk among the Jews who believed it so; for those who had any knowledge of its origin must have known its puerility.

The origin of the whole story will be found in

Genesis 15:7 *I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees.*

Now Ur in Babylonish means a "city", as in UrShalim (Jerusalem), "the City of Peace." And the Chaldaean Ur³ was the residence of Abraham. This name Ur closely resembles in speech another word, Or, signifying light or fire. And so ages after, a Jewish Commentator,⁴ ignorant of Babylonish,

2 Sura vi. 74.

3 Same as the present town, Mugheyr.

4 Jonathan ben Uzziel.

when translating the Scripture into Chaldean, put the above verse from Genesis; as follows: I am the Lord that delivered thee out of the Chaldean fiery oven. The same writer has also the following comment on

Genesis 9: 27 *“Now this happened at the time when Nimrod cast Abraham into the oven of fire, because he would not worship the idols, that leave was withheld from the fire to hurt him,”*

- a strange confusion of words, - Ur the city, for Or light and fire. It is as if a Persian seeing notice of the departure of the English post, should put in his diary that an Englishman had lost his skin, - not knowing that the same word for skin in Persian means the Post in English.

No wonder then that a Jew should have mistaken a word like this, and made it the foundation whereon to build the grand tale of Abraham's fiery Oven. But it is somewhat difficult to understand how a Prophet like Mohammed could have given credence to such a fable, and entered it in a revelation held to have come down from heaven. And yet the evidence of it all is complete, as quoted above from the Jewish writer. Apart from this we know from Genesis that Nimrod lived not in the days of Abraham but ages before his birth. The name indeed is not in the Koran, though freely given in the Muslim Commentaries and Tradition. As if a historian should tell us that Alexander the Great cast Nadir Shah into the fire, not knowing the ages that elapsed between the two, or that Nadir never was so thrown.

QUEEN OF SHEBA

The story of Balkis, Queen of Sheba, as told at length in the Koran, corresponds so closely with what we find in the II. Targum of the Book of Esther, that it was evidently taken from it, as heard by Mohammed from some Jewish source. The following is from the Sura of the Ant:-

Koran 27:17- *His armies were gathered together unto Solomon, consisting of Genii, men and birds, and they were kept back. .. Solomon smiled at the ant and said: O Lord! may I do that which is right and well pleasing unto thee, so that thou introduce me amongst thy servants the righteous. And he viewed the birds and said, Why is it that I see not the Hudhud (Lapwing)? Is she among the absent ones? Truly I will chastise her with a severe chastisement, or will put her to death unless she bring a just excuse. But she did not wait long, and said, I have viewed a country that thou hast not seen: and I come unto thee from Sheba with certain news. I found a female ruling over them, surrounded with every kind of possession, and having a magnificent Throne. I found her and her people worshipping the Sun apart from God. Satan hath made their deeds pleasant unto them, and hath turned them aside from the right*

way, and they are not rightly directed, - lest they should worship God who manifesteth that which is in heaven and earth, and knoweth what they conceal and what they discover. God! there is no God but he, the Lord of the great Throne! Solomon said: We shall see whether thou tellest the truth or art amongst the liars. Go with this my letter, and having delivered it to them turn aside, and see what answer they return. The Queen having received it, said: O ye Nobles! verily an honourable letter hath been delivered unto me. It is from Solomon. It is in the name of the Most Merciful God; - "Rise not up against me; but come ye submissive unto me." She said: O ye Nobles! advise me in the affair; I will not resolve upon it, until ye be witnesses thereof. They said: We are men of strength and of great prowess; but the matter belongeth unto thee; see therefore what thou wilt command. She said: Verily kings when they enter a city waste it, and abuse its most powerful inhabitants; and so will they do. But I will send gifts unto them, and wait to see what the messengers will return with. So when they went to Solomon, he said: Ah! do ye present me with wealth? Verily that which God hath given unto me is better than that which he hath given you, but ye do rejoice in your gifts. Return unto them; we will surely come unto them with an army which they cannot withstand, and we shall drive them thence humbled and contemptible. O ye Nobles (he continued), which of you will bring me her Throne, before they come submissive unto me? A giant of the Genii cried, I will bring it unto thee before thou gettest up from thy place, for I am strong in this, and to be trusted. And one who had knowledge of the Scriptures: I will bring it unto thee before the twinkling of thine eye. Now when (Solomon) saw it placed before him he said: This is a favour of my Lord, that he may try me whether I am grateful or ungrateful; he that is grateful is grateful for his own benefit; but he that is ungrateful, verily the Lord is rich and beneficent. And (Solomon) said: Alter her throne, that we may see whether she be rightly directed, or be amongst those who are not rightly directed. And when she came, it was said, Is this thy throne? She said, It is as if it were; and knowledge hath been bestowed upon us before this, and we are resigned (unto God). But that which she worshipped besides had turned her aside, for she was of an unbelieving people. It was said to her, Enter the Palace. And when she saw it, she imagined that it was a great surface of water, and she uncovered her legs, when (Solomon) said, Verily it is a palace floored with glass. And she said, Truly I have done injury to my own soul, and I resign myself, along with Solomon, unto God, the Lord of all creatures.

Such is the account the Koran gives us of Queen of Sheba. What it tells us of the Throne differs but little from the Targum, where it is said to have belonged to Solomon, and to have had no other like it in any land. There were six steps of gold to ascend, and on each twelve golden Lions, while

twelve eagles of gold were perched around. Four-and-twenty other eagles cast their shadow from above upon the King, and when he wished to move anywhere, these powerful eagles descending would lift the Throne and carry it wherever he wished. Thus they performed, according to the Targum, the same duty the Koran tells us the Genii did. But otherwise in respect of Queen of Sheba, her visit to Solomon, the letter sent by him to her, etc., there is a marvellous resemblance between the two, excepting this, indeed, that in place of the Lapwing of the Koran, the Targum speaks of a Red-cock, - not a very vital difference after all! The whole story is told in the Targum as follows:-

At another time, when the heart of Solomon was gladdened with wine, he gave orders for the beasts of the land, the birds of the air, the creeping things of the earth, the demons from above and the Genii, to be brought, that they might dance around him, in order that all the kings waiting upon him might behold his grandeur. And all the royal scribes summoned by their names before him; in fact, all were there except the captives and prisoners and those in charge of them. Just then the Red-cock, enjoying itself, could not be found; and King Solomon said that they should seize and bring it by force, and indeed he sought to kill it. But just then the cock appeared in presence of the King, and said: O Lord, King of the earth! having applied thine ear, listen to my words. It is hardly three months since I made a firm resolution within me that I would not eat a crumb of bread, nor drink a drop of water until I had seen the whole world, and over it make my flight, saying to myself, I must know the city and the kingdom which is not subject to thee, my Lord King. Then I found the fortified city Qitor in the Eastern lands, and around it are stones of gold and silver in the streets plentiful as rubbish, and trees planted from the beginning of the world, and rivers to water it, flowing out of the garden of Eden. Many men are there wearing garlands from the garden close by. They shoot arrows, but cannot use the bow. They are ruled by a woman, called Queen of Sheba. Now if it please my Lord King, thy servant, having bound up my girdle, will set out for the fort Qitor in Sheba; and having "bound their Kings with chains and their Nobles with links of iron," will bring them into thy presence. The proposal pleased the King, and the scribes prepared a despatch, which was placed under the bird's wing, and away it flew high up in the sky. It grew strong surrounded by a crowd of birds, and reached the Fort of Sheba. By chance the Queen of Sheba was out in the morning worshipping the sea; and the air being darkened by the multitude of birds, she became

so alarmed as to rend her clothes in trouble and distress. Just then the Cock alighted by her, and she seeing the letter under its wing opened and read it as follows:

“King Solomon sendeth to thee his salaam, and saith, The high and holy One hath set me over the beasts of the field, etc.; and the kings of the four Quarters send to ask after my welfare. Now if it please thee to come and ask after my welfare, I will set thee high above them all. But if it please thee not, I will send kings and armies against thee; - the beasts of the field are my people, the birds of the air my riders, the demons and genii thine enemies, - to imprison you, to slay and to feed upon you.” When the Queen of Sheba heard it, she again rent her garments, and sending for her Nobles asked their advice. They knew not Solomon, but advised her to send vessels by the sea, full of beautiful ornaments and gems, together with 6000 boys and girls in purple garments, who had all been born at the same moment; also to send a letter promising to visit him by the end of the year. It was a journey of seven years but she promised to come in three. When at last she came, Solomon sent a messenger shining in brilliant attire, like the morning dawn, to meet her. As they came together, she stepped from her carriage. “Why dost thou thus?” he asked. “Art thou not Solomon?” she said. “Nay, I am but a servant that standeth in his presence.” The queen at once addressed a parable to her followers in compliment to him, and then was led by him to the Court. Solomon hearing she had come, arose and sat down in the Palace of glass. When the Queen of Sheba saw it, she thought that the glass floor was water, and so in crossing over lifted up her garments. When Solomon seeing the hair about her legs, cried out to her: Thy beauty is the beauty of women, but thy hair is as the hair of men; hair is good in man, but in woman it is not becoming. On this she said: My Lord, I have three enigmas to put to thee. If thou canst answer them, I shall know that thou art a wise man: but if not thou art like all around thee. When he had answered all three, she replied, astonished: Blessed be the Lord thy God, who hath placed thee on the throne that thou mightest rule with right and justice. And she gave to Solomon much gold and silver; and he to her whatsoever she desired.

In the Jewish statement, we see that the Queen put several enigmas for Solomon to solve; and though this is not mentioned in the Koran, it is in the Muslim traditions. And so with the story of her legs; for in the Ariiish al Majiilis we find the following: - When the Queen was about to enter the

Palace, she fancied the glass floor to be a sheet of water, and so She uncovered her legs, that is, to pass over to Solomon; and her legs and feet were covered with hair; which when Solomon saw, he turned his sight from her, and called out, The floor is plain glass.

Here we would ask whether there is any reality whatever in all this story. There is indeed so much as we find¹ which is as follows:-

First Kings 10: 1-11 And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions. And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not any thing hid from the king, which he told her not. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord; there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice. And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.

Now these are the facts of the Queen's visit, and all beyond mere fiction. The Jews themselves admit it to be so, - excepting, indeed, Solomon's magnificent Throne, though not its being carried aloft. The Koran account of Solomon ruling over Demons, Genii, etc., is in entire accord with what we have cited from the Targum; and it is curious to find, as learned Jews tell us, that the origin of the notion lay in the similarity of two Hebrew words,² 1 with two kindred words signifying demons and genii, and the Commentator confounding them together led to the strange error.

In concluding our notice of the fanciful tale which we have given from the Jewish Targum, we might say that it reminds one of such stories as we

1 See also 2 Chronicles ix. 1-9.

2 1 (Meaning "a lady and ladies," in Ecclesiastes ii. 8.)

find in the "Arabian Nights." But strange that the Prophet could not have seen it so. Having heard it from his Jewish friends, he evidently fancied that it had been read by them in their inspired Scriptures, and as such introduced it, as we find, into the Koran.

HARUT AND MARUT

Harut and Marut. - There are many other stories in the Koran taken from the fanciful details of Jewish writers; but we shall content ourselves with this one other before entering on more general questions. We shall first recite the tale of those two Spirits as given in the Koran and Tradition, and then compare it with the same as told by Jewish writers. The passage in the Koran is this:- Solomon was not an unbeliever; but the Devils believed not. They taught men sorcery, and that which was sent down to the two angels at Babel, - Harut and Marut Yet these taught no man until they had said, - Verily we are a temptation, therefore be not an unbeliever.³

The following is from the Arianish al Majilis:-

The Commentators say that when the angels saw the evil doings of mankind ascending up to heaven (and that was in the days of Idris), they were distressed and complained thus against them: Thou hast chosen these to be the rulers upon earth, and to they sin against thee. Then said the Almighty: If I should send you upon the earth, and treat you as I have treated them, ye would do just as they do. They said, O our Lord, it would not become us to sin against thee. Then said the Lord, Choose two angels from the best of you, and I will send them down unto the earth. So they chose Harut and Marut; who were among the best and most pious amongst them.

Al Kalby's version:-

The Almighty said: Choose ye three: so they chose (Azz, i.e) Harut, and (Azabi, i.e.) Marut and Azrael; and the Lord changed the names of the two when they fell into sin, as he changed the name of the Devil, which was Azazil And God placed in their heart the same fleshly lust as in the sons of Adam; and sending them down to the earth, bade them to rule righteously amongst mankind, to avoid idolatry, not to kill but for a just cause, and to keep free from fornication and strong drink. Now when Azrael felt lust in his heart, he prayed the Lord to relieve him, and was taken up to heaven, and for forty years

3 1 Sura ii. 96.

was unable to raise his head for shame before his Maker. But the other two remained steadfast, judging the people during the day, and when night came ascending to the heavens, worshipping the name of the Almighty. Catada tells us that before a month had passed they fell into temptation; for Zohra, one of the most beautiful of women (whom Aiy tells us was queen of a city in Persia), had a suit before them, and when they saw her they fell in love with her, and sought to have her, but she refused and went away. The second day she came again, and they did the same; but she said, Nay, unless ye worship what I worship, and bow down to this idol, or kill a soul, or drink wine. They replied, It is impossible for us to do these things, which God hath forbidden; and she departed. The third day again she came holding a cup of wine, and her heart inclined towards them; so when they desired her, she said the same as yesterday, but they replied, To pray to other than God is a serious thing, and so is the killing of anyone; the easiest of the three is to drink wine: so they drank the wine, and becoming intoxicated fell upon her and committed adultery: and one saw it, and they slew him. And it is said that they worshipped an idol, and the Lord changed Zohra into a star. Aiy and others tell us that she said, Come not near me till you teach me that by which ye can ascend to the heavens. They said, We ascend by the name of the great God. Again she said, Come not near me till ye teach me what that is. So they taught her; and forthwith she, repeating it, ascended to the skies, and the Lord changed her into a star.

Turning now to the Jews, the same account is given in two or three places of the Talmud, especially in this extract from the Midrash Yalkut:-¹

Rabbi Joseph being asked by his disciples about Azael, told them as follows:- After the Flood, idolatrous worship prevailing, the Holy One was angry. Then two angels, Shamhazai and Azael arose and addressing him said, O Lord of the Universe, when thou createdst the world, did we not say to thee, What is man that thou art mindful of him? and now we are anxious about him. The Lord replied: I well know that if ye be sent to rule over the earth, your evil passions will have possession of you, and ye will become tyrants over mankind. They answered:

If thou wilt give us leave, and we shall dwell amongst them, thou shalt see in what wise we shall sanctify thy name. Go then, he said, and dwell amongst them.

1 Cap 44.

Soon after, Shamhazai saw a beautiful maiden called Esther, and turning his eyes upon her to come and be with him, she said, I cannot surrender myself to thee until thou teach me that great name by which thou canst ascend to the heavens above. He told her, and she having spoken it, ascended upwards undefiled. Then said the Holy One, - Since she hath kept herself clear from defilement, she shall be raised aloft amid the Seven Stars, there to give praise unto the Lord. Forthwith the two went forth and consorted with the beautiful daughters of men, and children were born unto them. And Azael adorned the women he was inclined to with all kinds of beautiful ornaments. [Azael is the same as in the Talmud is called Azrael].

Now anyone comparing the two stories together, must see that they agree, excepting that in the Muslim one the angels are called Hfuiit and Mfuiit, and in the Jewish, Shamhazai and Azael. But if we search whence the names in the Koran and Tradition came, it will be seen that Hfuiit and Mfuiit were two idols worshipped far back in Armenia. For in writers of that country they are so spoken of, as in the following passage from one of them:-

Certainly Horot and Morot, tutelary deities of mount Ararat, and Aminabegh, and perhaps others now not known, were Assistants to the female goddess Aspandarami't. These aided her, and were excellent on the earth.

In this extract, Aspandaramit is the name of the goddess worshipped of old in Iran also; for we are told that the Zoroastrians regarded her as the Spirit of the Earth, and held that all the good products of the earth arise from her. Aminabegh also was held by the Armenians to be the god of vineyards, and they named Horot and Morot the assistants of the Spirit of the Earth, seeing that they held them as spirits who had control over the wind so as to make it bring rain. They sat on the top of the lofty mountain Ararat, and sent down showers that fertilised the earth; the two were thus rulers of the wind.² The Armenians, - fancying that Morot came from Mor, genitive of Mair, "Mother," - formed Horot in the same way from Hair, "Father." When also it is said that the two angels came down to propagate mankind, the meaning is that they caused the earth to bring forth its produce for that end. Zohra in Hebrew reads as Ishtar or Esther, the same as of old was worshipped in Babylon and Syria as the goddess over the birth of children and promoter of passion and desire. In proof of all this, we find in the ruins between the Tigris and Euphrates the name

² The origin of the name is traced still further East to the ancient Sanskrit wind-gods the Maruts.

Ishtar on the primeval tiles. The story of one Gilgamish, with whom Ishtar fell in love but was rejected, has been decyphered in ancient Babylonian character upon these tiles. Ishtar came to him having the crown upon her head and asked him to kiss her, and with many loving words and gifts to be her husband, when he would in her Palace have a quiet and happy life. Gilgamish in derision rejected her offer, whereupon she ascended to the sky and appeared before the God of the heavens!¹ It is remarkable that the idolators of Babylon are shown in this primeval story to have held that Ishtar, that is Zohra, ascended on high, - exactly as is told us in Muslim tradition, as also in the Jewish commentaries.

Now if we search for the Source of the above tale, we shall no doubt find it in what the Talmud says of the angels associating with women, in its commentary on the two verses in Genesis quoted below.² Speaking of the second verse, a Jewish commentator gives us the following interpretation: - "It was Shamhazai and Uzziel who in those days came down from heaven." Hence we see that the whole imaginative tale has come out of the mistake of this and other commentators. For the word giant, as shown below, was misconstrued by them to signify not those who tyrannically "fell" on the poor people around them, but angels who "came down, or fell, from heaven."³ And this unhappy mistake has led to the spread of the strange idol-worship just narrated. Nor was there any apparent reason for the mistake; since in the Targum we find the name (Nefilim) explained in its right and natural sense as "giants." But by and by the Jews came to love the wild tales that spread abroad; and so in a counterfeit book ascribed to

1 The original Babylonish text is here given, as indeed the Author does in most of the Oriental quotations. A close translation is also given, but only the general purport is here attempted.

2 1 Genesis vi. 2 and 4: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and took them wives of all which they chose ... There were giants in those days, ... when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children unto them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown." The "sons of God," according to our Author, mean righteous men of the seed of Seth. The Commentator quoted is Jonathan son of Uzziel.

There is a Sanskrit story of the similar ascent of two angels, and a Houry like Zohra, from which the Armenians may possibly have taken their tale; and from this idolatrous source the Jews no doubt received it; and from them, the Muslims.

3 The term is Nefilim, i.e. persons who fell upon the helpless around them and committed violence and oppression on the earth.

Enoch, we are told that 200 angels under Samyaza (i.e. Shamhazai) came down from the heavens to commit adultery on the earth, as we read:-

The angels of heaven having seen the daughters of men, fell in love with them, and said to one another, Let us take for ourselves these women, the daughters of mankind, and beget children for ourselves. And Samyaza, who was their chief, said Azazel taught men to make swords, daggers, and shields, and taught them to wear breastplates. And for the women they made ornaments of kinds, bracelets, jewels, collyrium to beautify their eyelids, lovely stones of great price, dresses of beautiful colours, and current money.

Let it be remembered also that we have mention of this in the Koran:- Men learned from these two (Hfuiit and Mfuiit) that by which to cause a division between a man and his wife; but they did not injure anyone thereby excepting by leave of God; and they learned that which would hurt them and not profit them.⁴ This is similar to what we have seen above in the Midrash Yalkut, where we are told that Azael embellished the daughters of men with ornaments to make them lovely and attractive.

But enough has been said to show that the story of Hfuiit and Mfuiit, as we find it in the Koran and Muslim books, has been derived from Jewish sources.

OTHER JEWISH TALES

A few other things taken by Islam from the Jews. - If time permitted, we could easily tell of many other narratives in the Koran, not in our Scripture but taken from tales of the Jews, about Joseph, David, Saul, etc.; but space will not permit, excepting for a few. Here, for example, is the account of "Sinai overhead" as we have it in

Koran 7:172 And when we raised the mountain over them, as though it had been a canopy, and they imagined that it was falling upon them, (we said) Receive that which we have sent unto you with reverence, and remember that which is therein, if may be that ye take heed;

and we have two other passages (vv. 60 and 87) in Sura Bekr to the same effect; - the meaning being that when the Jews held back from accepting the Torah, the Lord lifted Mount Sinai over their heads to force their reception of it.

4 1 Sura ii. 96.

The same tale is given by a Hebrew writer thus: "I raised the mount to be a covering over you, as it were a lid."¹ It need hardly be said that there is nothing of the kind in the Torah. The tale, however, may have arisen (Exodus xxxii. 19) from the fact that when Moses returning from Mount Sinai, saw his people worshipping the calf, "his anger waxed hot and he cast the tables (of the Law) out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount." The words "beneath the mount," simply mean that he cast the tables down at the foot of Mount Sinai. And hence all this wild fiction of the mountain being lifted over their heads! We can only compare it to a like Hindu tale of a mountain similarly lifted over the people's heads, very much resembling what we have in the Koran.

Here are one or two other tales of Moses in the wilderness; and first, that of the Golden Calf which came out of the fire kindled by the people at Sinai. The Koran tells us that Sameri also cast (what he had into the fire) and brought out unto them a bodily calf which lowed.² The origin of this fiction we find in a Jewish writer³ as follows:

"The calf having cried aloud, came forth, and the children of Israel saw it. Rabbi Yahuda says that Sammael from the inside of it made the cry of the calf in order to lead the Israelites astray." No doubt the Prophet in this matter got his information from the Jews; strange that he should have been led to adopt this baseless tale. But he has used the wrong name Al Sameri. The name of the people, of course, occurs often in the Bible, and the Jews regarded the Samaritans as their enemies; but as the city of Samaria did not arise till some four hundred years after Moses, it is difficult to imagine how it came to be entered in this story.⁴ We also note that in this matter the Koran is in opposition to the Torah, which tells us that Aaron was the person who for fear of the Israelites around him, had the molten calf set up. Another story, given us twice in the Koran,⁵ is that when the Israelites insisted on seeing the Lord, they were punished by death, but eventually restored to life again; and to add to the foolish tale we are told that it was the Torah which appealed for help and thus obtained their revival.

1 From the Jewish story in the Abodah Siirah.

2 Sura xx. 90.

3 Pirke Rabbi Eleazer.

4 No doubt, the Prophet thought that the Jews said Sfuneri (Samaritan) when they said Sammael. They regarded Sammael as the angel of death.

5 Sura ii. 28; iv. 152.

A FEW OTHER JEWISH MATTERS

In the Koran are a number of Chaldaean and Syrian words which the Muslims have been unable rightly to explain, as Torat, Jehannam, and such like.⁶ To know their meaning, it must be learnt from Hebrew, Chaldaean, and Syriac, for they are not genuine Arabic words.

The following ideas are common to both Jews and Muslims:-

In the Koran we are told of there being Seven heavens, and seven storeys to Hell, which we also find in Jewish writings.⁷ Similar accounts of the heavens and the earth we have also in Sanskrit sources, and also from Muslim tradition; and also from such stories in Zoroastrian books as that there are seven climes, etc.

In Sura xi. 9, we are told of God's throne being above the waters; and similarly the Jewish Rashi, commenting on Genesis i. 2, says: "the glorious throne stood in the heavens and moved over the face of the waters." Again, Muslims tell us that the Lord appointed an angel Malik ruler over Jehannam. Similarly the Jews speak of the Prince of Hell; only the Muslims call him Malik, following the ancient idolators of Palestine, who worshipped the Ruler of Fire as Molech.

In Sura vii. 44 there is mention of a wall or partition called Aaraf as separating Paradise and Hell, thus:- And between the two a Veil, and upon Al Aaraf (stand) men. So in the Jewish Midrash, when it is asked what the distance is between heaven and hell, the answer of one Rabbi is "a wall," and of another "a span"; and again. "Our leaders tell us that the two are so close that a mere ray glances from one to the other." And so we find similar passages in the Avestic and Pehlavi writings, as, - "the distance is but as that between light and darkness."

In three passages of the Koran,⁸ we are told of Satan listening stealthily, and being driven away with stones; another idea taken from the Jews, in one of whose books we find it written of the Genii that "they listened behind the curtain" in order to gain knowledge of things to come.

In Sura 50:29, we read:- *On the day we shall say unto hell, Art thou full? and it shall reply, Is there yet any more?* Similarly in a Jewish author:- "The Prince of Hell shall say, day by day, Give me food that I may be full."

6 Such as, Garden of Eden, TaghUt, Forcan, Sakina, TabUt, Hibr, etc.: all from one or other of the Hebrew, Syriac, or Chaldaean tongues.

7 Sura xv. 44; xvii. 46. Jewish books, Hagigah, and Zohar. 3 Sura xv. 17 and 34; xxxvii. 7; lxvii. 5.

8 Sura 15:17, 34; Sura 37:7; Sura67:5

In Suras xi. 42 and xxiii. 27, it is said of the Flood, - *The oven boiled over*; and in a Jewish work we have this: "The people of the Flood were punished with boiling water."

These similarities are interesting as showing the close connection between the Koran and Jewish remarks; but enough has been given of them.

RELIGIOUS USAGES OF ISLAM TAKEN FROM THE JEWS

There are many such, but it will suffice to mention two or three. We have seen that keeping the fast of Ramazan has been taken from the Sabaeans and not the Jews; still there is one point certainly coming from the latter, and that regards eating and drinking at night during the month. In Sura ii. 83, we read:- Eat and drink until ye can distinguish a white thread from a black thread by the day-break, then fulfil the fast. In a Jewish book¹ we find it similarly laid down that "the beginning of the day is at the moment when one can but distinguish a blue thread from a white thread," - a striking coincidence.

Again, Muslims of all lands, at the fixed time of their five prayers, wherever they happen to be, whether in the house or in the street, perform their devotions on the spot, especially at places where people are passing by. This strange practice is entirely confined to them, and would be seemly in no other religion. But in the days of the Prophet there were Jews in Arabia who used this habit; for many of them were descended from the Pharisees, of whom our Saviour said:- "They love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men."² 1 Thus the Companions of Mohammed looking upon the Jews as the People of the Book and children of father Abraham, regarded such practices as having descended from him, and so adopted, and have continued them to the present day, as we see, unchanged, though they are no longer kept up by the Jews themselves.

Does it not seem strange to the Reader, that although the Koran repeatedly attests our Scriptures as the Word of God, yet but one quotation is taken from them; viz.

Koran 21:105 *Verily we have written in the Psalms after the mention (of the Law) that my servants the righteous shall inherit the earth;*

1 Mishnah Berakhoth.

2 Matth. vi. 5.

an evident reference to Psalm xxxvii. 11; - "But the meek shall inherit the earth."

Two other matters borrowed from the Jews. Every Muslim thinks the Koran to have been on the heavenly Table (Lauh) from before the creation of the world, as is mentioned in a passage already quoted:- *Truly it is the glorious Koran, on a preserved Table.*³ Now before saying anything about this Table, one may ask, was the Book of the Psalms in existence before the Koran or not? For we have given above a verse in which is revealed the inheritance given by the Lord to his servants, as mentioned in the Psalms before the Koran was revealed. The Koran quotes from the Psalms: is it not clear, therefore, that the Psalms were before the Koran? How then could the Koran, produced so late in the world, have been placed on the heavenly Table?

Now let us hear what Tradition tells us about this Table:-

One tells us that the Throne is made out of a pearl, as is also the Preserved Table, the height of which is 700 years' journey, and its breadth 300. All around it is adorned with rubies. The Lord commanded that there should be written upon it what he had wrought in Creation, and onwards till the Day of Judgment:- "In the name of the Lord, the Compassionate and Merciful. I am God and there is none else beside me. He that accepts my decree, is patient at my punishment, and thankful at my mercies, I will write and place him along with the righteous; he that doth not accept my decree, let him go forth from beneath my heaven," etc.⁴

The Source of this tale is to be found in Jewish books, but vastly exaggerated by the Muslims. We find in the Tourat that when God desired to give forth the Ten commandments, he thus addressed Moses, who has himself given the account in

Deut. 10: 1-5 At the time the Lord said to me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and then come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark. And I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand. And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the Lord gave them unto me. And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the

3 2 Sura lxxxv. 21 and 22.

4 Qissas al Anbia.

tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me.

Elsewhere also we are told that the two Tables were preserved in the Ark of the Covenant, made by Moses at the Lord's command.¹ But in course of time the Jews imagined that all the books of the Old Testament, nay the Talmud itself, were deposited in the Ark on the Tables, Mohammed hearing this of the Jewish Law and Scriptures, imagined the same of his own, and said (as we are told above) that the Koran also was placed on the Preserved Table; and his followers not understanding of what heavenly Table he spoke, swelled out the whole matter into the story given above.

The following is from a Jewish writer, Rabbi Simeon:-

What is that which is written that the Lord said to Moses: Come up to me into the mount, and be there; and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them (Exodus xxiv. 12). The tables are the Ten Commandments; and the Torah the Law which is read; and the Commandments also mean the Mishnah; and "that which I have written" means the Prophets, and the Holy Writings; and "that thou mayest teach them" points to the Gemara. And from this we learn that all these were delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai.

No intelligent Muslim would for a moment credit this story, knowing that the Mishna was not written till about the year 220 of the Christian era; the Gemara of Jerusalem in 430 A.D.; and the Gemara of Babylon about 530 A.D. But ignorant Muslims believing it all, added their own Koran to the rest, and so comes this wretched story. The Reader will not think it necessary, we are sure, that anything more of the above kind be added, excepting this, perhaps, that the Jews themselves hold the Tables to be of date beyond time; for one tells us they were made "at the creation of the world at the sunset before the Sabbath day."²

The Mount Caf.- The origin of what the Muslims tell us about this mountain clearly originated from the Jews. Here is what the Tradition of the Muslims tell us:³ -

The Lord Almighty formed a great mountain from green chrysolite, - the greenness of the sky is from it, - called Mount Car, and surrounded the entire earth therewith, and it is that by which the Almighty swore, and called it Car (see Sura 50:1).

1 Exodus xxiv. 12; 1 Kings viii. 9; Hebrews ix. 3.

2 From Pirke Aboth, v. 6. 2 Araish al Majalis.

3 Araish al Majalis.

And again: -

One day Abdallah asked the Prophet what formed the highest point of the earth.

“Mount Car,” he said. “And what is Mount Car made of?” “Of green emeralds,” was the reply; “and from hence is the greenness of the sky.” “Thou hast said the truth, O Prophet; and what is the height of Mount Car?” “A journey of five hundred years.” “And round about it how far is it?” “Two thousand years’ journey.”

Now all these strange ideas are founded on the Jewish writing called Hagigah, where we meet with the following comment on the word *thohu* in Genesis i. 2: “Thohli is a green line (Cav or Cat) which surrounds the whole world, and hence comes darkness.” And so the Companions of the Prophet hearing this explanation of the word Cav, and not understanding what was meant, fancied it must be a mountain, or succession of great mountains, surrounding the world and making it dark.

From all that has now been said, it must be clear to the Reader that the Jewish writings, and specially the fanciful tales of the Talmud, formed one of the chief Sources of Islam. And now we must turn our attention to the similar influence on Islam exercised by the Christian religion, and especially by those stories which in the Prophet’s day the unorthodox sects, spread abroad.

UNORTHODOX CHRISTIAN SECTS

Chapter 4

In the Prophet's day, numbers of Christians in Arabia belonged to unorthodox Sects, which had been expelled from the Roman Empire, and thus had taken refuge beyond the border land. They had hardly any acquaintance with the Gospel or Apostolic writings, but were conversant with unorthodox books. Now our argument is that Mohammed having but an imperfect knowledge of the Gospel, learned from these people, who were all around him, what he believed to be the purport of the New Testament. It was his object to establish a faith which should embrace and unite all races of the Peninsula, and the Christians among the rest. He therefore entered in the Koran very much of the teaching of these sects. It is our object carefully to test whether this proposition is true, - that is, whether it be the case that such stories form one of the Sources of the Koran or not; and that we propose to make the subject of the present chapter.

THE SEVEN SLEEPERS, OR COMPANIONS OF THE CAVE

The tale as given in the Koran is quoted in full below.

Koran 18:8-26 Dost thou consider that the Companions of the Cave, and al Rakim, were one of our signs and a great miracle? When the young men took refuge in the Cave, they said, O Lord, grant us mercy from before Thee, and dispose our business for us to a right issue. Wherefore we struck their ears so that they slept in the Cave for a great number of years: then we awakened them We will relate unto thee their history with truth. They were young men who had believed in their Lord; and we had abundantly directed them; and we fortified their hearts with constancy when they stood before the judge; and they said Our Lord is the Lord of heaven and earth; we will by no means call on any god besides him; for then we should surely utter an extravagance And they said to one another, When ye shall separate yourselves from them, and from that which they worship besides God, then fly into the Cave: your Lord will pour his mercy upon you abundantly and dispose your business to advantage. And thou mightest have seen the sun, when it had risen to decline from their Cave to the right hand, and when it went down, to leave them on the left hand: and they were in the spacious part of the Cave. This was one of the signs of God And thou wouldest have judged them to have been awake, while they were sleeping; and we caused them to turn themselves

to the right hand and to the left. And their dog stretched forth his fore-legs in the mouth of the Cave; if thou hadst come suddenly upon them, verily thou wouldst have turned thy back and fled from them, and thou wouldst have been filled with fear at the sight of them. And so we awaked them out of their sleep, that they might ask questions of one another. One of them said, How long have ye tarried here? They answered, We have tarried a day, or part of a day. Others said: Your Lord best knoweth the time ye have tarried. And now send one of you with this your money into the City, and let him see which of its people hath the best and cheapest food, and let him bring you provision from him; and let him behave circumspectly, and not discover you to anyone. Verily, if they come up against you, they will stone you, or force you to return to their religion; and then shall you not prosper for ever. And so we made their people acquainted with what had happened to them And they said, Erect a Chapel over them; their Lord best knoweth their condition Some say the Sleepers were three, and their dog was the fourth; others say they were five, and their dog the sixth, guessing at a secret matter; and others say they were Seven, and their dog the eighth. Say, My Lord best knoweth their numbers; none shall know them except a few. Wherefore dispute not concerning them, unless with a clear disputation, and ask not any (of the Christians) concerning them And they remained in their Cave 300 years and 9 years over.

It is one of Greek origin to be found in a Latin work of Gregory of Tours,¹ and may be described in brief as referring to the age of the Emperor Decius (249-251 A.D.), when Christians were terribly persecuted, and every endeavour made to destroy the Faith. To escape with their lives, seven men of Ephesus took refuge in a Cave near their city, and fell asleep for two hundred years, till the reign of Theodorus II. (447 A.D.). On awaking, one of them ventured into the City to see what in the interval had happened, and was overcome with amazement to find the Christian faith triumphant over all other religions. The Cross, once the sign of shame and disgrace, now the crown of the Emperor, and the mark of Empire; and nearly the whole people of the land turned Christians. All this is of course a mere story, composed no doubt to illustrate the rapidity with which, by the grace of the Holy Spirit and shedding of Martyrs' blood, the Faith had gained ascendancy at the last. No Christian ever dreamt that the tale was true; but such as the nurse tells her children of "the cat and the mouse," etc. But the Prophet has entered it with all gravity in the Koran for the instruction of his followers. Is it needful for us to add that such a tale could never have been placed by the Most High upon the heavenly Table, and

1 "Story of Martyrs," i. 95.

from thence sent down to the Prophet; but was learned by him from some of the ignorant Christians around him?

MARY

In Sura Mariam we are told that after the birth of the Holy Child, the people came to her and said,

Koran 19:28,29 O Mary, now hast thou done a strange thing; O sister of Aaron, thy father was not a bad man, neither was thy mother a wicked woman.

According to Mohammed, therefore, Mary (Miriam) was the sister of Aaron, Moses' brother; which is all the plainer as elsewhere she is named Mary daughter of Imran¹; and again,

Koran 56:31 We gave unto Moses the Book, and appointed him his brother Aaron as Vizier.

Hence it is clear that Imran, Moses, Aaron, and Mary (Mariam) are the same persons as are so named in the Torah - excepting only that in the Hebrew the name of the first is Amram; and in Numbers (xxvi. 59) we are told that "the name of Amram's wife was Jochebed the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt, and she bare unto Amram, Aaron and Moses and Miriam their sister"; and also in Exodus (xv. 20) we read of "Miriam (Mary) the prophetess, the sister of Aaron." Now looking to the words in the Koran above quoted: *O Mary! O sister of Aaron*, it is quite evident that Mohammed is speaking of Mary the sister of Aaron." and daughter of Imran, as the same Mary who, some 1570 years after, became the mother of our blessed Saviour! The Commentators have in vain endeavoured to explain this marvelous confusion of time and space. One attempt may be set down to the fabulous Jewish story regarding Mary the sister of Aaron, that "the angel of death had no power over her, that she passed away with the kiss of the Lord, and that no insect or worm could touch her person" - A strange conceit this: nor have any of the Jews ever said that she survived to the Christian era.

As regards Mary the mother of Jesus, we find many passages in the Koran opposed to the Four Gospels, and taken evidently from the Apocryphal writings of the unorthodox sects. For example, the following: -

Koran 3:31,32 Then the wife of Imran said, O Lord, I have presented unto Thee that which is in my womb as dedicated to thy service. Accept it,

1 Sura 25:37.

therefore, from me; for thou art he that both heareth and knoweth. So when she was delivered of the child, she said, O Lord, truly I have brought forth a female (and God knoweth what she had brought forth), and a male is not as a female. I have called her Mary; and I commend her unto thee, and her issue, against Satan, the stoned one. Whereupon the Lord accepted her with a gracious acceptance, and caused her to bear an excellent offspring. And Zacharias took care of the child; and as often as Zacharias entered the chamber unto her, he found provisions laid beside her, and he said, O Mary, whence hast thou this? She answered, This is from God; for the Lord provideth for whom he pleaseth without measure.

We read also in Beidhawi and other Commentators that Imran's wife, who was aged and barren, one day saw a bird feeding its little ones, and at once longed for a child herself, and cried: - O Lord, if thou wilt give me either a son or a daughter, I will present it unto Thee in the Temple, thy Holy House. The Lord heard her prayer; she conceived and bore a daughter, whom she called Mary. Jelal ood Deen also tells us that some years after, Mary's mother, called Hanna, taking the child to the Temple, made her over to the priests, who in their turn made her over to Zacharias to take care of; and he placed her in a chamber shut off from anyone else to enter. But the angels came there to tend and nourish her.

Again, we read:-

Koran 3:37-42 Now when the angels said, O Mary, verily God hath chosen thee, and purified thee, and hath chosen thee over all the women of the world: O Mary, be devout towards thy Lord, and worship, and bow down with those who bow down. This is a secret history. We reveal it unto thee, although thou wast not present with them when they cast their rods as to which of them should have the education of Mary; nor wast thou with them when they strove among themselves. When the angels said, O Mary, verily God sendeth thee good tidings regarding the Word from himself; his name is Jesus the Messiah son of Mary honourable, in this world and in that to come, and one of those that approach nigh to the Almighty. And he shall speak unto men in the cradle, and when he is grown up, and he shall be one of the righteous. She said, Lord, how shall I have a son, since no man hath touched me. He said:- Thus the Lord createth that which he pleaseth. When he decreeth a thing, he but saith unto it, - Be, and it is.

The notice here given of the "casting of rods" is thus explained by Beidhawi and Jelal ood Deen. Zacharias with six and twenty other priests who sought to have the charge of Mary, went to the river, in order to choose which should be the favoured one, and cast their rods into it. All

sank but that of Zacharias, who thus became Mary's guardian. Regarding all this we read in Sura xix. 16-31, as follows: -

Koran 19:16-31 And in the Book make mention of Mary, when she retired from her people to a place towards the East, and took a veil, apart from them. And we sent unto her our Spirit, who appeared unto her as a real man. She said, I flee for refuge from thee unto the Merciful, if thou fearest the Lord. He answered: Verily I am the Messenger of thy Lord that I may give unto thee a holy Son. She said, How shall I have a son, for no man hath touched me, and I am no harlot. He said, So shall it be. Thy Lord saith, This is easy with me, and we shall make him a sign unto mankind, and a mercy from us; for it is a thing decreed. Whereupon she conceived him, and retired with him (in her womb) to a distant place; and the pains of childbirth came upon her by the trunk of a palm-tree. She said, Would to God I had died before this, and had become a thing forgotten, lost in oblivion! And one from beneath her called out:-Grieve not: verily thy Lord hath provided a rivulet under thee; and do thou shake the body of the palm-tree, and it shall let fall upon thee ripe dates ready gathered; so do thou eat and drink, and comfort thine eyes. Moreover, if thou seest any man, say, I have vowed a fast unto the Merciful, and I will speak to no man this day. So she came to her people, carrying the child in her arms. They said, O Mary, thou hast done a strange thing: O sister of Aaron, thy father was not a bad man, neither was thy mother a harlot. Then she made signs to the child. They said, - How shall we speak to an infant in the cradle? Whereupon the child said, Verily I am the servant of God: He hath given me the Book and hath made me a prophet.

Such, then, are the tales regarding the Virgin Mary which we find in the Koran and ancient Muslim Commentators. From whence did such strange fictions come? Clearly not from the true Gospel; but nearly all of them from the schismatic writings, spread abroad in ancient times. To prove this, we now give full and satisfactory evidence. In the Protevangelium of James the Less, written in Hellenic Greek, we have the following: -

Anna looking upwards to the heavens, saw a sparrow in its nest, and sighed saying, O me! O me! Would it were the same with me. O me! to what thing am I alike? Not like unto the birds of heaven, for the birds of heaven are fruitful before thee, O Lord And lo! an angel of the Lord from above spake thus unto her: Anna, Anna! the Lord God hath heard thy cry, and thy seed shall be spoken of over the whole earth. Anna said, As the Lord my God liveth, if a child, either male or female, be born unto me, I will offer it as a gift to the Lord my God, and it will be in his service all the days of its life And when her full

time had come in the ninth month, Anna was delivered And she gave the breast to the child and called its name Mary.

In an Arabic apocryphal book, called the History of our holy Father the Aged, the Carpenter (Joseph), there is given the following account of Mary as a child. Her parents took her to the Temple when three years old, and she remained there nine years. Then when the Priests saw that the Holy Virgin had grown up, they spoke among themselves, - Let us call a righteous man, one that fears the Lord, to take charge of Mary till the time of her marriage, that she may not remain in the Temple. But before that time when her parents brought her, a new occasion had arisen, of which we read as follows in the Protevangelium: -

The Priest accepted the child, and having kissed and blessed her, spake thus to her: May the Lord glorify thy name over all the races on the face of the earth. The Lord God will in the latter days manifest to thee the ransom of the house of Israel. And Mary remained like a dove in the Temple of the Lord, and received food at an angel's hand. And when she was twelve years of age, the Priests came together saying: - See now, Mary is twelve years old, and still in the Temple of the Lord; what then shall we do with her? ... And behold an angel of the Lord stood beside him and said: - Zacharias; Zacharias! come forth, and bring together all the widowers of thy people, and let each carry his rod, and whom the Lord God will signify, his wife shall she be. And the criers went over the whole land of Judea, and proclaimed it by the trumpet of the Lord, and all flocked together; and Joseph also carrying his rod hurried to the Synagogue. So having come together, they went to the Priest, who, gathering all their rods, went into the Temple and prayed. Having finished the prayer, he came forth, and gave to each man his rod, but upon none of them was there any mark. Joseph's rod came to him last of all. And lo! a dove came out of the rod, and sat upon Joseph's head. Then the Priest said to him: - Thou hast been chosen to take the Virgin of the Lord; take her therefore under thy protection

And Mary, taking a pitcher went forth to fill it with water; and lo! a voice saying, "Hail thou highly favoured one: the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women." And she looked to the right and to the left to see whence the voice came; trembling she returned to her house, and putting down the pitcher, sat upon her seat And 10, the angel of the Lord from over her cried, "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with the Lord and shalt conceive by his word." Mary

hearing it, became anxious in her soul, saying, Am I to conceive, as every woman doth, and bring forth? And the angel said unto her: - "Not thus, Mary, for the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore that Holy Child shall be called the Son of the Highest, and thou shalt call his name JESUS."

Anyone reading the above will see that it gives a close account of Mary's residence in the Holy Temple. We have pretty much the same in other books, such as the following from the Coptic book on the Virgin Mary:-

When placed by Hanna in the Temple, Mary was fed there like the doves, as the angels of the Lord brought her food from the heavens. When she worshipped the Lord in the Temple, they did reverence to her, and often brought her fruit from the Tree of Life, which she did eat with cheerfulness.¹.... Mary lived in the Temple, a pure and holy worshipper, till twelve years of age. She had been her first three years in her parents' home, and nine years in the Temple. Then the Priests seeing that she was growing up a virtuous and God-fearing maiden, consulted together, saying:- "We must seek for a righteous God-fearing man to whom she may be given in marriage." And so having summoned the tribe of Judah together, they chose twelve men according to the names of each of the twelve tribes of Israel, and the lot came out upon that good old man Joseph.² Then when she became with child, Mary was summoned with Joseph before the High priest, who thus addressed her: - O Mary, what is this thou hast done, and debased thy soul: thou who in the Holy of holies feddest from the hand of an angel, and heardest their hymns, what is this thou hast done? Weeping bitterly she answered:- By the living God I swear that I am pure before him and have known no man.³

After that we have the account of Joseph and Mary leaving Nazareth for Bethlehem, where they rested in a cave, and there Jesus was born: -

And Joseph having found a cavern, brought Mary into it And he tells us: - I looked up to the heavens, and saw the heavenly vault standing still, and the birds of the air trembling; then looking down upon the earth, I beheld a dish laid, and the workers sitting at meat around it, their hands therein, yet not taking out anything, or putting a morsel to their mouths, but their faces all looking upwards. And I

1 Coptic History of the Virgin.
2 Story of Joseph's dream.
3 Protevangelium.

saw sheep being driven, but they stood still, and the shepherd raised his crook to strike them, but his hand remained raised. And by the bed of the river I saw kids with their mouths as it were touching the water, but stopped from drinking. All things in fear and alarm.⁴

Referring now to what is told us in a quotation from the Koran given above, regarding Mary, the Palm-tree, etc., we give an extract from an apocryphal book called the History of the Nativity of Mary and the Saviour's Infancy:-

Now on the third day after she had set out, Mary was wearied in the desert by the heat, and asked Joseph to rest for a little under the shade of a palm-tree. So he made haste and made her sit down beneath it. Then Mary looking up and seeing its branches laden with fruit, said, - I desire if it were possible to have some of that fruit. Joseph answered:- I wonder at what thou sayest, since thou must see how lofty the branches of the palm-tree are; and besides, I am anxious to get water, for all in my vessel is done, and there is none anywhere about to fill it with. Just then the child Jesus, looking up with a cheerful smile from his mother's bosom, said to the palm-tree:- Send down thy branches here below, that my Mother may eat fresh fruit of thee. Forthwith it bent itself at Mary's feet, and so they all ate of its fruit. When they had gathered all the fruit, it still remained bent, waiting for orders to arise. Then Jesus said:- O palm-tree, arise with cheerfulness, be one of my Father's trees in Paradise; but with thy roots open the fountain beneath thee; and bring me here for my refreshment some of the water flowing from that fount. At once the tree became erect, and began to pour from its roots water beautifully clear and sweet before them. So when they saw the water, they were all filled with delight, and drank of it with their cattle and servants, till they were satisfied and praised the Lord.

Between this story, as told here and in the Koran, there is just this divergence, that with the latter the Palm-tree appears at the time of the Messiah's birth, whereas this ancient Christian tale belongs to a somewhat later period, namely, after the journey of Joseph and Mary into Egypt.

⁴ It is remarkable that we have the same story repeated in the Rauzat al Ahabab regarding the birth of Mohammed himself!

THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS

In the Koran we are told that the angels, before the infant's birth, thus addressed Mary:-

Koran 3:41,43 And he shall speak to men in the cradle And he shall say, Verily I come unto you with a sign from your Lord, for I shall make unto you of clay the figure as it were of a bird; then I will blow thereon and it shall become a bird, by permission of God.

And again in another Sura:-

Koran 5:119 When God said, O Jesus son of Mary! remember my favour towards thee, and towards thy Mother; when I strengthened thee by the Holy Spirit, that thou shouldst speak unto men in the cradle, and when grown up; and when I taught thee the Book and wisdom, and the Torah, and the Gospel; and when thou createdst of clay as it were the figure of a bird by my permission, and didst breathe thereon, and by my permission it became a bird. And when thou didst heal one born blind, and the leper, by my permission; and didst raise up the dead by my permission; and when I held back the children of Israel from thee at the time thou camest unto them with evident miracles; and when such of them as believed not said, This is nothing but manifest sorcery.

It need not be repeated that tales of our Saviour's childhood such as these have nothing to do with the Gospel, but like those before of the cradle, palm-tree, etc., have been taken from imaginary and fabulous Christian writings, such as the following from a Greek story-book called *The Gospel of Thomas the Israelite*: -

The child Jesus, when five years of age, was playing on the road by a dirty stream of running water; and having brought it all together into ditches, immediately made it pure and clean; and all this by a single word. Then having moistened some earth, he made of it twelve sparrows. And it was the Sabbath day when he did these things. There were many other children playing with him. Now a Jew, seeing what Jesus did, that he was playing on the Sabbath day, forthwith went his way to his father Joseph; Behold, he said, thy son is at the stream of dirty water, and having taken up some mud, hath made of it twelve sparrows, and hath thus desecrated the Sabbath. On this Joseph went to the spot, and cried out:- Why dost thou do these things on the Sabbath day which it is not lawful to do? Whereupon Jesus, clapping his hands at the sparrows, cried aloud to them, - Go off! So they, clucking,

flew away. The Jews seeing it, were astonished, and went and told their Rulers what they had seen Jesus do.

In the Arabic *Gospel of the Infancy*, the whole story is found twice over, in Chapter 36, and again in a different form in Chapter 46, because the latter part of the book is taken from *The Gospel of Thomas the Israelite*.

In reference to the supposed fact that Jesus spoke when an infant in the cradle, we find it said in the Koran (Sura xix. 29-31) that when the Virgin Mary's people reproached her, she pointed to Jesus, implying that they should ask him about the matter. And when they asked her, *How can we speak to a child in the cradle?* then Jesus answered them and said, *Verily I am the servant of God, who hath given the Book, and made me a Prophet.*

So also in the *Gospel of the Infancy*, Chapter 1, it is thus written:-

In the Book of *Josephus, High Priest*, who lived in the time of the Messiah (and men say he was Caiaphas), we find it said that Jesus spake when he was in the cradle, and called out to his mother Mary:-
 "Verily I am Jesus, the Son of God, the Word, whom thou hast given birth to according to the good tidings given thee by the Angel Gabriel, and my Father hath sent me for the Salvation of the Wodd."

Now if we compare the above, taken from this ancient Arabic work on the Infancy of our Saviour, with the Koran, it will be at once apparent that Mohammed has adopted the story, with its very words, changed only so far as to bring them into accord with his own belief and teaching; and doubtless it was all taken from this ancient apocryphal treatise. Should anyone ask, How could this have been? - the answer is that this book of the Childhood was translated into Arabic from the Coptic original, and must have been known to the Prophet's Coptic hand-maiden, Mary. From her he must have heard the tale, and believing it to have come from the Gospel, adopted it with some little change, and so entered it in the Koran. Now it is clear that such stories of infantile miracles are altogether opposed to what is written in the Gospel of St. John (ii.) regarding the turning of water into wine, where it is recorded that "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee and manifested forth his glory." Jesus was then over thirty years of age; and it is clear that before this no miracle had been done by him. But all the miracles noted in the Koran, beyond what have been mentioned above, and that of the Table to be spoken of below, were undoubtedly true and beyond question, as they correspond with what we read of in the four Gospels.

Now as to the Table, the following is the account given in the Koran:-

Koran 5:112-115 When the Apostles said, O Jesus Son of Mary! is thy Lord able to cause a Table to descend unto us from heaven? He said, Fear God if ye be true believers. They answered, We desire to eat therefrom, and that our hearts may rest at ease, and may know that thou hast told us the truth, and that we may be witnesses thereof. Jesus Son of Mary said, O God our Lord! Cause a Table to descend unto us from heaven, that it may become an Eid (day of festival) to the first of us and unto the last; and a sign from thee; and do thou provide food for us, for thou art the best Provider. God said, I will send it down unto you.

This miracle is not mentioned in any Christian book. So strange an imagination never could have had reality. but its origin is no doubt to be found in the Supper which Jesus partook of with his disciples the night before his death. This Lord's Supper, which has ever since been observed by Christians as a sacred ordinance according to Christ's command, is described in each of the four Gospels.¹ It is also mentioned in Luke (xxii. 30), where Jesus promises his disciples "that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."²

We pass on to other notices in the Koran regarding Jesus and his Mother, that we may observe the Sources from which they were derived. Thus, in

Koran 5:116 When God shall say unto Jesus at the last day, O Jesus Son of Mary! hast thou said unto men, Take me and my Mother for two gods, besides God?

And again:-

Koran 4:169 O ye people of the Book! Exceed not the Just bounds in your religion; neither say of God other than the truth. Verily the Messiah Jesus Son of Mary is the apostle of God, and his Word which he placed in Mary, and a Spirit, from him. Believe, therefore, in God and his apostles, and say not there are three (Gods); forbear this; it will be better for you. Verily God is one God. Far be it from him that he should have a son. To him belongeth whatever is, in heaven and earth; and he is a sufficient advocate.

And once more:-

1 Matthew xxvi. 20-29; Mark xiv. 17-25; Luke xxvi. 14-17; John xiii. 1-30.

2 It is also possible that the dream of Peter in which food was sent down to him in a sheet may have originated the idea of the Table descending from heaven. It was, however, but a dream. Acts x. 9-16.

Koran 5:77 *They are very unbelievers who say, God is the third of three; for there is no God but the one God. And if they refrain not from what they say, a dreadful torment shall surely be inflicted on such of them as disbelieve.*

From these verses it is evident, as Jelal ood Deen and Yahya say, that the Prophet must have heard from some of the unorthodox Christian sects, that they held the Almighty to be three, namely, God, and Mary and Jesus; and to oppose this evil teaching, it is over and again repeated in the Koran that God is one. Whoever may read the Torah and the Gospel must know that Unity of the Almighty is at the foundation of the Christian faith;- as we read in

Deut. 6:4 *“Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord”;*

a text quoted and enforced by Jesus himself, Mark xii. 29. The godhead of Mary is held by no real Christian. It is, alas, true that several Churches do worship her, - which is nothing short of idolatry, and altogether opposed to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures; yet it is in accordance with what many of the unorthodox works contained regarding Mary; and from them no doubt Mohammed learned the strange story he has put in the Koran. We find it written that:

Koran 4:156 *The Jews said: We have slain Jesus son of Mary, the Apostle of God. Yet they slew him not, neither crucified him, but a likeness was given unto them They did not really kill him; but God took him up unto himself; and God is mighty and wise.*

It need hardly be said that this doctrine of the Koran is entirely opposed to the writings of the Prophets and Apostles, but it is in agreement with the teaching of some of the early heretics. Thus the ancient writer Irenaeus tells us that Basilides, one of their chief men, held this view, for he wrote of Jesus as follows:-

He suffered not; but Simon a Cyrenian was compelled to carry the cross for him; and he through error and ignorance was crucified, being transfigured by him, that it might be thought he was Jesus himself.

It is evident then that Mohammed learned this story as propagated by the disciples of Basilides; - a story everyone must know to be opposed to the writings of the Prophets, who said that the Messiah would come as a sacrifice for the redemption of mankind; and to the testimony of the Apostles, who with their own eyes saw our blessed Redeemer on the cross. Mohammed, however, failed to see that the object of this heretic was to hold up the vain imagination that Jesus was not clothed with manhood

proper, but had only the semblance and not the reality of it. If so, it was not possible that he could have been born of the Virgin, and suffered on the cross; but that men were deceived into thinking that these things happened to him. Now all this unorthodox teaching is entirely opposed not only to the Gospel, but to the Koran itself. Accordingly, it did not become Mohammed to accept part of the wild imaginations of Basilides, and reject a part; for if the basis of a heretic's teaching is false, how can the notions and doctrines derived therefrom be true? And yet we see that the Prophet did so, in accepting the vain imagination of the heretic as given in the verse of the Koran quoted above.

The Muslims hold that Christ announced to his followers that they were to expect a Prophet named Ahmed; and in proof they adduce the following verse from the Koran,

Koran 56:6 *And when Jesus Son of Mary said, O children of Israel, I am the apostle of God unto you, confirming that which was delivered unto me in the Torah and bringing good tidings of an apostle who shall come after me, named Ahmed.*

This passage no doubt refers to the Comforter, the Paraclete promised in the Gospel of John.¹ But anyone who attentively reads what is said in the passages on the subject, will perceive that they make no promise of any prophet's advent, but of the coming of the Holy Ghost;- a promise fulfilled shortly after our Saviour's ascent to heaven, by the descent of the Holy Spirit, as described in Acts ii. 1-11.

The origin of the misapprehension in the Koran came from the Arabs not knowing the meaning of Paraclete (Faraclete), and fancying it to signify Ahmed, or "the praised one"; while the real sense of the name is the Comforter. But there is in Greek another word which to the ear of a foreigner would have a nearly similar sound, namely, Periclete (praised or celebrated); and it is extremely probable that the people of Arabia, not familiar with Greek, mistook its meaning thus and named the promised one Ahmed, or "the praised."²

We read in ancient times of one Mani³ in Iran, who fancied himself a prophet, and claimed to be the Paraklete promised by the Messiah. But he was rejected by the Christians of Persia, who, being well acquainted

1 John xiv. 16,26, xv. 26, xvi. 7. Called also the Faraclete.

2 Our Author exemplifies this by words begun with two Arabic letters sounding very similar, and liable to be mistaken one for the other.

3 Manes, and hence the Manichaeans.

with the gospel, knew that our Saviour made no promise of any prophet to come.

We have it in tradition that Mohammed said Jesus would descend upon earth, there live forty years, and become married.⁴ Anyone acquainted with the Bible will understand how this strange imagination arose; for in Rev. xix. 7-9, we read as follows:-

Revelation 19:7-9 *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*

And if it be asked, Who is the Bride spoken of here? the answer is:

Revelation 21:2 *“And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”*

We see then that the Bride spoken of here is the Christian Church which will be on earth at the second coming of Jesus; and their “marriage” is simply the symbol of the perfect union, love and devotion that will subsist between the two, as between a husband and his wife. The whole story of the Commentators is but a myth.⁵

Again we read:-

Koran 3:48 *O Jesus! I will cause thee to die,*

- the meaning being that after his return to this earth Jesus will die. This is entirely opposed to the Scriptures, for in Revelation i. 17, 18 Jesus says,

Revelation 1:17,18 *“I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead: and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”*

The story has arisen from a passage in a traditional book⁶ regarding Enoch and Elias, who ascended without dying to the heavens and of whom we are told:

“It will happen to them that they will return to the world in the last time, in the day of grief and fear and distress, and then will die.” And in

4 Araish al Majalis.

5 The argument might have been strengthened by a reference to Ephesians v. concerning the marriage of Christ the Church.

6 History of Joseph the Carpenter.

the Coptic tale of the Falling asleep of Mary, it is said of Enoch and Elias, - "Of necessity both of these will at the last taste of death." So when the Companions of the Prophet had such foolish notions in their heads, they no doubt concluded that Jesus too, like Enoch and Elias, would eventually be made to taste of death; and moreover, knowing that he had ascended up to heaven, they thought that his death would follow his return at the Second coming. Hence the way in which they tried to illustrate the above text. It may be noticed also that in other Suras we find it written that "Every soul shall taste of death."¹

OTHER STORIES

When God would create Adam he sent angels and archangels, one after another, to bring a handful of earth. At last Azrael, having descended, brought a handful gathered from every quarter, and said, "O Lord, thou knowest whence I have brought it."² Abul Feda, quoting from Ibn Athir, gives us this account:-

The Prophet said that God created Adam from a handful of earth gathered from all round the world ... and that he was called Adam as formed out of the earth below (i.e. adim).

The following is also taken from the heretic Marcion, who is quoted by an old Armenian writer as follows: -

The God of the Law seeing the earth fair to look upon, desired to make man out of it, and having descended to Matter, the earth, he said, Give me some of thy soil, and I will from myself impart to it a soul .. So when Matter had given to him some of the earth, he created man and breathed into him a soul; and for this reason he was called Adam, because he was made out of the earth.

According to the heretic Marcion, he whom they name "the God of the Law," who got earth for the creation of man, was only an angel; for they say that the Law came down from one of the angels hostile to the great God. And that Angel they call Lord of the universe, Creator of all things, and Prince of this world. This last is taken from the Gospel of John, where the devil is so called?³ Marcion tells us that this angel was an inhabitant of

1 Sura xxix. 57, and iii. 182.

2 Qissas al Anbia.

3 John xiv. 30. The Muslims apply the name "Prince of the World" to their Prophet, not understanding its true meaning.

the Second heaven, and at first knew nothing of the great God; but when he came to know of his existence, then he turned out to be an enemy of “the Unknown God,” and sought that mankind should neither know nor worship him.

This imaginative story of the creation is in entire accord with what the Muslims say regarding Azazil, who came to dwell in the Second heaven. But the rest of the tale about him belongs to the Zoroastrian books, which will be noticed in our Fifth chapter. We have the following passage:-

Koran 19:69-73 By the Lord! we shall surely assemble them round about Hell on their knees. Then will we draw forth from every Sect such of them as shall have been most rebellious against the Merciful; and we best know which of them are the more deserving to be burned therein. There are none of you but shall descend into the same. It is an established decree with thy Lord. Then we will deliver the pious ones; but will leave the wicked ones therein upon their knees.

In explaining this passage Tradition varies. Some say that all believers will descend into Hell, but will not be touched by the flames; others that it refers to the Bridge Sirat, over which all must pass, and which is over Jehannam. It is just possible that the words, “There are none of you but shall descend into it,” may be borrowed from the way in which some Christians interpreted the “Trying with fire,” mentioned in the Gospel,⁴ as if it meant that they were thus to be purified of their sins. But if the Koran here refers to the Bridge Sirat, the idea cannot be from any of them, but from the Zoroastrian books, to be noticed below.

THE BALANCE

The Balance is mentioned in two passages of the Koran,

Koran 42:16 It is God who hath sent down the Scripture with truth, and the Balance; and what shall inform thee whether the time be near at hand?

Koran 101:5,6 Moreover, he whose Balance shall be heavy will lead a pleasing life; but he whose Balance shall be light, his dwelling-place shall be Hell.

We need not enter into the vast store of Tradition devoted to this great Balance, but simply enquire whence the notion arose. There is a fictitious work called “The Testament of Abraham,” written originally in Egypt, and thence translated into Greek and Arabic; and what is there said of the weighing of deeds, good and bad, we shall compare with what is in the Ko-

⁴ Mark ix. 49; 1 Corinthians iii. 13.

ran. In this book we are told that when the Angel of Death wished to seize the soul of Abraham, the patriarch desired that before his death he might see the wonders of the heavens and of the earth. Having obtained permission, he ascended and beheld all the scenes around him. After a time he ascended the Second heaven, and there saw the Balance by which angels try the deeds of mankind. The following is an extract from this work:-

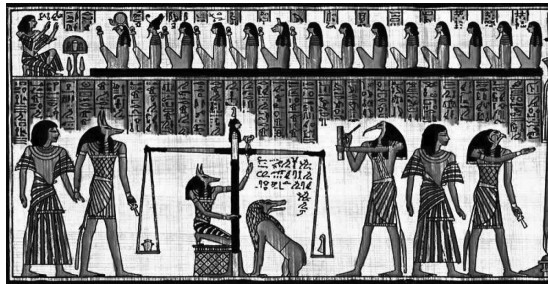
Betwixt the two doors there stood a throne ... and upon it was seated a wonderful Man ... Before him stood a Table, like as of crystal, all covered with gold and linen. And upon the Table a book lay, its length six fingers, and breadth ten fingers. On the right hand of it and on the left, stood two angels having paper and ink and pen. In front of the Table sat a brilliant angel holding in his hand a Balance. On the left sat an angel, as it were all of fire, merciless and stern, having in his hand a trumpet, in which was flaming fire, the touchstone of sinful men. The wonderful Man seated on the throne was judging the souls and passing sentence upon them. And the two angels on the right and on the left were writing down, the one on the right, righteous deeds, and he on the left, sinful ones. And he that stood before the Table holding the Balance was weighing the souls, and the angel holding the fire, passing judgement upon them. And so Abraham asked Michael, the Captain of the Host, What is all this that we see? He answered, That which thou seest, holy Abraham, is the Judgment and Retribution.

Thereafter we are told that every soul whose good deeds equalled its evil ones was reckoned neither as one of the saved nor as one of the condemned, but put in a position between the two, like what is told us in the Koran already quoted, "Between the two a veil, and men upon al Ariif. "

From the above it is clear that what Mohammed mentions about the Balance in the Koran was derived from this fictitious "Testament of Abraham," written in Egypt some four hundred years before the Hegira, and of which an account was probably given him by his Coptic concubine Mary.

But what there is mentioned about the Balance belongs to a far earlier source, namely, to a book called "The Book of the Dead." Many copies of this primeval work have been found in the sepulchres of the ancient idolatrous Egyptians, placed there because supposed to have been written by one of their gods called Thoth, and with the notion that they would be read by the dead buried there. In it is a strange picture illustrating the Judgment hall of Osiris, of which our Author has given an interesting copy. There are in it two deities on opposite sides of a Balance. One of these is weighing the heart of a good man placed in a vessel on the scale, and in

the corresponding scale opposite is an idol called Mtl or truth. The great god is recording in ancient Egyptian the fate of the departed:- “Osiris the justified is alive; his Balance is equal in the midst of God’s palace; the heart of Osiris the justified is to enter into its place. Let the great god, Lord of Hermopolis, say so.” Over some of the idols are their names; and above a savage figure, the words, “Conqueror of his enemies, god of Amenti (Hades)” ; several times also are repeated the words, “Life and peace to Osiris.” Below we have reproduced a sketch of the “Balance” which stands at one side of this most remarkable picture.



From all this it is clear that what we have in the Koran about the “Balance” was learned by the Prophet from such Sources as the above.

ASCENT TO HEAVEN

As regards the Ascent to heaven, Tradition tells us that Mohammed there saw Father Adam, at times weeping and groaning, at times happy and rejoicing; of which in the Mishkat we have this account: -

When he opened, we went up to the lower heaven. Lo! a man seated, on his right hand were dark figures, and on his left dark figures. When he looked to his right, he laughed; when to the left, he wept. And he said, Welcome to the righteous Prophet, and to the excellent Son. I then asked Gabriel, Who is this? It is Adam, he said, and these dark figures on his right, and on his left, are the spirits of his sons. The people on his right hand are the inhabitants of Paradise; and the dark figures on his left are those of the Fire; when he looks to his right, he smiles; and when he looks to the left, he weeps.

The same tale we find in the ancient “Testament of Abraham,” as follows: -

So Michael turned the chariot, and took Abraham towards the east through the first gate of heaven. There Abraham saw two roads;

one strait and difficult, the other wide and easy. He beheld also two gates, one wide like its road, and another narrow like the other road. Outside the two gates they beheld a Man sitting on a golden throne, his aspect terrible like unto the Lord. They saw a multitude of souls driven by the angels through the wide gate, but few souls led by the angels through the narrow one. And when the great Man seated on the golden throne saw but few passing through the narrow gate, and so many through the wide gate, forthwith he grasped the hair of his head and his beard on either side, and cast himself weeping and groaning from his throne upon the ground. But when he saw many souls entering in by the narrow gate, he arose from the ground, and with joy and rejoicing seated himself again upon the throne.

Then Abraham asked the Captain of the Host:- My Lord Commander! Who is that great Man adorned with so much grandeur, who sometimes weeps in great distress, and sometimes rejoices and is glad? Then the Spirit (Michael) answered:- This is Adam, the first created man, adorned with so much glory; and here he beholds the world and the multitudes who derive their existence from himself. When he beholds many souls passing the narrow gate, then rising up he seats himself upon his throne in joy and gladness, because the narrow gate is for the righteous and leadeth unto life eternal. Those passing through it are on the way to Paradise, and hence the first created Adam rejoiceth, because he seeth souls that are saved. But when he beholds many passing through the wide gate, then he seizes the hair of his head, beats and casts himself to the ground crying bitterly. For the wide gate leadeth the wicked to everlasting destruction.

It were easy to shew that many other passages in the Koran are in close accord with the tales of unorthodox Christians. Before closing the chapter, however, it seems proper to ask whether Mohammed, having borrowed so much from fictitious works, has taken anything at all from the Gospel, or Apostolic writings. In answer to this serious question; we reply that throughout the Koran only one verse is quoted from the Gospel; and by a well-known Traditionist possibly one verse from St. Paul.

First. It is written:-

Koran 7:38 They that charge our signs with falsehood and proudly reject them, the gates of heaven shall not be opened to them, nor shall they enter Paradise until a camel pass through the eye of a needle:- compared with

*this in three of the Gospels:- "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."*¹

Second. Abu Hureira tells in the Mishkat of the Prophet having stated that God Almighty had said as follows:- "I have prepared for the righteous what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man." See similar words in I Cor. ii. 9.

But this absence of actual quotation does not detract from the second-hand, and in many respects fictitious, knowledge of the Christian past. And we conclude that the Gospel, and especially some of the ancient unorthodox works, were clearly among the Sources of Muslim teaching,- a conclusion altogether beyond question.

1 Matthew xix. 24; Mark x. 25; Luke xviii. 25.

ANCIENT ZOROASTRIAN AND HINDU BELIEFS

Chapter 5

We learn from Arabian and Greek historians that previous to Mohammed's birth, and during his life, many parts of the Peninsula were ruled over by Persian kings. For example, Kesra Nousherwan having sent an army to Hira, put down Hiirith the king, and in his room placed the subservient Mandzar on the throne. He also sent an army to Yemen, and having expelled the Abyssinian invaders, restored the old king, whose progeny followed him in the government of the land. Abulfeda tells us that "the family of Mandzar, and race of Nasr son of Rabia, were the Kesra's governors over the Arabs of Iraq"; also that after the Himyarites, "there were four Abyssinian governors of Yemen, and eight Persians, and then it became ruled over by Islam." It is clear, then, that both in the time of Mohammed and previously, the Persians had constant intercourse with Arabia; and being incomparably more learned than its ignorant people, must have had an important influence on their religion, on their customs, and on their knowledge at large. Both history and Koranic commentaries shew that the tales and songs of Iran were spread abroad among the tribes of Arabia. Thus Ibn Hisham tells us that in the days of the Prophet, stories of Rustem, Isfandiyar, and the ancient kings of Persia, were not only current at Medina, but that some of the Quraysh used delightedly to compare them with the similar tales in the Koran. He adds as follows:-

The Prophet of the Lord, when he sat in the assembly, used to pray there to the Almighty, read to them from the Koran, and warn the Quraysh of what in times past had happened to the unbelieving nations. It so came to pass that one day after he had left, Nadhr son of Al Harith came in and told them stories of the great Rustem and of Isfandiyar and the kings of Persia. Then he said, "I swear by the Lord, that the stories of Mohammed are not better than my own; they are nothing but tales of the past which he hath written out, just as I have written mine out." Then descended this passage: -

Koran 25:6,7 They say these are fables of the ancients which he hath caused to be written down, dictated by him morning and evening. Say, He hath

revealed the same who knoweth the sacred things in heaven and earth; verily he is gracious and merciful ...

Koran 68:15 *When our verses are recited unto him, he .with, - Fables of the ancients.*

Koran 45: 6,7 *Woe unto every lying and wicked one that heareth the verses of God read unto him, then proudly resisteth, as if he heard them not; wherefore denounce unto him a feaiful punishment.*

These stories of Rustem, Isfandiyar, and other ancient kings of Persia, are similar to what Ferdosi, some centuries after the Prophet, turned into song in his Shahnama. Certainly as the Arabs used to read of the ancient sovereigns, they could not have been ignorant of stories such as those of Jamshid, the ascent of Ahriman out of darkness, Arta Viraf, the bridge Chinavad, and such like. Our object is by careful search to ascertain whether these stories and the like had any effect on the Koran and Tradition. We are sure that they had; and that Persian tales and doctrines form one of the Sources of Muslim faith. Many also of the stories, literary, imaginative, and religious, were not confined to Iran, but were current among the Hindus in India, and spread abroad amongst the people travelling by Herat and Merve, and so westward. It will be asked what our proof of all this is; and we propose accordingly to quote some passages from the Koran and Tradition, and then to compare these with what may be found in ancient Zoroastrian and Hindu writings.

ASCENT TO HEAVEN

We begin with the ascent,- Miraj-of the Prophet. The following account of it is:-

Koran 17:1 *Praise be to him who transported his servant by night from the Sacred temple (of Mecca) to the farther Temple (Jerusalem) the surroundings of which we have blessed, that we might shew him some of our signs, for he is both the hearing and the seeing One.*

In the interpretation of this verse the greatest difference has prevailed. Thus Ibn Ishaq gives this account from Ayesha:- "The body of the Prophet did not disappear, but the Lord carried off his soul by night." Tradition also tells us that the Prophet himself said:- "Mine eyes slept, but my heart was awake."¹ Mohee ood Deen is of the same opinion;- writing of the Ascent and Night Journey, he says, in explanation of the above passage:-

1 Sirat al Rasul

Praised be he that transported his servant; that is, released him from material surroundings, and caused a spiritual separation without any change of the body. By night, i.e. in darkness surrounding the physical frame; for the ascent could only be carried out spiritually through the inner senses of the body. From the holy Masjid; that is, from the centre of a sacred heart, free from bodily corruption and sensual coverings. To the further Masjid; that is, the fountain of the spirit, far removed from the corporeal world, and close to the manifestation of the Almighty's glory, in order that he might the better understand that which, We might shew him some of our signs, even if they be within the heart, which can only be done in all their glory and grandeur by spiritual discernment within the soul; namely, that we can shew him of our Nature and perfection.

Hence, if we accept the above, together with the witness of Ayesha, and what the Prophet himself is reported to have said, - the ascent was not in body, but in spirit. But the view of others is altogether different. Thus Ibn Ishaq tells us that, according to what Mohammed said, Gabriel awoke him twice; but he went to sleep again:-

And he came to me the third time, and made me stand up and go with him to the gate of the Mosque, where, lo! there was a white steed, in appearance between a pony and an ass . Then with his hand he helped me upon it, neither of us preceding the other. (Then follows a quotation from CotMa.) The Prophet said: When I tried to mount on Burac he became refractory; then Gabriel touched his mane and said: Burac, "knowest thou what thou art doing? for, by the Lord! no servant of the God hath ever mounted thee more blessed from heaven than Mohammed." Whereupon Burac became so ashamed that sweat poured like water from him. Then he stood still, and I mounted him. After that (Hasan tells us) the Prophet went forward and Gabriel with him, till they reached the Holy temple at Jerusalem, and there found Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, with a company of Prophets, - whom the Prophet led in prayer. Then were brought two vases, in one was wine and in the other milk. So the blessed Prophet took that with milk, and drank of it, and left the vase of wine alone. Then Gabriel said:- Guide unto temperance, and teach thy people so, O Mohammed, for wine is forbidden unto you. Then the Prophet returned to Mecca; and in the morning, meeting the Quraysh, he told them all that happened. "By the Lord!" said the people, "what a marvellous thing. It takes our caravans a whole month to reach Syria from this, and a whole month

to return; yet Mohammed has gone it all in a single night, and in the same returned!"¹

The following is another account given by the Prophet of his night Journey, as heard by Cotada:-

While I was asleep, to one came to me, close as the hair is to the skin, and took out my heart. He then brought a golden vase filled with Faith, in which my heart was placed, and my stomach cleansed in the water of Zemzem, so that I was filled with Faith and Wisdom. Thereupon Gabriel mounted me upon Burac (as in the previous account), and having carried me upwards to the Lowest heaven called out to open the gate. "Who is this?" one cried. - It is Gabriel. And who is with thee? - It is Mohammed. Was he summoned? - O yes! was Gabriel's answer. Then welcome to him; how good it is that he hath come. And so he opened the gate. Entering, Gabriel said, Here is thy father Adam, make thy salutation to him. So I made to him my salaam, and he returned it to me; on which he said, Welcome to an excellent son and to an excellent Prophet. Then Gabriel took me up to the Second heaven, and to there were John (the Baptist) and Jesus.² In the Third heaven there was Joseph; in the Fourth Idrees; in the Fifth Aaron; and in the Sixth Moses. As he returned the salutation of the Prophet, Moses wept, and on being asked the reason said: "I mourn because more of the people of him that was sent after me do enter Paradise than of mine." Then we ascended the Seventh heaven;- This is thy father Abraham, said Gabriel, and salutation was made as before. At the last we made the final ascent, where there were beautiful fruits and leaves like the ears of an elephant. This, said Gabriel, is the last heaven; and lo! four rivers, two within, and two without. What are these, O Gabriel, I asked? - Those within, he said, are the rivers of Paradise; and those seen without, are the Nile and the Euphrates. Then a dwelling-place was prepared for me; and then they brought me vessels of wine and milk and honey. So I took the milk, and he said, This is food for thee and thy people.³

Much more of the same kind of Muslim stories, as of Adam wailing, etc., might be given; but enough and to spare has been quoted for comparison with the Sources which follow, from which it has all been derived.

1 Sirat Ibn Hisham.

2 At each ascent the same salutation is repeated, but it has been left out here in all but the first.

3 Mishkat al Masabih.

I. And First as to Mohammed's Mirijj or Ascent to heaven. We begin with a Pehlavi book called Arta Viral namak, written in the days of Ardashir, some four hundred years before the Hegira. We are there told that, the Zoroastrian faith fading away, the Magi of Persia sought to revive it in the people's ears, by sending a Zoroastrian of the above name up to heaven, with the view of bringing down tidings of what was going on there. This messenger ascended from one heaven to another, and having seen it all, was commanded by Ormazd to return to the earth, and tell it to his people. The result is contained in the above named book, of which we shall briefly quote a few passages, freely translated, to shew how far the Muslim account corresponds with the imaginary details below: -

Our first advance upwards was to the Lower heaven; and there we saw the Angel of those Holy ones, giving forth a flaming light, brilliant and lofty. And I asked Sarosh the holy and Azar the angel:- "What is this place; and these, who are they?" We are then told that Arta ascended similarly to the Second and Third heavens, and to many others beyond.¹

Rising from a gold-covered throne, Bahman the Archangel led me on, till he and I met Ormazd with a company of angels and heavenly leaders, all adorned so brightly that I had never seen the like before. My leader said: This is Ormazd. I sought to salaam to him, and he said he was glad to welcome me from the passing world to that bright and undefiled place. Then he bade Sarosh and the Fire-angel to shew me the blessed place prepared for the holy, and that also for the punishment of the wicked. After which they carried me along till I beheld the Archangels and the other Angels.

At the last, says Arta, my Guide and the Fire-angel having shewed me Paradise, took me down to Hell; and from that dark and dreadful place, carried me upward to a beautiful spot where were Ormazd and his company of angels. I desired to salute him, on which he graciously said:- "Arta Viraf, go thou to the material world; thou hast seen and now knowest Ormazd, for I am he; whosoever is true and righteous, him I know." When Ormazd began thus to speak, I became confused in mind, because I saw a brilliant light but no appearance of a body, and forthwith I perceived the unseen must be Ormazd himself.

There is no doubt a singular resemblance between the ascent of this Magian messenger, and that also told of Mohammed, to the heaven above.

1 One of the angels noticed above is said to have led Arta aloft, just as we are told that Gabriel guided Mohammed upwards.

In the fabulous Zerdashtnama there is also an account of Zoroaster having ages before ascended to the heavens, after having received permission to visit hell, where he found Ahriman (the devil). It is remarkable that similar tales are not confined to Persia, but extend to India, where they are recorded in the Sanskrit poems.

Thus Arjuna was shewn over the heavens, and there saw Indra's palace, its garden with rivers and fruits, and a tree of which if one eats, he never dies, but lives in delight and enjoys all his heart desires.²

Many such tales are to be found not only in Zoroastrian books, but also in works of unorthodox Christian sects, such as "The Testament of Abraham" already noticed. The Apostle is there said to have ascended, at the bidding of one of the Cherubim, to the heavens, and there to have seen all the sights around him. Of Abraham also we have the following account:-

The Archangel Michael having descended to the earth, took Abraham in a Cherub's car, raised him aloft on the cloud, with sixty angels; and from the same car shewed him the whole world beneath.

This is no doubt the origin of the Burac (ethereal horse) tradition;- something like which is to be found in the book of Enoch, where also is notice of the heavenly tree, and the four rivers of Paradise. The Jews hold that the Tree of Life in Eden is so high as to take five hundred years to reach its top,³ and tell us numberless other stories of a similar kind.

The Muslims believe that the Garden of Eden was in the heavens above, an idea taken from many of these fictitious writings, specially that called "Visio Pauli." Perhaps also such stories may have been derived from Zoroastrian or Hindu sources, or these from them; at any rate they are altogether imaginary. If it be asked whether there is any foundation for such tales, the answer must be that there is none whatever, They may have arisen from ignorant and imaginative people seeking to amplify what we find in the Bible of the ascent of Enoch and Elias, and also of our Saviour Christ, and also what Paul saw in his sleep, or Peter in his vision at Caesarea. But anyone reading these in our Scriptures will see that to compare them with the wild and fanciful tales of the East would be as sensible as to compare heaven with earth, or the fabulous Shahnameh with the history of the great Nadir. The origin of the Jewish and Christian fancy about the heavenly tree, the four rivers, etc., has evidently been the passage in

2 This resembles a tree called by the Arabs Tuba, as well as a marvelous tree of the Zoroastrians, similarly named as if from it flowed sweet water

3 The Targum of Jonathan.

Genesis about the Garden of Eden,¹ which the wild imagination of these people pictured as if in Heaven, not knowing that the spot lay near to Babylon and Baghdad; and thus they changed the truth of God into a lie, and the divine history into fancies of their own.

PARADISE

What the Koran and Tradition tell us regarding Paradise, with its Houries and youths, the King of Death, etc. As our Muslim friends know well about all such matters, it is unnecessary to go into any detail about them here. Their origin is to be found altogether in Zoroastrian Sources. Not a syllable is mentioned about them in the Bible, which tells us simply of the rest and peace provided for the true believer on the breast of Abraham, and the blessed place named Paradise in heaven; but not a word have we in the pages of any Jewish Prophet, or New Testament writer, of Houries or Youths of pleasure there. The books of the Zoroastrians and Hindus, however, are full of them; and these bear the most extraordinary likeness to what we find in the Koran and Tradition. Thus in Paradise we are told of "Houries having fine black eyes," and again of "Houries with large black eyes, resembling pearls hidden in their shells."² And just so the Zoroastrians speak of Fairies, "Paries" (Pairikan) - spirits in bright array and beautiful, to captivate the heart of man. The name Houry too is derived from an Avesta or Pehlavi Source, as well as linn for Genii, and Bi-hisht (Paradise), signifying in Avestic "the better land."³ We have also very similar tales in the old Hindu writings, of heavenly regions with their boys and girls resembling the Houries and Ghilman of the Koran. The account before given of the Prophet when he beheld Adam rejoicing at the righteous entering Paradise, and weeping at the destruction of the wicked is also given in "The Testament of Abraham"; but with this difference that it relates to the spirits of the dead, and in the other to the spirits of those not yet born. The latter are called by 'the Muslims "existent ants or motes"⁴; and though the term is Arabic, the idea is no doubt Zoroastrian, and may

1 Genesis ii. 8-17.

2 Suras Iv. 72; lvi. 22.

3 The Author gives an interesting passage on the derivation of the name Houry or Hury, from the Pehlavi word Hur, or Sun, the same as Khur, still used in Persia with a similar meaning. The Arabs not knowing this, trace the word to hur, or blackeyed.

4 Zamlt i Kainat: called in the Avesta Fravashiyo.

possibly have been taken by them from the Egyptians; but in any case the Arabs must have gained it from Persia.

We have already seen that the "Angel of Death" is a name that must have been borrowed by the Muslims from the Jews, that being his title in Hebrew. There is, however, this difference, that the Jews name him Sammael, and the Muslims Azrael:⁵ 1 neither word is Arabic, but Hebrew. Since, however, the idea nowhere occurs in the Bible, the Jews must have got it elsewhere, and a possible origin we may find in the Avesta, where we are told that if anyone falls into the water or fire, his death is not from the fire or water, but it is the Angel of Death that destroys him.

HELL

Muslims take this name from the Jews, who call the evil Spirit by the same name; but the Arabs have received the story from the Zoroastrians. According to Muslim tradition, God created Aziizil, who in the Seventh hell worshipped the Almighty for a thousand years; he then ascended, spending a similar term at each stage, till he reached the earth. Elsewhere we read that the Devil (i.e. Aziizil stayed three thousand years close by the gate of Paradise, with hostile intentions against Adam and Eve, of whom he entertained the utmost jealousy.

In a Zoroastrian book⁶ we have the following account of the Devil, by name Ahriman: -

He remained in the abyss, dark and ignorant, there to commit hurt and injury, and such mischief and darkness is the place that they term the dark region. Ormazd, who knew all things, was aware of Ahriman's existence and designs Both remained thus for 3000 years, without change or action. The evil spirit was ignorant of Ormazd's existence; but eventually rising out of the pit, at last beheld the light of Ormazd Then, filled with hostility and envy, he set to work to destroy.

There is no doubt some difference between the two accounts: the Muslims holding that Aziizil worshipped the Almighty, while the Zoroastrians say he knew him not. Still the similarity is obvious, for according to both, he came forth from the pit to destroy God's creation.

Before leaving Aziizil, there is another tale of which comparison may be made between the Muslims and Zoroastrians, namely, the story of the Peacock. The following is the Muslim tradition: -

5 I.e. Victory of God.

6 The Bundahishnfh, cappo I. and II.

Azazil kept sitting at the gate of Paradise, anxious to enter. The Peacock also was there seated on a Pinnacle, when he saw one repeating the mighty Names of God. Who art thou? asked the Peacock. "I am one of the angels of the Almighty"; - "But why art thou sitting here?" "I am looking at Paradise and wish to enter." The Peacock said, "I have no command to let anyone enter as long as Adam is there." - "If thou wilt let me in," said the other, "I will teach them a prayer which if anyone repeat, three things will be his - he will never grow old; never be rebellious; nor will anyone ever turn him out of Paradise." Then Iblis (the devil) repeated the prayer. The peacock also from his pinnacle did the same, and forthwith flew up to the Serpent and told him what he had heard from Iblis. We also learn that when God cast down Adam and Eve with the devil (Iblis) from Paradise, the Peacock also was expelled along with them.¹

The old Persian account of the Peacock differs from the above; but they too associate him with Ahriman, for Eznik in his book "Against Heresies" writes as follows:

The Zoroastrians tell us that Ahriman spake as follows:- It is not the case that I am unable to do anything good myself, but that I do not wish it; and to make this thing certain, I have produced the Peacock.

So the Peacock having been the creation of Aziizil, it is quite consistent with the Muslim tradition that he should be his assistant, and with him have been cast down from Paradise.

THE LIGHT OF MOHAMMED

Mohammed is reputed by Tradition to have said:- The first thing created by the Almighty was my Light.² Again:- When Adam was created, the Lord having placed that light upon his forehead, said, O Adam, this light which I place upon thy forehead is that of the greatest and best of thy descendants, the light of the Chief of Prophets that shall be sent. This light descended from Adam to Seth, and then in successive generations to Abdullah, and from him to Amina at the time of Mohammed's conception. We are further told by the Traditionists that the Prophet is reputed to have spoken thus:-

The Almighty parted that light into four sections, from which he made the heavens, the pen, Paradise, and believers; each of these four

1 Qissas al Anbia.
2 Rouzat al Ahbab.

he again divided into four: from the first he formed me, who am the Prophet; from the second he formed reason placed in the Believer's head; from the third modesty within the Believer's eye; and from the fourth love within his heart.³

Let us compare this with the Zoroastrian views:-

In a very ancient book, Ormazd is represented as having created the world and the universe, angels and archangels, and the heavenly intellect, all out of his own light, with the praise of Boundless Time.⁴

Again, from a still much older work, we quote as follows:

A grand and royal Halo long attached itself to Jamshid, Lord of the good flock, while he ruled over the Seven climes - Demons, men, fairies, wizards, sorcerers, and evildoers ... Then when he approved of that false and baseless word, the visible halo departed from him in the form of a flying bird When Jamshid, Lord of the good flock, no longer saw that halo, he became devoid of joy, and in distress gave himself up to making enmity upon earth. The first time that halo was removed from Jamshid, it departed from Jam son of Vivaghan (the Sun) in the form of a Varagh bird, and Mithra seized the halo. When a second time the halo was removed from Jamshid, it departed as before in the form of a bird; then Faridun the brave took that halo When that halo departed the third time from Jamshid, it was taken by Keresaspa (Garshasp), that great and powerful man.⁵

Now if we bring these two accounts together, and remember that according to the Avesta, Jamshid was the first man created by God upon earth, and therefore the same as Adam the father of mankind, we see at once that the light from Jamshid descended on the best of his posterity agrees with what Tradition speaks of as the Light of Mohammed, which Muslims appear thus to have borrowed from the Zoroastrians. We also gather that what appears in the Zoroastrian book about Jamshid ruling over men, genii, giants, etc., is very similar to what the Jews write of Solomon, evidently from the same Source, and taken from them by the Muslims, as indeed has been seen in our Third Chapter. Also what the Muslims write about the division of the Prophet's light, coincides closely

3 Qissas al Anbia.

4 The Minukhirad, as old as the Sasanides.

5 Yesht xix. 31-37.

with what appears in a Zoroastrian book,¹ and was evidently taken from that Source.

V. The Bridge Sirat.- Muslims tell us the Prophet held that at the last day after the Judgment, all mankind will pass over this bridge, which is finer than a hair, and sharper than a sword; and that the wicked will fall from it into hell. Now what is the origin of the name Sirat? Though adopted into Arabic, it is of Persian origin, and called by the ancient Zoroastrians Chfnavad,² and its history is also derived from them, as will be seen from the following account taken from one of their ancient writings:-

I flee from much sin and I keep my conduct pure. The keeping pure of the six vital powers, - conduct, speech, thought, intellect, reason, wisdom, - according to thy will, O Author of the power to do good works, with justice do I perform it, that service of thine, in thought, speech, and deed. It is good for me to abide in the Bright way, lest I arrive at the severe punishment of Hell, that I may cross over Chinavad and may reach that blest abode, full of odour, entirely delightful, always bright.³

The meaning of the Persian name is "the connecting link," the Bridge being that which joins earth with Paradise.

NOTICE OF SUCCESSOR

The Muslims say that each Prophet before his death gives notice of the next to follow, as Abraham did of Moses, Moses of David, and so on. Nothing of this sort, however, is in the Bible; on the contrary, the Prophets from first to last gave notice of the coming of the Messiah, and nothing more. As they could not therefore have got this notion from the Scriptures, from whence than could it have come? There is a work⁴ believed by the Zoroastrians to have been written in the language of heaven, and, about the time of Khusru Parwez, to have been translated in the Dari tongue.⁵ It comprises fifteen books said to have descended upon fifteen Prophets; last of all came the sixteenth, Zoroaster himself. At the end of each book, the name is given of the Prophet that is next to follow. These books no doubt are an ancient forgery, but apparently the Muslim Traditionists took their

1 Dasatfr-i Asmanf

2 It is difficult to explain in English how Chinavad became Sirat; but it comes from the varied sound of the letters - ch being turned into sharp s.

3 Dfnkart, an ancient Zoroastrian book.

4 The Dasatfr-i Amanf.

5 It has been published both in the original and in the Dari translation.

idea of the anticipated coming of each Prophet from them. Again, the second verse in each of these books open with:- In the name of God, the Giver of gifts, the Beneficent; similar to the words at the opening of all the Suras,⁶³ - "In the name of God the Merciful and Gracious." We also find the first words in another Zoroastrian book⁷ to be very similar, namely, In the name of Ormazd the Creator. We have already noticed that the five times of Muslim prayer are the same as five of the seven common to the Zoroastrians and Sabaeans, no doubt taken from them.

Many other things might have been added common to the two systems; but it would have swelled our pages beyond reasonable dimensions; and we must be content with what has been given.

HOW DID MOHAMMED KNOW?

Some may hold it difficult to understand how Mohammed could have obtained such stories and matters as we find in the Koran and Tradition from Zoroastrian sources; and further, how it was possible for the "unlearned" Prophet to have become informed of them. But Tradition⁸ tells us as follows: "It was his practice to converse in their own tongue (so we read) with people of every nation who visited him; and hence the introduction of some Persian words into the Arabic language." Again, as the Prophet introduced Jewish tales, and also the stories and customs of Arabian heathen, into the Koran, what wonder that he should do so likewise with Persian tales? Many of these, moreover, were current among the Arabs, as Al Kindy tells us:- "Suppose we relate to thee such fables as those of Ad, Thamud and the She-camel, the Companions of the Elephant, and such like, it would only be the way of old women who spend their days and nights in such foolish talk."

In the *Sirat al Rasul*,⁹ we learn that Mohammed had among the Companions a Persian called Salman, who at the siege of Medina advised him to surround the City with a trench, and when fighting with the Thackif helped the Muslims with a catapult. Now it is said that some of the Prophet's opponents spoke of this person as having assisted him in the composition of the Koran, an accusation noticed in Sura xvi. 105, as follows:

6 Excepting only the Ninth.

7 Dfnkart.

8 Rouzat al Ahbiib.

9 Sirat al Rasul, by Ibn Hisham and Ibn Ishaq.

THE SOURCES OF ISLAM

Koran 16:105 *And, verily, we know that they say, Truly a certain man teacheth him; but the tongue of him unto whom they incline is a Foreign one, while this is the tongue of perspicuous Arabic.*

Now if these objectors simply spoke of this Persian helping in the style of the Prophet's composition, the answer would have been sufficient.

But when we find that much of the Koran and Tradition has the closest resemblance to the contents of Zoroastrian books, the answer is of no value whatever. On the contrary, the above verse shews, by the admission of the Prophet himself, that he was assisted by this Persian Salman. Hence even from this story it is clear that the Zoroastrian writings formed one of the Sources of Islam.

THE HANIFS

Chapter 6

Before the time of Mohammed, there were a few inquirers from amongst the Arabs who had a strong aversion from idolatry, and who accordingly sought to find relief in a better faith. Amongst the Jews, and possibly from ancient tradition still surviving, it was known in Arabia that Abraham was a worshipper of the One true God. Hence both at Mecca and Medina, and also at Taif, we find that there were men who, seeking after the truth, had abandoned the worship of idols; and these were called

CITY	PERSON	Hanifs. The names of six of these are given in the margin, some having also followers of their own.
Medina	Abu Ameer	Now we hold that these inquirers, Waraca and especially Zeid ibn Amr, had a very marked effect, by their Obeidallah conceptions, conversation, and example, upon the Prophet, as we find from the contents of the Koran. Of all the authorities on the subject, that of Ibn Ishaq and
Taif	Ammea	
Mecca	Waraca	
Mecca	Obeidallah	
Mecca	Othman	
Mecca	Zeid	

Ibn Hisham as contained in the Sira,¹ is by far the oldest, and being nearest the Hegira, the most reliable that we have. The details of this work were learned from Zohry (d. AH. 124), who knew a succession of the Companions, and in especial Orva, a relation of Ayesha. Zohry's book no longer exists, but much has been preserved in that of his pupil, Ibn Ishaq (d. AH. 151), from which we have quotations in the Sirat of Ibn Hisham (d. AH. 213). No doubt in these writings there is a vast amount of the fanciful and exaggerated; but much also is valuable as giving men's impressions, and memory of facts, as they existed at the time. We take, therefore, from the Sirat the following account of the Hanifs:-

The Quraysh were once gathered together during their Eid beside one of their idols, slaying sacrifices, praying, and making circuits around it, as they used to do at this festival every year. Just then four friends stood apart, and spoke secretly to one another in righteous terms. These were Waraca, Obeidallah grandson of Abdal Mutalib, Othman and Zeid ibn Amr. They said:- By the Lord! our people have

1 Sirat al Rasul, or Life of the Prophet.

nothing left of the faith of Abraham. What is this stone that we should encircle it? It can neither hear nor speak, neither hurt nor help. O our people! look out for your souls, for by the Lord ye are altogether wanting. Then they separated, and departed into various lands to find out the true faith of Abraham. Waraca embraced the Christian religion, and studying the books of its people, became fixed in their faith. Obeidallah remained in his doubts, but at last embraced Islam; then with a party of the Muslims he emigrated to Abyssinia along with his wife Omm Habibah, daughter of Abu Sofian and also a believer. There, however, he afterwards became a Christian, and perished. When he was converted to Christianity, he said to his companions: -"We see, but ye are only blinking" - that is, cannot see plainly, like a whelp trying to open its eyes. The Prophet himself married his widow, Omm Habibah, sending over a follower for that purpose to the Najashy, who himself concluded the marriage ceremonial - the dower being 400 dinars, which formed a precedent for time to come. Now as to Othman, he repaired to the Court of the Emperor of Byzantium, where he obtained high rank and embraced the Christian faith

Last of all we come to Zeid, who stood fast, joining neither the Jewish nor the Christian religion. He broke off from his own people's faith, and gave up idols, the eating of carrion, blood, the slaughter of animals for the gods, and the putting of daughters to death. He said:-

I worship the God of Abraham; but he blamed his people for having chosen evil ways. There is a tradition from Amina daughter of Abu Bekr that she once saw Zeid, then very aged, leaning with his back on the Kabah, and thus addressing the people:- O Quraysh! by Him in whose hand is the life of Zeid ibn Amr I swear, that not one of you professteth the faith of Abraham, but me alone, Then he prayed:- O Lord! if I but knew what way was most pleasing unto thee, I would worship thee in that manner; but I know it not. Then putting the palms of his hands to the ground, he bent his body down in worship. We are also told that Mohammed being asked by his relations to pray that Zeid might be forgiven, consented, - "for he shall be raised up alone, like a community."² Zeid wrote the following lines regarding his

2 Ibn Ishaq tells us that Mohammed, while believing himself forbidden to pray for his own mother, yet when asked by a female relative of Zeid whether she might pray for him, said: "Yes, for he will be raised as a separate religious community at the last day."

parting with his people's faith, and what happened to him therefrom

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Am I to worship one or a thousand
I have altogether forsaken Lat and Ozza, Hence I neither worship Ozza
nor he two daughters,
Neither do I worship Ghanam, Are Divine affairs divided thus?
Thus should every brave and thoughtful man. Nor the two idols of the
Beni Amr, nor do pilgrimage unto them.
Though I did regard him my Lord, when I had little understanding.
And in the day-time the seeing will understand. Because their works
are evil; And cherisheth the little ones.
I was astonished, and had strange thoughts in the night seasons.
Since the Lord destroyeth multitudes
And many others he preserveth for their goodness,
Amongst us, one day man will stumble; But I now worship my Lord
Most Merciful; Therefore observe the fear of the Lord your God;
Thou shalt see the home of the pure in the Gardens;
During this life disgrace,
And the next, he will be as the branch fed by the rain.
That the Compassionate Lord may pardon my sin.
So long as ye do so, ye shall not perish; But for the unbelievers, flam-
ing hellfire;
And after death that which shall bitterly cramp their breasts.

We further learn from Ibn Hisham that Zeid was expelled from Mecca; and being forbidden to remain there, had to live on Mount Hira, opposite the city. The Prophet himself in the summer-time used every year to retire, as the Arabs used to do, into a cave in the Sacred Mount for solitary meditation; and so we believe that he must often have met his relative Zeid there. For he used still to go after his call to be a Prophet, as we learn from Ibn Ishaq:- ".Gabriel by the mercy of the Lord came to him at Hira in Ramazan ... This he did every year, according to the custom of the Quraysh in the days of ignorance, to be alone and refresh their souls." Now everyone acquainted with the Koran and Tradition cannot but perceive how alike is the teaching of both, and that they must have had the greatest influence on each other, in their views about such things for instance as idol-worship, the burying alive of infant girls, the Unity of God, Paradise and Hell, and calling God "the Lord most Merciful and Compassionate." Again, Zeid and the Hanifs, like the Prophet, followed Abraham, calling

him by the same name (Hanif) as their own, - in illustration of which we may quote:-

Koran 4:126 *Who is of better religion than he who resigneth himself unto God, and followeth the faith of Abraham the Orthodox (Hanif).*

.... And again,

Koran 3:89 *Say, The Lord hath said truly, "Follow the faith of Abraham the Orthodox (Hanif), for he was not one of the idolaters."*

And again:-

Koran 6:162 *Verily the Lord hath guided me into the right way, the true faith, the religion of Abraham the Orthodox (Hanif).*

And thus we see the Prophet calls himself and his people by the name Hanif. The word, indeed, originally signified "unclean" or "apostate," and was so used by the idolatrous Arabs of Zeid, because he abandoned the worship of their gods. The name pleased the Prophet and was used by him in a good sense. We must not forget, however, that all the four Hanifs were themselves, as already said, nearly related to the Prophet, - Obeidallah being nephew to Mohammed who took his widow Omm Habibah to wife; while Waraca and Othman were sons of two aunts of Khadija. Hence the views, sayings, and teaching of these Hanifs cannot but have had a decided influence on the Prophet. We may also remember that though the Prophet is believed to have said that he had no right even to pray for the salvation of his own mother, yet he did so for Zeid and his blessedness hereafter. From all this we see that the Prophet recognized his principles, and attested them as right.

But, FIRST, after the Hegira, when he had gained the powerful body of the Ansars for his followers, he gave them leave to defend themselves and beat off their opponents. Thus:-

Koran 22:40 *Permission is given to them to fight, because they are persecuted those who have been turned out of their houses without just cause other than that they say, Our Lord is God;*

and it is allowed by the Commentaries, that this was the first revelation giving permission to fight.

SECOND, some time after, when Mohammed had gained victories over his enemies, this simple permission was changed into command, as we find in Sura ii. 212, 214:-

Koran 2:212,214 *War is enjoined you, but it is hateful unto you ... They will ask thee concerning the Sacred Month, whether they may war therein.*

Say, - To war therein is grievous but to obstruct the way of God, and infidelity towards him and the holy Masjid, and to drive out his people from thence, is more grievous in the sight of God; and temptation (to idolatry) is more grievous than to kill.

The instruction in this passage being that the Muslims should war against the Quraysh even in the Sacred months, because they prevented them from visiting the Kabah.

THIRD, when in the sixth year of the Hegira, the Prophet had conquered the Beni Coreitza and other tribes, he issued still sterner commands against his adversaries, as we find:-

Koran 5:37 The recompense of those who fight against God and his Apostle, and study to act corruptly on the earth, is that they shall be slain or crucified, or have their hands and their feet cut off on the opposite sides (of the body), or be banished from the land. Such shall be their disgrace in this world, and in the next they shall suffer a grievous punishment.

The Commentators hold that this terrible command relates to idolaters only, and not to Jews and Christians.

FOURTH, But towards these also, the attitude of the Prophet towards the end of his life entirely changed; and so we read in the last revealed that after the four Sacred months had passed, they should again commence war, as follows:-

Koran 9:5,29 And when the Sacred months are ended, kill the idolaters wheresoever ye find them, take them prisoners and besiege them, and lay wait for them in every convenient place. But if they repent, and offer up the appointed Prayers, and pay the legal Alms, then dismiss them freely, for God is gracious and merciful. Fight against those who believe not in God, nor in the last day, nor forbid that which God and his Apostle have forbidden, and profess not the true religion, namely, of those to whom the Scriptures have been given, until they pay tribute by the hand, and be reduced low.

And so we learn from these successive passages in the Koran, that the God, step by step, allowed his Divine Law to be altered as the Prophet and his followers gradually gained successive victories by the sword. Not only so, but we see the same liberty of change permitted in respect of certain passages in the Koran to be cancelled by other passages; thus:-

Koran 2:100 We abrogate no verse, or cause it to be left out, but we bring in its place a better, or one like unto it. Ah! close thou not know that God is over all things almighty?

Hence so long as Mohammed entertained the hope of bringing together both Jews and Christians, and also the Arab tribes, by the retention of some of their national practices, there seemed to him the possibility of uniting all Arabia in one Grand religion. But when he found this to be impracticable, then it remained for him either to abandon and eventually destroy the two former, or else lose the native Arabs as a whole. The objects and the mind of the Prophet are manifest throughout his prophetic life. Thus, to take an instance, the marriage with Zeinab wife of his adopted son Zeid, as justified in the Koran,³ shews how much the revelation and whole system of the day was permeated by the objects of his hourly life and personal surroundings; which indeed is manifest in a multitude of other matters in the Koran itself and in Tradition. And certainly, when we look at the variety of teaching and of interests embodied in these, we gain a wide and extensive survey of the thousand rills which run along to form the vast Muslim river;- Sources they all are of Islam, but everyone affected by the intellect, the nature, and the personal aims and objects, of the Prophet himself.

3 Sura xxxiii. 37.

