

*WHAT DID THEY TEACH?*

# MOHAMMED

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August 8, 2003

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BY

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BLACKIE & SON LIMITED  
LONDON AND GLASGOW

BLACKIE & SON LIMITED

*50 Old Bailey, London*

*17 Stanhope Street, Glasgow*

BLACKIE & SON (INDIA) LIMITED

*Warwick House, Fort Street, Bombay*

BLACKIE & SON (CANADA) LIMITED

*Toronto*

*First published 1939*

*Printed in Great Britain by Blackie & Son, Ltd., Glasgow*

## *PREFACE*

THE title of this contribution to Messrs. Blackie's Series is nearly synonymous with that of the late Dr. Weitbrecht Stanton's work *The Teaching of the Qur'an*, since for reasons stated in the first chapter other sources for the Islamic Prophet's teaching inspire little confidence. The two works do not, however, compete, since a large part of Dr. Stanton's is occupied with an alphabetical subject index to the Qur'an, forming a welcome supplement to the Concordances, and securing for it permanent value. There was no occasion to iterate work which had been done so well.

The output of Qur'anic literature in recent years has been copious in both European and Oriental languages, and Professor Jeffery, whose scholarly treatise on the Foreign Vocabulary of the sacred book bears date 1938, is known to be preparing a critical edition of the text, which should be epoch-making in these studies. Among several recent translations, that by the late Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall is conspicuous both for accuracy and felicity of style. Among commentaries, a high place should be assigned to that by the historian Ibn Kathir (*ob.* A.D. 1373), published in 1937 in four stout volumes. This is not, like so many, verbal transcription of earlier works, but throughout endeavours to trace various interpretations to their sources and to criticize them intelligently, with a

keen eye for anachronisms. Scholars are deeply indebted to those who have rendered this work accessible.

Just as spectators are said to see most of the game, so an outsider who is free from bias is less likely than an adherent to misrepresent the doctrines contained in the sacred book or books of a community. He is immune from the temptation to harmonize inconsistencies and explain away what might shock or offend. And these are temptations to which an adherent, who is apt to be an apologist, frequently succumbs.

As the Arabic alphabet of 28 consonants contains several letters which are not found in ours, though resembling some of them, in works intended for students various devices are employed for distinguishing them. For persons who are not acquainted with the former alphabet such devices (e.g. dots under the letters) convey no meaning, and only worry both reader and printer. Hence in our English Bible Hosea and Haggai are printed with the same initial, though in the Hebrew original their first letters are different. Since this book is not primarily intended for students these devices have not been employed, except in a few cases for the difficult guttural 'Ain, to which nothing in our alphabet bears any resemblance. Its ordinary representation, the Greek rough breathing ' has been used.

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# I

## *THE RECORD OF MOHAMMED'S TEACHING*

FOR envisaging the career and ascertaining the doctrines of the Islamic Prophet we have materials which are more easily utilized than the Pentateuch for the work of Moses or the Gospels for that of Christ. The Gospel narrative is indeed linked in places with contemporary history, and though it abounds in miracles, these rarely affect the sequence of events; but the period which it covers is exceedingly short, and the relation of the Synoptic Gospels to each other and to the Fourth Gospel, the authorship of these works and their sources, confront the student with problems for which neither learning nor ingenuity can hope to find more than, hypothetical solutions. The biography of Moses in the Pentateuch is lengthier and more continuous, but it has no links connecting it with otherwise recorded history, and the causation is throughout miraculous, i.e. of a sort which secular annals recognize either exceptionally or not at all. Moreover questions of authorship and sources are in this case more complicated and less amenable to solution than in the other.

In dealing with the life and teaching of Mohammed we are not involved in questions of authorship and sources; the extent to which these come into consideration is, as will presently be seen, negligible.

The career of the Prophet is not, of course, identical with that of other persons who have achieved autocracy, but the abilities which he displayed are analogous to those which have won success for dictators even in our own time. The empire which he founded and which for some generations spread with phenomenal rapidity was of no extraordinary duration; province after province broke away, and Muslim states were no more peacefully inclined towards each other than Christian powers. In our time there has been war between rival sovereigns in his own Arabia. And if the religious system which he founded has survived for more than thirteen centuries, that duration is outdone by the Jewish, the Zoroastrian, and some other systems, which have rarely been able to attract converts by worldly advantages. Even Samaritans and Mandaeans are not yet extinct.

Into the recorded biography of Mohammed, the miraculous, as we ordinarily understand the term, scarcely enters. The chief miracle claimed by him is on the lines of the Mosaic legislation. The Qur'an which contains his utterances is according to its own statement a copy of a "well-guarded Tablet", or "unfolded parchment", hidden away; and in what is supposed to be the earliest revelation Allah (God) is said to have taught with the pen, taught man what he did not know. Its contents were communicated to the Prophet's "heart " (i.e. mind) at times at any rate by the angel Gabriel. Their miraculous character lies in the first place in their inimitable eloquence, in the second in their recording matters which the Prophet could not have learned from any other source.

The miraculous eloquence is asserted in a repeated challenge to opponents to produce anything like them, ten chapters like them, even with the aid of all their deities: one chapter like them: indeed if mankind and the jinn made a united effort to produce anything like the Qur'an, they would fail.

The claim to the production of information which could only have been supernaturally obtained is made no less frequently. In Surah xi, where the Story of Noah is told at length, the Prophet is addressed at the end: "Those are mysterious narratives which We reveal unto thee, which neither thou nor thy people knew before this." Sometimes he is reminded that he was not present at the scene described, whence he could only learn of it by revelation. In Surah iii, after narrating in partial accordance with an apocryphal Gospel how the Jewish doctors cast lots with their pens for the guardianship of the Virgin Mary, the Speaker says to the Prophet: "That is one of the mysterious narratives which We reveal unto thee; thou wast not with them when they cast their pens (to determine) which of them should be Mary's guardian, nor wast thou with them when they wrangled." Similarly where the story of Moses is told most fully the Prophet is reminded that he was not present on the occasion described nor dwelling in Midian. At the end of what is the most continuous narrative in the Qur'an, the history of Joseph, there is a similar reminder: "That is one of the mysterious narratives; thou wast not with them (Joseph's brethren) when they conspired and plotted." The correctness of the narratives could, however, be tested by asking learned

Israelites, who would testify that they were in the books of the ancients; the Prophet, himself, is told, if he harbours any doubt about "what We have revealed unto thee", to ask those who read the earlier Scriptures.

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Analogies rather than close parallels to these claims could be found in the Old Testament and even in the New. Yet when the unique value of their contents is asserted, it is rather the import than the form of which this is alleged; and though accuracy of prediction is given as the test of the true prophet, this is somewhat different from the Qur'anic claim to knowledge of the contents of earlier scriptures to which the Prophet had not had access.

The question whether Mohammed could read and write has been the subject of much discussion: some verses of the Qur'an seem to imply that he acquired these arts by supernatural instruction. "Thou usedst not before it to follow (read) any book nor inscribe it with thy right hand" certainly suggests that he was now able to do both. "Thou knewest not what is the writing nor faith." The Meccans were also illiterate; they are asked, "Have ye a book wherein ye study? Have We given them a book before this? Have they the mystery and do they write? We have given them no books to study neither have We sent them any warner before thee. Bring me a book previous to this or some trace of knowledge." On the other hand ability to read would seem to be implied by their demand that he should himself ascend into heaven and bring down a book which they could read, and

by the statement that each one of them demands unfolded scrolls, said to mean letters from Allah addressed to individuals bidding them believe in Mohammed. Further one unnamed person is asked whether he has not heard certain propositions in the writings of Moses and Abraham.

So long as the community was mainly or entirely illiterate the circulation of the matter revealed could only be oral: and indeed it is described as "clear signs (texts) in the breasts of those to whom knowledge has been given". How early in the Prophet's career his revelations were actually committed to some material cannot be ascertained with accuracy; that both writing and memorizing were employed in the Medinah period is suggested by the text in which abrogation is said to be either by erasure or causing to be forgotten. The occasional insertion of afterthoughts suggests the use of written material. Thus in a Surah of the Meccan period the assertion that Hell is guarded by nineteen custodians is defended from criticism by verses which are clearly of the Medinah period.

The Qur'an records objections which the Prophet's Meccan opponents brought against its claims. They did not admit that it was inimitable: there were persons who undertook to "reveal" the like of what had been revealed by Allah; some boasted that if they chose they could say something similar. Some found difficulty in its being revealed piecemeal: the reason alleged for this procedure is the strengthening of the Prophet's heart. Some would have preferred that the Qur'an should be brought down by the angels visibly

or by Allah Himself. They were told that on the day whereon the evildoers will see the angels there will be no good tidings for them, and that an angelic messenger would only be sent to an angelic community.

Its main theme is indeed the Unity of Allah, which is constantly asserted, with the assurance of a resurrection and Day of Judgment, warnings of catastrophes to befall those who reject these doctrines and promise of reward to those who accept them. Its narratives, which often reproduce matter found in the Old Testament, canonical or apocryphal Gospels, and Jewish or Christian tradition, have mainly the purpose of inculcating these themes; for a few narratives belonging to antiquity it is the sole authority. Other matter is devotional and legislative; some journalistic rather than historical, accounts of contemporary events, some belonging to the Prophet's domestic life, with criticisms, attack and defence, references to personal friends and enemies, exultation over victories, explanations of defeat, complaints and threats, even curses. Ascription of all this to the Divine Being is not easy for the non-Muslim; yet scepticism with regard to the Qur'an is far removed in its scope from that which assails the Pentateuch. In the latter case not only is the rubric "the Lord spake unto Moses, saying" rejected as unhistorical, but the matter is thought to date some or even many centuries after the time of Moses, if indeed it be granted that he is a historical personage. In the case of the Qur'an the sceptic may reject the ascription of the matter to the Deity, but only about isolated texts or passages has he any doubt that Mohammed communicated them

to his contemporaries; and even these can be removed by only a few years from the Prophet's time. Further, owing to the introduction by his third successor of an official recension by the side of which no others were to be tolerated, the text of the Qur'an presents less variety than that of the New Testament, and less reason for suspecting corruptions and interpolations than that of the Old. Since the original script failed to distinguish several of the consonants and had no signs for short vowels, there is considerable room for variety of reading, sometimes as many as ten suggestions being recorded for the same group, where the sense is obscure: such cases are, however, exceptional, and ordinarily neither reading nor interpretation offers much difficulty. It is, however, remarkable that there was among the Muslims no continuous tradition of either. Where we might reasonably expect knowledge we are confronted with guesswork. Thus in the text "The day when we shall roll up the heavens as the *sigill* rolls up the books" (a reminiscence of Isaiah's "the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll") no one knew what *sigill* (doubtless Byzantine Latin for sealing) meant; some supposed it to be the name of an angel; others that of a scribe of the Prophet.

The fact that the Qur'an was communicated in instalments, i.e. as occasion arose, giving rise to one of the Qur'anic disciplines, Occasions of Revelation, enables us to use the book not only as a source for Mohammed's teaching but to some extent as a record of his career. And if the texts had been chronologically arranged we should be able to apply to its author what Horace says of Lucilius:

Ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim  
 Credebat libris, neque si male cesserat unquam  
 Decurrens alio neque si bene: quo fit ut omnis  
 Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella  
 Vita senis.

The order, however, is not chronological; the same chapter (called Surah) contains utterances belonging to very different periods of the Prophet's career, and as proper names both of persons and places are ordinarily, though not always, avoided, there is much uncertainty as to the occasions. A man whose conduct is censured in one of the Surahs may, it is thought, be either Balaam, a contemporary of Moses, or Umayyah son of Abu'l-Salt, a contemporary of Mohammed. Three suggestions are offered for a person who asks for the realization of certain threats, one of them being the Prophet himself. When one of his wives is rebuked for divulging something to another, very different opinions are held as to what she divulged. Where the people of the Rass are enumerated among those who had merited destruction, no fewer than six suggestions are offered by commentators for their identification, no one knowing who were meant. Even the division of the Surahs which appears in their headings into Meccan and Medinese is only partially accurate.

The book, as compiled by the order of the Prophet's successors, contains both too much and too little. Too much, because whole passages and indeed whole narratives are repeated, in some cases many times, with only slight variation. The same text is found in different contexts, in some of the Surahs verses recur

as refrains, and there are formulæ which the author never tires of iterating. Indeed there is so much repetition that the whole content of the Qur'an might be reduced to a small fraction of its size. There is too little of it, because the work admits that passages were cancelled, and the collection is far too small to be a record of communications continued with only brief interruptions for more than twenty years.

Hence for the location in time and place of its contents we have to rely on other sources, separated by some generations from the Prophet's time.

Although the chronology of events preceding the Migration (hijrah) to Medinah (the City of the Prophet, formerly known as Yathrib, in Greek Iathrippa) is shadowy, considerable accuracy was secured for those which followed it — the Migration itself presently furnishing an era, with a lunar year of twelve months for its basis — by the enactment of the Prophet's second successor (Caliph) assigning pensions to Muslims varying with the length of their conversion. The community at Medinah consisted of Refugees (immigrants from Meccah) and Helpers (Medinese converts). The first had obviously the greatest claim, and the order in which they had respectively joined the Prophet's company could be remembered: the years following the Migration were full of noteworthy events, chiefly battles and conquests, offering the material for a continuous chronicle. Such was not indeed attempted till Abbasid times, i.e. the middle of the second century of Islam; indeed the first hereditary dynasty, the Umayyad, had good reason for discouraging such a project, since the father of its

founder was for the greater part of Mohammed's residence in Medinah the commander of his enemies, and that dynasty both rose to power and continued therein by ruthless suppression of his relatives and descendants. When, however, a dynasty claiming descent from the Prophet's converted uncle Abbas arose, a writer of talent, Ibn Ishaq, compiled a biography of the former, which has been the basis for innumerable works on the same subject. No copy of Ibn Ishaq's treatise in its original form has as yet come to light; but the bulk of it survives in a partially expurgated edition, and in works by other authors who had access to it. Though what is recorded of Ibn Ishaq is not favourable to his character, the general accuracy of his narrative has rarely been questioned.

For the Prophet's teaching, as distinct from his career, the source which in Muslim estimation comes second to the Qur'an is called by Europeans *Tradition*, by Muslims *hadith* (talk) or *sunnah* (practice). For the preservation of the Prophet's sayings and doings, or for the attribution to him of sayings and doings, a powerful motive was provided by the notion, which the world has not yet entirely abandoned, that the science of right and wrong is not an experimental science to be based on observation and experience, ascertainment and registration of sequences, but a system of dictates by persons divinely inspired. There is reason for thinking that Mohammed made a clear distinction between his revelations, which being from Allah were infallible — if Satan made an occasional interpolation, Allah would eject it — and his own utterances. His followers were led by logic to treat

the latter as infallible also, since unless a prophet were infallible there would be no guarantee for the accuracy of his record of the divine communications. Hence where the Qur'an appeared to contain no ruling on a point of law or ethics an answer might be found in some words or deed of the Prophet which happened to be remembered. This principle gave rise to the "science" of Tradition, pursued by the Muslims with greater ardour than any other. Medinah, where Mohammed reigned during the years of his chief activity, was the natural home of Tradition, since his followers and associates there had unique opportunities of noting what he said and did; but with the expansion of Islam over large parts of Asia, Africa, and Europe, the descendants and disciples of the Prophet's associates migrated to distant countries, and the serious student of Tradition had to travel far afield to profit by what they ostensibly remembered. We have only to think of the localities whence those came who in the third Islamic century made the canonical compilations of Tradition to find illustration of this. The first in the list is a man of Bokhara; the second of Nisapur; a third of Kazwin, &c. Only, if the traditions which they admit are to count as genuine, they must trace them by a chain of trustworthy transmitters to one of the Prophet's actual associates.

Since Mohammed was founder and organizer of a religion and a state, which by the time of his death included most of the great Arabian peninsula, and was besides the organizer of armies, he doubtless uttered many memorable sayings, and probably dictated much

important correspondence. But, to quote Horace once more:

neque  
Si chartam sileant quod bene feceris  
Mercedem tuleris:

the correspondence was not preserved, with some possible exceptions, and no Boswell or Eckermann kept a continuous record of what the Prophet said. St. John tells us that the sayings and doings of Jesus if written would fill more volumes than the whole world could contain: his own collection of both does not occupy many pages. And indeed without the aid to memory supplied by writing down, the sayings of great men which their contemporaries remember are apt to be few.

Where, however, there is a demand, supply is likely to follow, and motives which led men to father sayings on the Prophet were sometimes sordid, sometimes at worst excusable. They were numerous and fertile. Bokhari, who counts as the most critical of the compilers, is said to have selected 4000 traditions as genuine out of 90,000 which he had heard. His collection is arranged under ninety-seven headings, and records rulings by the Prophet on something like the whole range of mental and bodily activities, doctrine, ritual, civil and criminal law, military operations, etiquette, eschatology, and much more. This work is held in such high esteem that in places its sanctity is said to surpass that of the Qur'an. Probably traditions which it rejects have little claim to genuineness.

Unfortunately we cannot adopt the converse of this

proposition, and regard those which it accepts as necessarily authentic. Disputes over the succession broke out immediately after the Prophet's death: the second, third, and fourth of his successors were murdered by Muslims, and the death of the third was followed by a series of civil wars of which the consequences remain to this day in the division of Islam into sects, at times bitterly hostile to each other. Where justification for the parties and their policies could not be found in the Qur'an, partisans were ready to attribute to the Prophet some saying which favoured their cause and find names for the people who had heard it with an occasion which evoked it. Often, too, the attribution of a saying was due not to conscious misrepresentation, but to inaccuracy of memory. Moreover, whereas in the case of the Qur'an the actual expressions and rhetorical figures are attributed to the Deity, in that of the Tradition it is admitted that the reporters may have substituted expressions of their own for those which the Prophet employed. In spite, therefore, of the conscientious labours of those who collected the sayings of the Prophet and ultimately perpetuated them in canonical digests, it is doubtful whether we can in any case be confident that the sayings attributed to the Prophet were actually his.

Our main if not our only source for the teaching of Mohammed must then be the Qur'an, and though it repudiates the idea of inconsistency — "If it were by any other than Allah, they would have found therein much variety" — it admits that verses are at times substituted for others, the substituted verse being occasionally an improvement. Sometimes the abrogated

text was forgotten, but in other cases it continued to find a place in the Sacred Book. One indisputable case of this kind occurs in Surah viii, where (verse 67) the Believers are promised that if twenty of them are steadfast in battle, they will defeat two hundred, and a hundred of them defeat a thousand. This is followed by an alleviation based on experience — "Now Allah has reduced this, knowing that there is weakness in you: a hundred of you who are steadfast will defeat two hundred, a thousand two thousand". The substituted text admits that the superiority of the Muslim warrior to his unbelieving opponent had been overestimated no less than five times!

In this case and, it would seem, in one other the correction finds a place immediately after the original statement. In the fourth Surah, containing at its commencement rules for the division of deceased persons' estates, certain eventualities had been omitted these are dealt with in an appendix to the Surah.

In a life of which the fortune was so varied as Mohammed's we should not expect complete consistency of teaching. The institutions on which at one time he depended for his existence at a later period hampered his plans; the communities on whose friendship he had at first to rely at a later time incurred his animosity. The problems which he had to solve as tentative reformer were quite different from those which confronted him as despot and general. Hence just as experience taught him that one Muslim warrior might be equal to two others, but was not equal to ten, so his teaching on a variety of matters would almost of necessity be modified by events. An

illustration of this is to be found in his direction of prayer (qiblah). His early teaching must have been closely connected with that of the South Arabian monotheists who, as we learn from their inscriptions, worshipped the Rahman. We cannot doubt that these turned in prayer to Jerusalem, to the north of Medinah. Having come to Yathrib as the prophet of a Deity whom the Jews worshipped he turned to Jerusalem in prayer as they did; but presently when he experienced their hostility he shifted the direction to the Meccan shrine, south of the city, which he associated with Abraham and Ishmael. The new religion thereby definitely severed itself from the Judaism which for a short time had been dominant in South Arabia. When the sanctity of clan and family was all important to him, in the account of Abraham's controversy with his father, the patriarch promises to ask forgiveness for the latter and actually does so: but after the migration to Medinah, when relationships had been severed, an order is issued not to ask Allah's forgiveness for pagans, even though they are near relations; hence Abraham's action is excused on the ground that he was performing a promise, and the Muslims were warned not to follow his example in the matter. Indeed even Abraham, when convinced that his father was an enemy of Allah, repudiated him. A similar alteration can be traced in what is said at different times about Christians.

Hence in collecting and arranging under heads the Prophet's teaching we cannot neglect differences which we associate with different periods, and indeed the orthodox theory of abrogation is that it means limiting

to a particular time. Yet when we read in a late Surah of the Qur'an, "This day I have completed for you your religion", we can agree that before the Prophet's death his teaching had assumed a complete and final form, in which room was left for commentators rather than for legislators. The history of Jewish jurisprudence has something analogous. The Mosaic law (whatever its origin or date) enacted that no work was to be done on the Sabbath. Commentators have to decide what is meant by work, and they distinguish thirty-nine classes of operations. Similarly the Qur'an enjoins maintenance of "prayer" or devotional exercises, and bestowal of alms: it is necessary for the Muslim to know what performance will satisfy these requirements, whence number and times of the former have to be ascertained and rates fixed for the latter.

Within a century of the Prophet's death the Islamic empire acquired an area of which the territory ruled by himself was no more than a fraction, and its political centre was within a generation transferred to another country. Yet the problems which the government had to face were, though on a vaster scale, essentially the same as those which had confronted the Prophet when master of Arabia. In the regions of Asia, Africa and Europe which his successors incorporated in their dominion there were pagans, Jews and Christians, just as there had been in Arabia when Islam was first preached. If Pharaoh's conduct in making his people "parties" — perhaps we might say castes — was scarcely to be regarded as a model, it had been followed by the Prophet in Arabia with the institution of tolerated

communities who were humbly to bring tribute. Islam was to dominate all other religions: the extent of that domination had been fixed by the Prophet's practice.

Hence in the heads under which Mohammed's teaching is grouped in the following pages it is chiefly in the section named Ethics that differences due to the period of communication — the phrase which we may substitute for "revelation" — will require consideration. Elsewhere owing to the repetition of the same narratives, the same expressions, and the same maxims in passages which must belong to very different periods we shall not be misrepresenting the teaching by leaving the question of date out of account.

For details of Mohammed's career reference may be made either to the present writer's biography in the Heroes of the Nations series, or to one of its numerous English competitors: the facts recorded vary very little, though the attitude adopted by the writers towards the material differs considerably. For the purpose of this work the following brief summary will suffice.

Of Meccah, the Prophet's home, from which he bitterly resented his expulsion, we have no certain notice prior to his time. It certainly possessed a sanctuary, a square building known as the Ka'bah, and practised some forms of pagan worship. The Qur'an once calls it by an earlier name Bekkah, twice "Mother of the Towns", whereas in one place it appears coupled with another called "the two Towns". From the Qur'an we learn that Mohammed, otherwise called Ahmad, was not born to eminence there; although the

assertion that he was an orphan occurs next to one which is clearly metaphorical, we have no reason for doubting that he lost his parents at an early age, and was brought up by an uncle, Abu Talib, father of 'Ali, who plays a great part in the history of Islam. The community to which he belonged, the tribe Quraish, pursued the carrying trade, and since the Qur'an contains frequent references to sea voyages, some allusions to monuments of antiquity in Palestine, and to the geography of Egypt, the tradition that he took part in such trading expeditions is likely to be sound. A monograph has been written on the commercial language of the Qur'an, and there is indeed sufficient of this to confirm the tradition. His acquisition of wealth is mentioned in the Surah which describes him as an orphan, and the tradition explains it by his marriage to a wealthy widow many years older than himself. In its statements about himself and other prophets the Qur'an insists on their not demanding any fee, suggesting that this was done by other preachers with whom he was acquainted.

From the Qur'an we should infer (as has been seen) that the Jewish and Christian systems and scriptures were wholly unknown to his fellow-citizens; indeed this is expressly stated: if we do not accept its assertion that these were communicated to Mohammed by special revelation, we can only suppose that he became acquainted with them on his travels. And the forms assumed by Biblical names and Jewish and Christian technicalities in the Qur'an indicate numerous sources. Thus the forms Yunus for Jonah and Elias for Elijah clearly get theirs from some Greek source or version

made from the Greek. The name for the Apostles is certainly Ethiopic. Other names or technicalities are Hebrew or Syriac. The tradition gives the name of a monk Bahira with whom he at one time came in contact, and the Meccans pointed to some foreign resident from whom they asserted that he derived information; the Qur'an which repudiates the charge fails to mention this person's name. Both Judaism and Christianity had by the time of his birth (about A.D. 570) been making considerable progress in Arabia, but there is no evidence that any parts of the Christian Bible had been translated into the dialect of the Quraish or those Arabic dialects of which we have monuments in pre-Islamic inscriptions.

We have no reason for disbelieving that his prophetic career commenced with some mental experience such as those which some of the Hebrew prophets record, leading him to produce oracles, in form utterances of the Divine Being addressed to him. When these were communicated to his fellow-citizens, he was supposed by many to be either a Kahin (soothsayer) or demon-ridden poet. According to the tradition the oracles of the former were delivered in rhymed prose, a style which at a later period was popular for official correspondence and certain other branches of literature. The existence of poets is also recognized by the Qur'an, and a considerable amount of verse claiming to be pre-Islamic is preserved, though hitherto the epigraphy of the highly civilized South Arabian states has produced no example of it. The system is so essentially *literary*, i.e. based on the recurrence of particular consonants and vowels, that acquaintance with it in an

illiterate community is surprising. Although the style of the Qur'an involves rhyme of a kind, it has neither the regularity of the later rhymed prose nor, save in rare cases, anything resembling metre. It rejects with indignation the epithets *Kahin* and *poet* applied to the Prophet, but nowhere records a complaint that either its rhyme or its metre was incorrect.

His call like that of St. Paul was followed by a period of retirement, after which, however, publicity was not immediately attempted. Indeed a period of three years is said to have been occupied with inviting and in some cases obtaining the adherence of members of his household and intimate friends. He then came forward more openly as a reformer, demanding the substitution of monotheism for the existing polytheism, threatening a catastrophe if his views were not adopted, and promising a bodily resurrection with rewards and punishments. Since his reforms meant a definite breach with hereditary doctrine and practice, he had naturally to face violent opposition. The tribal system under which he lived rendered his life secure only so long as the tribe to which he belonged did not expel him. The tradition makes him enjoy the protection of his tribe, so that his execution would have led to a civil war, which the commercial community would do all they could to avoid.

That his followers were for a time drawn mainly from a humble class is admitted in the Qur'an, and these could more easily be persecuted. For a number of them a refuge was presently found in the Christian kingdom of Abyssinia: we have no record belonging to that country which might explain the motives which

led the monarch to harbour them and how they maintained themselves there. It seems clear that they were allowed to retain their own religious system, which would appear to be a rare example of toleration.

After the death of Abu Talib, Mohammed is said to have retired for a time to Taif, probably the other of the "two towns" mentioned above, until another Meccan magnate promised him protection. Meanwhile events were taking place at Yathrib which were to lead to the turning point in the Prophet's career. In that community there were Jewish as well as pagan tribes: the two pagan tribes Aus and Khazraj had for a long period been fighting each other: fighting since Maccabean times has not been an occupation successfully pursued by Israelites. The accession of a Jewish contingent to one of the sides did ultimately secure a victory. The defeated tribe learning that in Meccah there was an apostle of the Jewish Deity, to whom doubtless the victory was attributed, were anxious to secure his services, and an invitation to Yathrib was the result. He wisely arranged that his followers should precede him to that town, and from them he received favourable reports. The Qur'an speaks of his expulsion from Meccah, the Tradition of an attempt on his life which he successfully eluded, and the former has an allusion to his hiding with one follower in a cave while escaping from pursuit. Eventually he arrived in Yathrib, since then to be known as "The City" (al-Medinah) of the Prophet, where he assumed the direction of affairs, being at first, it would seem, welcomed by all communities.

Since he was very soon himself to take the field

with a troop of doughty warriors we can only conjecture that both he and they must have had some military experience before the Migration; about such we have no details. He proceeded when established as ruler to organize a fighting force, and in the second year encountered and defeated a Meccan band intended as the guard of a caravan. That day, the Battle of Badr, called with justice the day of salvation, started a career of uninterrupted warfare with rare setbacks, in which he ultimately took Meccah and subdued Arabia both to the north and the south. He indeed had to deal in Medinah with internal hostility and disaffection as well as with external enemies; ridiculed by the Jews for his Biblical narratives he got rid of them all save for a few converts by banishment and massacre; but exhibited great mildness in dealing with his old Meccan enemies when they were once in his power: measures were taken to win their hearts.

His duties as a ruler of a constantly increasing realm and commander of a constantly increasing army were accommodated to and combined with his operations as prophet. The revelations of this period are indeed somewhat more prosaic than those of the Meccan: but the Qur'an continues to be the great miracle, the source which provides the answer to all questions, and guidance for all difficulties. In the longest of the Surahs, that which occupies the second place, we have a sort of resume of the teaching, though it is partly occupied with polemic against the Jews, who are also attacked in other Medinese Surahs. The legislative element, which is not altogether wanting in the Meccan revelations, is much more developed in the Medinese.

The main doctrines of Islam, the unity of Allah and the future life, are no less repeatedly emphasized than before.

Lord Beaconsfield observed that men celebrated for military prudence are often found to be headstrong statesmen. "In civil life a great general is frequently and strangely the creature of impulse; influenced in his political movements by the last snatch of information; and often the creature of the last aide-de-camp who has his ear." This last charge was brought against Mohammed, as we learn from a late Surah, where he complains of people who annoy the Prophet by saying that "he is an ear", i.e. all ears: ready to believe anything that is told him. From this particular accusation he can be absolved, and his generalship has been criticized for insufficient caution. Yet as legislator he appears "frequently and strangely the creature of impulse": his calendar of twelve lunar months suggests the settlement in a moment of a matter for which lengthy astronomical and mathematical studies were required. He is said on his arrival at Yathrib to have forbidden fertilization of the palm-trees, thereby ruining the date-crop: happily this was not a revelation, whence the prohibition could without difficulty be removed. In the rules for distribution of inheritance, provision is made for one female and more than two females: the case of two females is omitted. It is difficult to imagine a mind of this type thinking out any system, and hence in the teaching we shall find doctrines which cannot easily be reconciled: our present text of the Qur'an finds in the work "fixed 'texts", such as leave no doubt about their import,

and "ambiguous texts", of which the interpretation is known to Allah only: though, with a different punctuation, an exception may be made in favour of the profoundly learned. We need not here decide whether this division of the texts is part of the original Surah or an editorial interpolation: it is in any case an admission that harmonizing of different passages is no easy matter. We are, however, justified in treating whatever is actually in the Qur'an as the Prophet's teaching: only we need not claim him as an upholder of one opinion rather than another when authority can be cited for each. For this reason in what follows, though the matter is collected from different parts of the Qur'an so as to furnish a conspectus of what it says on each subject, no attempt has been made to discover more of the Prophet's views than the Qur'anic texts display. That is rather a matter for Muslim theologians, who seem even to take a pride in showing that Islam has developed more sects than either the Jewish or the Christian system. Unfortunately, only one of the sects is held to be in the right.

## II

### *THE SPIRITUAL WORLD*

THE first article of the Islamic Creed — it consists of two only — seems to be correctly rendered: "There is no god (*ilah*) but (*nisi*) God (*Allah*)." The difference between the word God without and with a capital adequately reproduces that between the Arabic *ilah* without the article and *Allah* with it, as the latter is thought to be an abbreviation of *Al-ilah*, parallel to Allat, the name of a goddess mentioned in the Qur'an, whom Herodotus calls Alilat. The word for "god" is identical with the Hebrew Eloah, which occurs chiefly in the book of Job, whose scene is laid in Arabia; its plural Elohim is common in other parts of the Old Testament, used, however, as a singular, whatever may be the explanation of the practice. In the terminology of Islam Allah serves as the proper name of the Deity, other names being regarded as epithets.

There is in the Qur'an another name for the Deity, al-Rahman, identical with the Aramaic Rahmana found in the Talmud, and the Rahmanan of inscriptions executed by South Arabian monotheists. In some early Surahs of the Qur'an this name predominates, and from one passage we should infer that it was previously unknown to the Meccans: "When they

are bidden to bow down to the Rahman they say: "And what is the Rahman? Are we to bow down to what you order us?" In another passage the choice is given them between invoking Allah and invoking the Rahman. On the other hand the Prophet elsewhere is told to say, "I have only been ordered to worship the Lord of this town which he has sanctified", and according to a tradition the Meccans while declining to recognize the Rahman did recognize Allah. From another the name of the chief Meccan Deity would appear to be Hubal, whose name is found in Nabataean inscriptions of North Arabia. A suggestion which may be right is that just as in the family the head is spoken of as Father, not as John or Edward, so the Meccans when they spoke of their deity called him God, not Hubal. A relic of some discussion on the subject seems to be found in the formula which according to the Qur'an was used by Solomon in his letter to the Queen of Sheba, is prefixed to all the Surahs save one, and is used by Muslims to commence books, official documents, and even private letters: "In the name of Allah the Rahman the merciful," where "the merciful" is the Arabic translation of the Aramaic Rahman. The formula gives the appearance of what is called syncretism, or more simply compromise, in this case identification of Allah with whose cult the Meccans were acquainted with the Rahman whose name was new to them.

It is certain that Mohammed was brought up in a pagan environment, but its form of paganism is more obscure than that which prevailed in the South Arabian states, of which we possess many epigraphic documents.

We only glean something about it from the polemic of the Qur'an, to which the Tradition adds some details which may be trustworthy.

The term used in the former for paganism, and already found in a monotheistic inscription of South Arabia, means "partnership", and implies recognition of a supreme being with minor deities as "associates". Such a system seems quite different from that of the South Arabian states, where the community has a god or protector of its own, and though a number of deities and other superhuman beings may be revered, there is no suggestion of their subordination to a supreme god. To this form of theology there appears to be an allusion in one passage of the Qur'an, where the Meccans are represented as saying: "Has he made the gods one god? This is a wonderful thing; we never heard of this in the former system; it is nought but an invention." Much more frequently they are represented as acknowledging the supremacy of Allah. "When asked Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and Lord of the great throne, they reply Allah. When asked in whose hand is the dominion over everything, who protects and against whom there is no protection, they reply Allah. When asked Who created the heavens and the earth, they reply Allah." Passages of this import are of frequent occurrence. They are not charged with rejecting Allah, but with setting beside Him another god, of taking two gods, adopting gods from the earth, saying that there were gods with Him, taking gods beside Him (or in preference to Him). They are said to love their "equals", i.e. partners, as much as they love Allah, whereas

the Believers love Allah more. The notion of two gods is rejected on the ground that were this the case, heaven and earth would have come to ruin. Had there been any god with Allah, each god would have gone off with his own creation, and one god would have got superiority over another. All this reasoning implies that the supremacy of Allah was recognized: the point in dispute was whether any other deities should or should not be recognized as well.

The character of the "associates", subordinate or rival deities, is not clear. At times they are said to be mere names, arbitrarily invented, without authorization; this would imply that they had no existence at all. In one passage they are said to be dead, not alive. Idols, i.e. figures of deities, whether in human or other form, are rarely mentioned: in one place indeed the Believers are told to keep clear of the foulness of idols. The chief mention of them is in the story of Abraham, who charges his people with worshipping them, which they admit to be their hereditary practice, and himself broke them all up with the exception of a particularly large one, which he mockingly charged with the exploit. The calf which was made for the Israelites was, it is said, suggested by the idols which they found worshipped by the people to whose country they had come. The charge, however, which the Hebrew prophets so often bring, that the gods of the Gentiles are wood and stone, the work of men's hands, is scarcely to be found in the Qur'an. And indeed, though the figures of men, beasts, and birds are common amongst the remains of South Arabian antiquity, images of gods have not hitherto been found.

On the other hand the objects of Meccan worship are at times credited with both existence and the possession of certain faculties. It is repeatedly asserted that on Resurrection Day they will be the enemies of their worshippers and deny that the latter had worshipped them. They are said to be "servants (of Allah) like yourselves", though it is added that they have no feet, hands, eyes or ears. Indeed in one place we are told that "those whom they (the pagans) invoke seek to get nearer and nearer to Allah, hope for His mercy and fear His punishment", which implies that they are a superior order of beings. There is indeed some uncertainty as to what spiritual order these "servants" belong. At times they are identified with the jinn, are called the hosts of Iblis (the devil), and the "associators" are said to have taken the demons as allies in preference to Allah. These passages suggest masculine beings; but elsewhere we learn that "they only invoke females and only invoke a rebellious demon". The view that these associates were females agrees with the taunt that they make the angels females, and suppose them to be Allah's daughters. On the other hand it is asserted that the associates will be the fuel of Hell with their worshippers: had they been gods they would not have entered that region to abide there for ever.

Probably these statements which cannot easily be reconciled are due to different accounts of these objects of worship given by the Meccan opponents as the controversy continued. In what is certainly an early Surah three goddesses, known to us from other sources, al-Lat, al-Uzza, and Manat, are mentioned,

clearly as the daughters of Allah: the Meccans are ridiculed for assigning Him daughters whereas they themselves have sons. This particular taunt cannot well be separated from that about the angels, whose existence, one would assume, had only been learned by the pagans from Mohammed. The deities worshipped, according to the Qur'an, by the people of Noah have masculine names: and those of whose cult we learn from epigraphic monuments are ordinarily so. Worship of the sun is attributed to the people of Saba, and that as well as worship of the moon is forbidden. Abraham experimented with worship of a star, of the moon, and of the sun, but abandoned it when he found that they all set.

The later Islamic theology disapproved of anthropomorphism, but this involved explaining away a great many texts which speak of Allah's face, hand, hands, right hand. Indeed, where the Divine Being is thought of as a king, issuing orders, reacting to obedience and disobedience, loving and hating, hearing and seeing, planning and even plotting, it is difficult, if not impossible, to dissociate Him from that human form which in our experience invariably accompanies the greater number of these activities. There is indeed no assertion in the Qur'an so decidedly anthropomorphic as the Biblical, "God made man in His own image", but in the former Allah writes, and seats Himself on a throne, which, we learn is supported by angels and surrounded by certain beings: on Resurrection Day it will be supported by eight angels. His throne has indeed the width of the heaven and the earth: when these were created, the throne was on the water; the

heaven, when He retired thither, was smoke. The time taken for Him to ascend was a day equal to a thousand years "of your reckoning"; the angels take five times as long. On Resurrection Day He will grasp the whole earth and the heavens will be folded in His right hand.

Such passages may indeed be allegorical: given their literal meaning they represent the Deity as similar in many respects to a human monarch, only on a colossal scale. He is indeed immortal and neither slumbers nor sleeps. He has no consort; like human monarchs He ordinarily communicates His will through messengers. He has favourites and enemies. He can even utter curses: "May Allah fight with them." Like human monarchs He permits intercession on behalf of offenders.

But though the presentation of Allah in the Qur'an is mainly anthropomorphic, there are passages which resemble pantheism. Such are to be found in a Surah of uncertain date, where Allah is said to be the first and the last, the manifest and the hidden, who is with you wherever ye are. Being omnipresent, wherever three are talking, He is the fourth; where five are, He is the sixth. There is not a quadruped but He has hold on its forelock. "We are nearer to a man than the vein of his neck." "He intervenes between a man and his heart." "To Allah belong the East and the West, and whithersoever ye turn, there is the face of Allah." At the battle of Badr it was Allah, not the fighters, who slew the enemy: Allah, not the Prophet, who threw pebbles.

To this latter — and to many minds worthier — con-

ception of the Divine Being, perhaps, belongs the grave objection to a divine family which pervades the Qur'an. In the Meccan period the "associators" are mocked and censured for this notion: "They have invented for Him sons and daughters ignorantly: He is exalted above such descriptions. Creator of the heavens and the earth, how could he have offspring, seeing that He had no consort, and brought everything into existence?" At a later period Christians are rebuked for speaking of the Son of God. In a Surah of the Rahman period, into which some later matter is introduced, the assertion that He had taken to Himself a Son is called one which might make the heavens split asunder, the earth burst, and the mountains crash in pieces. In the Medinah period Jews and Christians are charged with imitating the language of the earlier unbelievers, the Christians using the appellation Son of God of Christ and the Jews of 'Uzair. This latter statement is one of the puzzles of the Qur'an, for though 'Uzair might plausibly be identified with Ezra, search of the Jewish tradition has revealed no claim for that personage which would justify the statement that has been quoted. If, however, for 'Uzair we substitute Israel, the charge would be justified by Exodus iv. 22. "Thus saith the Lord: Israel is my firstborn son," softened by the author of Ecclesiasticus (xxxvi. 17) to "Israel whom Thou hast likened to a firstborn".

The phrase which we ordinarily render by "revelation", but which literally means "sending down", brings us back to the anthropomorphic notion, according to which the divine dwelling is in the highest

heaven; and though Allah's speech is most frequently addressed to angels, such communication to human beings is not altogether excluded: in one place we are told that a human being is not addressed by Allah except by inspiration — putting something into the mind — or from behind a screen. Moses was addressed by Allah directly, and is given by Muslims the epithet *Kalim* "the addressee", though this name is not found in the Qur'an. Something similar might be inferred for Mohammed from an early Surah where we read, "There taught him one of great power, who sat himself, being at the highest sky, then approached and came down, was at two bows' distance or nearer, and communicated to his servant what he communicated". The commentators suppose the person who approached to have been the angel Gabriel. The expression "his servant" makes it more likely that Allah is meant.

Numerous epithets are assigned to Allah in the Qur'an, omnipotent, omniscient, merciful, forgiving, knowing, seeing, and the like: but also revengeful, and if no exact synonym for "jealous", applied to the Deity in the Old Testament, is to be found in the book, its import is sufficiently represented by the assertion that associating other objects of worship with Allah is the unforgivable offence. The sense wherein epithets could be predicated of Allah gave rise to much discussion among the later theologians and philosophers, but need not concern us here. The application of some of them involves at least superficial inconsistency with other doctrines and assertions.

In the same Surah we read "Allah knoweth what

is in your hearts whether ye conceal it or reveal it" and the Believers are asked: "Think ye that ye shall enter Paradise when Allah knoweth not yet those of you that have fought, neither knoweth the patient?" So Allah is often said to try or prove people: "Assuredly We shall try you that We may know the fighters among you and may try your records." Power to mislead the people of Saba was only given to Iblis that Allah might know which of them believed in the future life and which doubted it. Iron, which has in it much mischief as well as utilities, was sent down that Allah might know who helped Him and His apostles secretly. The literal sense of such texts is clearly inconsistent with omniscience: there are according to them things which Allah does not yet know, but which experience may ascertain. And indeed He may be said to be guided by experience: "Nothing prevented us from sending (a messenger) with signs but that men of old disbelieved them." Similarly it is said of men: "Nothing prevented them from believing except (their wanting or being destined) to be overtaken by the rule of their predecessors."

Difficulty was also occasioned by two other epithets, just and merciful. The despatch of messengers, prophets, or apostles with commands, obedience to which is to earn reward, whereas disobedience is to incur punishment, implies that the human will is free: and this doctrine is not quite easy to reconcile with divine omniscience, since knowledge of what a man will do, if he is free to choose, cannot go beyond probability. If on the other hand his actions are all predetermined by Allah, he earns neither reward nor

punishment by them. Nor, indeed, can preaching and warning have any effect, though of course like the acts which they enjoin or condemn they must be foreordained.

The difficulty of this matter caused the Muslim community at an early period to split into sects, one maintaining predestination, the other the freedom of will: the latter called themselves "the party of monotheism and justice", on the ground that the punishment of acts about which the agent has no choice is clearly unjust. The majority at most times have favoured predestination. G. F. Buckle's theory that predestination is the doctrine of the poor, free will that of the rich, does not seem to suit the history of Islam.

In the Qur'an as in the Tradition predestination is the dominating doctrine. Passages could be cited belonging to different periods which state it as clearly as the Pentateuch makes the Deity harden Pharaoh's heart. A few may be translated.

When We wish to destroy a town we command its luxurious ones and they do evil therein, the word against them is verified, and we destroy utterly.

The obvious interpretation of this passage is that when Allah determines to destroy a community He commands its people or some of them to do wrong, and thereby they earn destruction.

Among them that listen to thee are those on whose hearts We have set veils lest they should understand, and in their ears stopping, and even if they see every sign they will not believe.

A particularly picturesque description of the state of those whom Allah has rendered incapable of accepting guidance is the following:

Verily We have put collars on their necks and they reach up to their chins so that they keep their heads erect, and We have set a wall in front of them and a wall behind them, and We have blinded them so that they see not. It is the same for them whether thou warnest them or warnest them not, they will not believe.

Passages to the same effect are, Who shall guide him whom Allah has led astray?" "He whom Allah guides is the rightly guided, and whom He misleads they are the losers." What follows this last passage is illuminating: And verily we have created for Gehenna many of the jinn and of mankind. They have hearts wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, ears wherewith they hear not; they are like beasts, nay yet more misled." The unforgivable offence, association, is attributed to Allah's order. "Had Allah so willed, they would not have associated." The hostility between the Christian sects is ascribed to the will of Allah: "Had Allah not so willed, they would not have fought each other: only Allah does what He will." Even when the Prophet is rebuked for having permitted some followers to stay at home instead of going to the war, it is Allah "who did not want them to go and discouraged them". The general principle is summed up in the following text: "Had We so willed, We should have given every soul its guidance: only My word was verified 'I shall assuredly fill Gehenna from Jinn and mankind all'." Somewhat

similar is the assertion "No disaster has befallen on the earth or in yourselves but it was (written) in a Book before We created them".

Hence when the Tradition assigns the Prophet a saying that the heart of a man is between two fingers of Allah, who directs it as He will, the saying whether genuine or not is in accordance with many Qur'anic texts.

We learn from the Qur'an that the resulting difficulty did not escape the Meccan opponents of Mohammed. "They say: had the Rahman so willed, we should not have worshipped them (the angels)." "The associators say: Had Allah so willed, we should not have worshipped anything besides Him, neither should our fathers; nor should we have taboo'd anything without Him." They made the doctrine an excuse for refusing charity: "Are we to feed those whom Allah would have fed, had He so willed?" The replies offered are that the speakers are doing the same as their predecessors, that they are talking without knowledge and merely guessing, and that they have no book or authority for their doctrine. The solution presented is in reality about the same as that which results from the powerful reasoning of Kant in his Transcendental Dialectic: that we are here faced with a problem which the human reason is incapable of handling.

The Hymn *Dies Ire* speaks of a written book containing all the evidence by which the world will be judged:

Liber scriptus proferetur  
In quo totum continetur  
De quo mundus judicetur.

In the chapter on Eschatology we shall hear of more than one book of this kind. The Qur'an has further references to a Book in which all events were recorded before they occurred. "No disaster has overtaken in the earth or in your souls but it was in a Book before We created them." "There is not a single town but We shall destroy it before Resurrection Day; that has been written in the Book."

If the sect called Mu'tazils had some ground for their claim that the justice of Allah required freedom of the human will, and were compelled to resort to various expedients in order to reconcile the Qur'anic texts with their system, they were confronted with no less serious a difficulty in the texts which speak of Jinn and human beings being created for eternal fire. "The word of thy Lord was accomplished, I shall fill Gehenna with Jinn and humans all." "Had We so willed, We had given each soul its guidance: only My word was verified 'I shall fill Gehenna with Jinn and humans all'." And indeed this would seem to be the fate of the majority. "The day when We shall say to Gehenna Art thou full? And she shall say Can there be more to come?" Further the epithet "forgiving" has its limitations: there were whole classes of people whom Allah would not forgive. Such were the Hypocrites of Medinah, i.e. the citizens who ostensibly accepted Islam and the Prophet's rule, but secretly plotted against him. It was all the same whether the Prophet interceded for them or not; Allah would not forgive them. The Prophet might ask forgiveness seventy times for those who discouraged almsgiving: Allah would not forgive them.

Allah will not forgive association with Himself though He may pardon lesser offences.

Although the difficulties connected with prayer which in any case are great are seriously increased by the doctrine that all events are predetermined, there is prefixed to the Qur'an a petition of seven clauses, which holds in Muslim worship the place of the Pater Noster in the Christian. The clauses are:

Praise to Allah, Lord of the worlds,  
The Rahman the merciful,  
Sovereign of the Day of Judgment,  
Thee we worship and Thine aid we invoke,  
Lead us the straight path  
The path of those whom Thou hast favoured,  
Not those against whom there is anger nor those that stray.

The epithet "Sovereign of the Day of Judgment" bears some resemblance to the petition "Thy kingdom come", which a Muslim might justify from certain passages in the Qur'an, e.g. "His shall be the kingdom on the day whereon the trumpet shall be blown", "The kingdom on that Day will be Allah's", "The true kingdom that Day will be the Rahman's", all implying that the "kingdom" is to come, and is not yet realized.

The wish "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" would seem to be inconsistent with those texts which have been cited, leaving no room for doubt that Allah's will is done in both. Although the prayer cited makes no mention of forgiveness, the doctrine that the exercise of it should precede the demand for it is found in the Qur'an: "Let them forgive and

pardon; would ye not that Allah should forgive you?"

Since Allah is regarded as a king, it is in keeping with this idea that He should have a court: some of the courtiers are termed "those who are brought near", a phrase which is also used of the persons who were promoted at Pharaoh's court. These are the angels, whose Qur'anic appellation seems to be taken from Ethiopic, the language which has preserved the verb whence the ordinary Semitic name for messenger is derived. To the angels Allah communicates His project of appointing a deputy on earth — where the word for deputy *Khalifah*, the origin of Caliph, as we learn from a pre-Islamic inscription, was already in use in Arabia for viceroy. The angels warn their Lord that such a deputy-man — will do mischief therein and shed blood; how different from their own course which consists of praise and sanctification! Their remonstrance is overruled: Adam is created and taught all the names. The holders of these names are then brought to the angels, who, when asked to name them, are unable to do so. Adam, however, can supply the information, and the angels are told to prostrate themselves before him, which all of them with the exception of Iblis (the Devil) proceed to do. Some of them are chosen to be messengers, in accordance with their name: and indeed one of them, Gabriel, according to one passage, brought it (the Qur'an) down to Mohammed's heart by Allah's leave; according to some earlier passages it was brought down to the Prophet's heart by the faithful spirit, or the Holy Spirit, where perhaps Gabriel is meant, though

in some early texts the angels are distinguished from the spirit, with which in one of them the angels are sent down, while in another the spirit is sent down without mention of the angel or angels.

The angels also announced to the Virgin Mary that she had been chosen to be the Mother of 'Isa (Jesus), but in another Surah where this is narrated the announcer is said to have been "our spirit, taking a complete human shape". The human shape taken by the angel agrees with another passage, where in reply to the demand of the Meccans for the appearance of an angel they are told that such angel would be given the form of a man. Their figure is supposed to be beautiful, since the women of Egypt thought Joseph must be one. They have wings, two, three, or four. They also have hands which they can stretch out. They were present, and possibly took part in more than one of the Prophet's battles: at that of Badr the Muslims were promised the aid of a thousand angels — the epithet here given them is of doubtful meaning, but at least suggests that they were mounted on steeds; they also wore badges, a sort of uniform. On other occasions no fewer than 3000 or even 5000 were conditionally promised. Traditions vary on the question whether they did any of the fighting: the belief that they had done so was in any case helpful to the Prophet's cause since the Arabs who would have felt humiliated at defeat by their fellows sustained no dishonour by yielding to supernatural foes.

Besides acting as messengers they have other functions. There are angels of death, "those who exact them"; indeed one such angel is put in charge

of either a person or a company. Their seizure of the insincere Muslims is accompanied with violence, beating them on the face and back. Others attend the living: "Our messengers write what they (the unbelievers) plot." According to another text "He (a man) has successors before him and behind him guarding him by Allah's order", i.e. angels who relieve each other; different it would seem from those who are employed in taking notes of his actions. These are described as seated one on his right hand and one on his left, taking down the words which he utters. On Judgment Day the two will accompany the soul, the one driving, the other testifying. Thus each man is in charge of four angels, who are relieved at the end of the day. In the case of an Apostle angels are sent in front and behind to watch and see that he delivers his message accurately.

The angels are normally in heaven, uttering the praise of Allah out of fear. They pray for the Believers and the Prophet. Indeed we are given a copy of their words: "Lord, Thy mercy and knowledge encompass everything, so forgive those that repent and follow Thy path, and guard them from the torment of Hell. Aye, Lord, and cause them to enter the Gardens of Eden, which Thou hast promised them and those of their parents, consorts, and offspring who are worthy; Thou art the Mighty, the Wise. Guard them, too, from evil things; on him whom Thou guardest from evil things on that day Thou wilt have shown mercy, and that is the great prize."

They descend on the Believers to say to them "Fear not neither grieve, but receive the good news

of the Paradise which has been promised you".

When the blest are about to enter Paradise, the angels will come to them from every gate and salute them. They will be asked whether they had been worshipped by the associators. They will deny it, explaining that the worship had been of the Jinn.

Two angels are mentioned by name, Jibril (Gabriel) and Mikal (Michael); the Jews are taunted with being hostile to both. One who has some function in reference to the damned has the name Malik. He will be asked by them to request his Lord to put an end to their existence, but will tell them it is to continue.

Two angels named Harut and Marut are mentioned in the Second Surah, to whom matter was revealed, apparently magical in character, as by it a man would be separated from his wife; these angels however warned those to whom the spells were communicated that they were a "temptation", and exhorted them not to disbelieve: still their spells did only harm and no good. Their place was Babylon. Marut is clearly the Ethiopic for "witch"; Harut is reminiscent of a Syriac word for strife. How they obtained their angelic character is obscure — perhaps they may be identified with the Jannes and Jambres of the Second Epistle to Timothy.

If the activity of good spirits occupies a considerable place in the theology of the Qur'an, that of evil spirits also is adequately recognized. The chief of these is sometimes called by his Hebrew name Shaitan (for Satan), sometimes by one taken from the Greek, Iblis (for Diabolos, the source also of "Devil".) Possibly another name for this spirit is Jann, since he

is said to have been created from the fire of the Samum (hot wind) before the creation of Adam from clay, and the story of Iblis, which is told several times, says much the same of him. Iblis was originally an angel, who, when the angels were ordered to prostrate themselves before Adam, declined to do so on the ground that the element whence he had been created, fire, was superior to Adam's substance. He was told to get down or get out (probably) from heaven, with a curse upon him till Judgment Day: he requested to be allowed time till mankind were raised (from the dead), and this being granted, he undertook to occupy it with misleading them and indeed ambushing them from every side. He is man's evident enemy. He persuaded Adam and his wife to eat the forbidden fruit and divested them of their clothing. He and his company see the descendants of Adam whence they cannot themselves be seen.

This would imply that they are invisible; they must, however, have some hideous form, since the fruit which will be the food of the damned is compared to heads of Satans.

It appears from one passage that Iblis is one of the Jinn and that the other Jinn are his offspring. These beings bear some resemblance to the devils of the Synoptic Gospels, which enter human beings and are expelled, but the former are much less diabolic. They endeavour to eavesdrop at the heavenly Council, but are driven away, or, when they succeed in catching some fragment of a discourse, are chased by a meteor. This was perhaps after the revelation of the Qur'an, when trying to eavesdrop they found the heavens well

guarded with shooting stars. A number of them were converted by hearing the Qur'an recited and proceeded to preach to their kin: those who believed would thereby escape Hell fire which would otherwise be their fate.

Of their other activities we hear occasionally. They inspire poets, mainly with false information. Hence the term jinn-ridden (*majnun*) is applied to poets, and some Meccans so designated the Prophet. Certain Jinn were also compelled by Allah to serve king Solomon in the capacity of manufacturers of various articles, and he had regiments of them in his army. They went on performing their tasks after Solomon's death, which they only learned by noticing a termite gnawing his staff. This taught them that they were not in possession of mysterious information.

To one of the number, who offered to do a service to Solomon, the name Afrit is applied. Like mankind the Jinn were created by Allah to serve Him; and the two sets of beings are called "the two weights". Both will be gathered to the final reckoning, and the Jinn, like mankind, will confess that messengers had come to them to recite the texts of Allah and warn them of the last judgment, only they had been deceived by this present life and been unbelievers. From this we may infer that Mohammed was not the only messenger who preached to them. Numbers of them had been created for Gehenna, and indeed it would seem that with them as with mankind whole communities of them had passed away, probably by way of punishment for rejecting the warnings of the messengers.

Apparently individual jinn are attached to individual men to mislead them: "to him who is blind to the mention of the Rahman we assign a demon and he is attached to him"; when the final reckoning comes, the man will wish that there were as great a distance between himself and this companion as that between east and west. The accompanying demon will disclaim responsibility for the man's errors but will apparently be damned with him.

The Qur'an does not mention any difference of sex in the case of the Jinn, though this has been inferred from one passage, neither does it furnish the names of individual Jinn with the exception of those of Iblis. The later Islamic literature supplies information on both these matters, mentioning cases wherein female Jinn married human males, and poets who could state the names of the Jinn from whom they derived their inspiration.

The separate Jinn have somewhat more individuality than the demons of the Synoptic Gospels, since Solomon employed some of them as builders, others as divers, and put others in chains: doubtless, too, those who manufactured the various articles which he required had special qualifications. Of their mode of life when they were not attached to human beings the Qur'an furnishes no more information than what has preceded.

The spiritual world would thus seem to resemble the material in some noteworthy respects: there is a Sovereign with a court: and there are spirits of a lower order, who, though ordinarily mischievous, can be usefully employed, and are not irreclaimable. The

function discharged by Iblis, which we might call that of *agent provocateur*, is similar to, though not quite identical with, that discharged by Satan in the Biblical Book of Job: he undertakes and receives permission to mislead mankind and succeeds in doing this: when people forget even commonplace duties, he is responsible. One of the ceremonies of the Pilgrimage consists in throwing stones: they are supposed to be thrown at Satan. This is because the Ethiopic word meaning "accursed" which accompanies his name has in Arabic the sense "stoned".

The belief in demons is associated in our minds with that of exorcism, modes of expelling a demon from a human body in which he has installed himself. The nearest matter in the Qur'an to formulæ capable of producing this effect is to be found in the two short Surahs which close the collection. The first is usually rendered:

Say: I seek protection from the Lord of the Dawn  
 From the evil of what He created,  
 And from the evil of the dark when it deepens,  
 And from the evil of the women that spit upon knots,  
 And from the evil of an envier when he envies.

The second as follows:

Say: I seek protection from the Lord of mankind,  
 King of mankind,  
 God of mankind,  
 From the evil of the whisper(er)  
 The skulking (?)  
 Who whispers in men's breasts  
 Of Jinn and men.

Both these are clearly exorcisms, in the sense of spells the pronunciation of which will avert evil: but not, in the more literal usage, of formulæ which will drive a demon out of a man. In the list of enemies against whom protection is required the Jinn occupy no conspicuous place: indeed it seems that the suggestion of evil thoughts can be done by men as well as by them. Although then the ordinary Arabic word for "mad" seems to mean jinn-ridden, the mode in which the Qur'an conceives the process appears to be different from that usurpation of personality which is found in the Gospel narratives.

### III

## *COSMOGONY AND ANTHROPOLOGY*

THE process of creation is, as in Genesis, said to be by command: "when He decrees a matter, He merely says to it Be, and it is." Only once is the Word of God personified, and that is in the application of the phrase "Word" to Him whose name was "The Messiah 'Isa son of Mary", in accordance with the theology of the prologue to the Fourth Gospel. The heavens and the earth were brought into existence in six days; this is often repeated, but the division of the stages between the days is different from the record of Genesis. At first the heaven and the earth were continuous, but We separated them. The production of the earth took up two days, blessing it and ordering means of sustenance therein four days (apparently including the two already mentioned). He (Allah) then retired to the heaven, which was smoke, and ordered it as seven heavens in two days, and enjoined on each heaven its business, and "We adorned the lowest heaven with lamps". From another Surah we learn that the seven heavens were a structure of continuous stages, called "paths", without break: and from another that the number of earth(s) was the same: the orders of Allah descend between these various storeys. Water was sent down from heaven and located on earth; all living things were created from water, though in one place this

seems to be limited to reptiles, bipeds and quadrupeds.

The lamps with which the lowest heaven was adorned are sun, moon and stars. These have all "been subjected to you", i.e. are of use to mankind. The sun rises over people who have no shelter from it and sets in a muddy well in the extreme west. It moves to a point at which it stops but is not allowed to overtake the moon. It indicates the shadow but is not the cause of it; Allah extends the latter and withdraws it slightly to Himself. The moon has "mansions" assigned it, "that ye may know the number of the years and reckoning": by the time that it has traversed all its mansions it is like an old palm-branch (i.e. bent). These "mansions" are given by the commentators as twenty-eight, i.e. one for each day of the month: if, however, they enable men to distinguish the years, they must rather be the twelve zodiacal signs, which even in our almanacks are assigned to the months, and in accordance with this is the ruling that the number of the months with Allah is twelve: whence the Muslim year is of twelve lunar months, and intercalation with the view of accommodating the lunations to the seasons which are produced by the sun is strictly prohibited. The stars are of use for guidance; the name of only one star, Shi'ra (Sirius?), is mentioned in the Qur'an. In the heaven there are mountains, fragments of which descend as hail. It is Allah who keeps the heavens from falling on the earth.

The purpose of the mountains on earth is to keep it steady. On the Last Day, when the mountains will be removed, the earth (i.e. its surface) will be exposed.

Apparently a question was asked as to the mode of operation, and the reply was that they would be blown away. A statement which occurs twice, "We come to the earth, diminishing it from its extremities", i.e. reducing its extent, is interpreted allegorically. There are two seas — bodies of water — one salt and the other fresh; between the two there is a barrier; there is, however, a place where they meet. Both supply fresh food and ornaments. The ships that sail are frequently mentioned as one of Allah's signs this may consist either in their floating or in their being moved by the winds.

The beasts that move on the earth and the birds which fly are all, according to the Qur'an, "communities like yourselves"; the passage has given trouble to the commentators, but may mean that they are intelligent beings: for in one Surah the words of an ant to the ant community are reported, occasioning Solomon, who understood their language, to smile; he also hears a report from the hudhud (hoopoe), having been taught the language of the birds, and having a regiment of them in his army. "Allah has undertaken their sustenance and knows their abodes, present and future: it is all in a perspicuous book." As the last day approaches a creature (quadruped?) will be brought out of the earth which will talk to men.

Everything that is in heaven and earth gives praise to Allah, as also do the birds, spreading their wings: each one knows its prayer and praise.

There are not a few passages wherein inanimate things are represented as intelligent. After creation Allah retired to the heaven and said to it and to the

earth: "Come willingly or unwillingly: they both said We come willingly". Equally obscure is the statement "We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, and they declined to carry it, fearing it: but man carried it". Whatever the "trust" may mean, the heavens, the earth, and the mountains are here credited with ability to receive and decline an offer. The mountains were told to repeat the praises of Allah with King David as well as the birds. If the Qur'an were revealed to a mountain, you would see it humbled and splitting for fear of Allah. There are stones which fall down for fear of Allah. The star and the tree prostrate themselves.

Possibly some of these assertions are to be taken metaphorically, though it is not quite easy to do so. Thus if no more were said than that the mountains sing the praises of Allah, that might be understood as we understand the words of the Psalm "the heavens declare the glory of God", i.e. that by their structure they indicate sublime wisdom and power. But the statement that the mountains received order to sing Allah's praises with king David at evening and at dawn does not lend itself so easily to such exegesis. It implies some operation executed by the mountains in company with king David and at particular seasons. These passages would appear to have been taken literally by those who asserted that trees saluted Mohammed as Prophet of Allah, a detail which figures in his biography.

Although the account given in Genesis of the creation of the human sexes is not reproduced in the Qur'an, it is summarized as follows

O ye people, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created therefrom its mate, and propagated from them twain men many and women.

Eve is not mentioned by name, but figures as Adam's wife in the story of the Fall. The substance whence Adam was formed is expressed by a rather difficult phrase, supposed to mean dry clay, which had originally been foul mud. In one place man's origin is called sticky clay.

The Qur'an repeatedly furnishes a simple embryology, which need not be repeated here. The suckling period is limited to two years or two years and a half. The attainment of puberty is often mentioned, without specification of the age. It is a matter of great importance, for thereby the adolescent becomes subject to the ordinances of the Code.

We saw above that the theory of predestination divides mankind as well as the Jinn into two classes, those who are guided and will be saved, and those who are misled and will be damned.

A further division, which is perhaps surprising, is into Israelites and others: the Biblical distinction between Jews and Gentiles. Allah repeatedly tells the Israelites to "remember the favour wherewith I favoured you, and how I gave you preference over the worlds". "We have given the Children of Israel the Book and the Wisdom and the prophetic office, and preference over the worlds." "We have chosen them with knowledge above the worlds." Indeed it would seem that at one time the Prophet was told to follow their Code.

It would appear that by misconduct they forfeited

this favour; in a passage inserted in a Meccan Surah (vi. 166-169) Allah lets it be known that till Resurrection Day He would send against them those who would subject them to painful punishment: He has split them up into separate communities; some of them are pious, others not so, and He has tried them with good and evil fortune on the chance that they may repent. The generations which succeeded that of Moses, though they inherited the Book, showed a preference for the goods of this world, maintaining that they would be forgiven. Those of them who adhered to the Book and performed their religious duties would not lose their reward. — This passage suggests that the relations between the Prophet and the Jews were becoming strained, though the allusions are not quite clear. At a later period they are bitterly reproached and repeatedly told that humiliation and poverty have been stamped upon them wherever they are to be found, and they have earned the wrath of Allah.

These latter passages belong to the Medinah period, when the Prophet was less concerned with the Israelites of the Old Testament than with the Jewish tribes resident in Medinah, who by no means gave that attestation to the accuracy of the Qur'an for which an Israelite had been previously cited. These Jews, of whom there were three tribes in that city and a settlement at the neighbouring Khaibar — one of the places visited by Doughty — are shadowy figures: we do not even know whether they were Judaized Arabs or Arabized Israelites. They are credited with poetical compositions: indeed when after a generation or two

of Islam some interest awoke in pre-Islamic antiquities, collectors of early verse ascribed a gem to a certain Samuel, who also became proverbial for keeping faith. A vizier towards the end of the third Islamic century wanted a collection of Arabic odes by Jews, and though one of the savants to whom he applied could furnish none, another was in the fortunate position of having a whole stock. The accounts given by the Mohammedan archæologists of the origin of these Jewish settlers are obviously fabulous, and the Oral Tradition of their Babylonian and Palestinian brethren knows nothing about them. But the traits which the Qur'an records of their character are similar to what we meet in the histories of Josephus, whether due to their religious system or to race. They are people who will only fight in fortresses, who are courageous enough against each other, but turn their backs when they have to fight strangers. They are supposed to be united, but in fact are hopelessly divided. They ought, the Qur'an maintains, to desire death, if, as they maintained, they were to have a monopoly of the future life; instead of that they were more anxious to be long-lived than any one else, even than the pagans: one of them would like to live a thousand years. The charge brought against them in the Gospels of killing the prophets is repeated.

Among privileged beings a place must be given to prophets: with these Allah has made a covenant, and indeed a severe one, though the terms of it are not clearly expressed. According to some texts there is no distinction between any of Allah's prophets or messengers, which perhaps means that all are equally

trustworthy; for in another we read, "We have preferred certain of the prophets to others, having given David the Psalms", and elsewhere two, Moses and 'Isa, are said to be eminent both in this world and the next.

In one passage four classes are enumerated of persons whom Allah has favoured, prophets, righteous men, martyrs, and saints: the second of these, which here is probably a Hebraism, is given in Arabic the sense "faithful friend", and with that import is a special title of the Prophet's faithful follower and indeed successor, Abu Bakr. The word rendered martyrs is a translation of the Greek word, and we learn from a pre-Islamic inscription that it was used by Arab converts to Christianity before it was taken over by Islam, with, however, an important difference in application. For the Christian martyr is a passive sufferer for his belief, who unresistingly endures torture or death. The Muslim martyr is one who dies fighting for it.

The word for prophet, *Nabiy*, is a Hebraism, but its etymology is Arabic, and the group with which it is connected is found both in the Qur'an and other literature. The verb (in a causative formation) means "to inform": one of the substantives has the sense "information"; a *nabiy* means a person possessed of information. In the Bible both it and the Greek word used to translate it, which gives us our word "prophet", mean some one who has access to mysterious information, about past, present, or future. When Christ tells the woman of Samaria her domestic history, she perceives that He is a prophet; a stranger could not otherwise have known about it. In the Acts of the

Apostles one Agabus is said to be a prophet: he earns the epithet by foretelling a famine, and later on the imprisonment of St. Paul. In the history of Israel prophets are expected to be able to locate lost property and to foretell the result of a campaign. The institution was found among other nations. The prophet is not primarily a preacher, but even in the first example of his activities which Greek literature furnishes he slips into that role. For disasters were attributed to the anger of the gods: a prophet could tell the cause of their displeasure, and show how they could be appeased. A plague rages in the Achæan army; a prophet explains that it is due to the captivity of a priest's daughter: the captive is released, and the plague in consequence is stayed. Now the past and the present are both certain, and either known or unknown: if the future were regarded as equally certain, the prophet who foretold it would merely be gratifying curiosity, and indeed revealing what it was better should remain hidden. It may, however, be contingent: what the prophet may be able to foretell is not what must come about, but what will come about provided no steps be taken to avert it; he thereby becomes an announcer of the will of the Deity, and if the conduct of the king or the community is such as to bring about disaster, he feels a call to preach. The last of the Biblical prophets (if Agabus be excepted), John the Baptist, (according to the Synoptic Gospels) discharges this function: he foretells a judgment, in which it will go hard with the "chaff": the disaster can, however, be averted by repentance.

Mohammed's mission was similar: he is a warner

to the community of a disaster that is to befall them unless they accept his doctrine. Only the Biblical prophets were often miracle-workers: they could produce "signs", demonstrating their veracity. Some of them could raise the dead. We do not know how Mohammed's Meccan opponents learned that prophets possessed such powers: but the Qur'an records that they did clamour for signs, and even demanded that Mohammed should resuscitate their deceased ancestors in order to prove his doctrine of the resurrection of the body. These demands he had no authorization to grant; and this may be a reason why he preferred the title Apostle (*rasul*, messenger or ambassador), the person authorized to communicate the Divine will. The Apostles of the New Testament certainly at times worked miracles: St. Paul even raised a dead man to life. But activities of this sort were less associated with the name Apostle than with the name prophet. He was primarily a preacher, the proclaimer of a doctrine, and only secondarily a worker of miracles. Hence the second proposition of the Islamic creed is "Mohammed is the Apostle of Allah", not "Mohammed is the Prophet of Allah".

Although the Israelites received such honourable mention, not only in Surahs of the Meccan period, the Prophet's experience at Medinah led him for a time to prefer Christians. "Thou shalt find," we read in a late Surah, "the most hostile to the Believers to be the Jews and the associators: and thou shalt find the most amicable to the Believers those who say that they are Nazarenes: that is because among them there are priests and monks, and they are not haughty.

When they hear what has been revealed to the Apostle, their eyes overflow with tears, knowing the truth (thereof): they say Lord, we believe, and write us with the witnesses." The monastic institution is mentioned with praise, only with some reservations, in another Surah: "We set in the hearts of his (Isa's) followers tenderness and mercy, and monasticism, which they invented, it not having been ordained by Us, but seeking the favour of Allah: neither did they observe it correctly." In the very late Surah ix the reference to monasticism is by no means eulogistic: "They (the Jews and Christians) have taken their doctors and their monks for lords instead of Allah." "Many of the (Jewish) doctors and monks eat people's property on false pretences and divert from the path of Allah."

These texts evidently represent different stages in the Prophet's relations with the communities. At Meccah, where there were few belonging to either community, perhaps casual visitors, he may well have received encouragement from them in his campaign against the pagan cults: he could call on them to attest the agreement of his revelations with what was to be found in their Bibles. Residence in Medinah, where there were tribes of Jews, shortly led to disputes and recriminations: such statements as that Moses was sent to Pharaoh, Haman, and Corah, doubtless provoked their ridicule: to acknowledge him as prophet was more than they could do. Relations steadily became worse: there was no cooperation between the Jewish tribes, and he was able to destroy them in detail.

Hostilities towards Christians began only after his conquests had extended to parts of Arabia where that system was established. He regarded his doctrine of the Unity of Allah as irreconcilable with what he supposed to be the tritheism of the Christians, i.e. the worship of Jesus and Mary in addition to that of Allah. He furnished his own doctrine of the Nature of Christ, disputes concerning which had split up the Christian community into mutually persecuting sects. He challenged a Christian deputation to settle the matter by a sort of ordeal — invocation of the Divine wrath on the side that was mistaken. Sprenger may be right in thinking that just as the Jews had been shocked by the inconsistency of the Qur'anic history with the statements of the Old Testament, so the Christians who came to Medinah expecting to find an ascetic, were horrified to find a prophet not only with a family, but with an ever increasing harem. But the claim now made for Islam to dominate over all other religions must in any case have led to hostility, whether the doctrinal differences had been small or great.

To one other religious community, which at the time must have had some hold on South Arabia, the Mazdians of Persia, there is only one allusion in the Qur'an, and that in a Surah supposed to be Meccan, where it is named as one of five sects whose differences will be settled on Judgment Day. According to the Tradition the revolt in South Arabia which had led to the overthrow of Abyssinian domination, of whose existence we have an authentic monument in one of the inscriptions on the mound of Marib, had achieved success by Persian aid: and the Persian government

had regarded Medinah itself as within its jurisdiction. Not long after the Prophet's death the Muslims invaded Persia, and made a fairly easy conquest of the country. The Mazdians had sacred books, but the Qur'an scarcely furnished an answer to the question whether these should or should not be ranked with the Jewish and Christian Scriptures.

The claim of Islam to dominate all other religions led to a division of the world which was merely an expansion of that which had its beginnings in Meccah, into "the home of Islam" and "the home of war": any non-Muslim state which claimed independence was ipso facto at war with the Islamic state. The *jihad*, war for the subjection of unbelievers, became a duty of the Islamic government, in the Prophet's time at Medinah incumbent on all Muslims physically capable of taking part in it, at a later time reckoned among duties incumbent on the community as a whole. In quite recent times a Muslim sect has come into existence which regards jihad as a struggle only with spiritual foes.

According to the Qur'an the sexes are not equal: "the men have a rank above them (the women)," the men being guardians of the women in virtue of the superiority which Allah has assigned the one over the other. This indeed would seem to be in the proportion of two to one, since the general law of inheritance gives the male heir double of what goes to a female. Moreover disobedience in a wife may be punished with blows. It is not clear whether the number of wives permissible is actually fixed by the Qur'an: the words "marry such women as you

please, in twos and threes and fours" are taken by the Sunnis to limit the number of them to four, but it looks like a series implying an etc. Its relation to the preceding part of the sentence "if ye are afraid of dealing unjustly with the orphans" is exceedingly obscure, but need not be discussed here. It is, however, noteworthy that if the Sunni interpretation be correct, the disproportion between the value of the sexes for matrimony is double that of the disproportion for inheritance.

A further division of mankind is into free and enslaved. The latter are spoken of as "what your right hands possess", and no limit is prescribed for the number of slave concubines. Only a believing slave or slave-girl is said to be superior to an "associating" (pagan) man or woman (who is free). Whereas marriage of a Muslim woman to an "associator", here equivalent to non-Muslim, is forbidden, that of a Muslim man to a woman of a tolerated community is permitted: the tolerated communities being "those who were given the Book before you", i.e. Jews and Christians. The marriage gift is in this case no less necessary than when the bride is a Muslim.

In this regulation we find the beginnings of a principle recognized in later Islam, according to which the husband must be at least equal in rank to the wife, whereas the wife need not be equal in social status to the husband.

Differences of rank are recognized in the Qur'an: "He (Allah) it is who has made you successors of the earth (probably successors of other communities in possession of it), and has raised some of you above

others in rank that He might test you in that which he has given you," doubtless to see what use they make of it. In an earlier passage we read, in answer to the complaint that the revelation should have been made to a distinguished man, "Do they allot the mercy of thy Lord? We have allotted their livelihood between them in the present life and have raised some of them above others in rank so that some might take others as servitors" — that the difference is mainly one of wealth is indicated by what follows "now the mercy of thy Lord is better than what they amass". The difference of rank based on possession of property is, therefore, to be recognized as a divine institution: only the inference, that Allah would bestow the gift of prophecy on one of higher rather than on one of lower rank, is rejected. For this assessment of rank another is presently substituted: "verily the most honourable among you with Allah is the most pious".

Islam did indeed produce ideas of nobility of which only the beginnings are found in the Qur'an. The privileges assigned to the Prophet as he became head of a powerful state were similar to those which other potentates enjoyed: he was not to be addressed like others, but more respectfully; people were not to come to his meals without invitation, and were to depart when the meal was over; women whom he had divorced were not to be married by others. The Prophet's wives received the honourable title "Mothers of the Believers". His family thereby acquired the status of a royal family, and though a hereditary dynasty did not arise before the advent to power of his fifth successor, the first four were all connected

with him by marriage. Thus there arose a new nobility, constituted by descent either from the Prophet himself, through his daughter Fatimah, or from his believing uncle 'Abbas, whose descendants according to Sunni theory inherited his throne. To a lesser extent descent from the more eminent of his associates constituted nobility, though the actual titles indicative of it were reserved for those who could trace their pedigree to one or other of his grandsons.

Of an ecclesiastical hierarchy, such as the Christian Church had developed at an early period, and is not wanting in the Mosaic system, the Qur'an contains no indication, and Islam has never had any institution which could be designated a priesthood. The Qur'an indeed speaks of "those that are in authority among you", and "those that are well grounded in knowledge", "the learned" ('ulama), said to be the only persons who fear Allah. These, however, do not constitute any order, any more than experts do with a modern community. The requirements of the growing state led to the appointment of persons to carry out particular duties, among them instruction of converts in such portions of the Qur'an as entered into the ritual, known as the "Readers" or "Reciters", at first persons who had memorized them, at a later period when particular modes of reading and intoning had acquired sanctity, those who had acquired these by special training. But though the institution of public worship involved the presence of leaders in prayer and preachers, any Muslim who possessed the necessary knowledge was qualified for these duties.

It is perhaps surprising that in a work in which we

can trace the growing importance of the military element, there is absolutely no indication of a hierarchy of officers. "Allah" we read in a late Surah "loves those who fight in His path in close formation, like a building whose stones are bound together with lead". Bitter reproaches are launched against those Bedouin who made excuses for not taking part in the Prophet's campaigns. It might be supposed that for success in war, which depends largely on the maintenance of discipline, officers of different grades were a necessity, and such of course existed in those Roman armies which even before the Prophet's death the Muslims had to face. On such matters the Qur'an is silent, and from the tradition we can gather no more than that the element was not the regiment, but the tribe, whose shaikh presumably was responsible for the communication and execution of orders. And this tribal organization seems to have lasted till under the third Islamic dynasty a standing army was substituted for hordes.

In the pre-Islamic communities besides the important distinction between free men and slaves there was one between membership of a tribe and attachment to it, the latter being a status indicated by a word which is fairly accurately rendered by "client", which in Roman law is largely used of manumitted slaves. Similar status was acquired in Arabia by persons who for some reason or other had fled from their own tribes and obtained the protection of another. As will presently be seen the manumission of slaves is recommended in the Qur'an as an act of piety, and it further approves the practice whereby a slave could purchase his freedom by instalments of money. Now

just as in the Gospels we find the Saviour's mission confined to Israelites, and only at a later stage extended to Gentiles, who indeed become the true Israel, so the Prophet's mission is at first to "his nearest clan", and since its being in the language of the people to whom it is addressed is emphasized and even defended, it seems a just inference that its extension beyond the Arabs was not contemplated till the Prophet's realm had acquired very considerable dimensions. There seems to be no reason for doubting that before his death he sent letters to the potentates of whom he had heard, telling them that safety could only be secured by acceptance of Islam; and since the Qur'an contains the maxim "the Believers are brothers" or "brethren", it might be argued that nationality would make no difference in the status of any convert to Islam. By a series of extraordinary conquests the Islamic empire after the Prophet's death was extended to foreign countries, and except where Christianity or perhaps Zoroastrianism was the national religion the choice offered by the conquerors was between Islam and the sword. This naturally led to conversions on a vast scale, especially in Persia, but the Arab conquerors were unwilling to grant these converts equal rights with themselves, giving them instead the status of clients, to which various humiliating conditions were attached. For a time then the Arab was a privileged person, and though with the rise of the Abbasid dynasty, whose cause had been won by warriors from Khorasan, the tables were to a certain extent turned, as it became safe to demonstrate that the Arabs so far from being the highest were the lowest of nations,

still many a foreigner continued to have an Arab pedigree devised for him, and reward those who could attest it.

The domination of Islam was indeed to be secured by victory in the field: "Weaken not neither invite to peace, when ye have the upper hand and Allah is with you"; "Weaken not neither grieve, seeing that ye have the upper hand if ye believe" — this latter passage is addressed to those who had been discouraged by the Meccan victory at Uhud in the third year of the Migration. Alternations between victory and defeat were to be expected, but an occasional experience of the latter did not affect the ultimate result. And this is in accordance with a sort of philosophy of history, not unlike that which some find first expressed in the Book of Daniel, though something similar is to be read in Plato's *Laws*. It is that there is a succession of dominating communities "That is a community which has passed away, to it appertains what it wrought and to you what you have wrought." "We have not destroyed any town, but it had an ascertained writing: no community shall anticipate its term neither shall they postpone it." "Every community has its term, and when the term comes they shall not postpone it by an hour neither shall they anticipate it." Thus, it would seem, the ascendancy of Pharaoh's people came to an end with the mission of Moses, that of the Israelites with the mission of 'Isa. Thus Allah promises 'Isa to make the latter's followers prevail over those who disbelieved till the Day of Resurrection. Similarly the Believers who do good works, i.e. the Muslims, are promised

that Allah will make them "successors in the earth" as He made those who preceded them, which in the case of the Israelites according to the Qur'an meant inheritance of both the East and the West: a proposition for which some justification might be found in the Psalms. Such hegemony would seem ordinarily to have been established by a prophet, and if the epithet "seal of the prophets" applied to Mohammed is rightly interpreted as "the final prophet", it may be supposed that his system is to be superseded by no other, and to be dominant till the world's end. That catastrophe in early Surahs is represented as imminent: later on it recedes from view.

Psychology is scarcely to be found in the Qur'an, since even the philosophical distinction between soul and body is barely hinted at. One who inferred from the maxim "every soul shall taste of death" that the Qur'an denied the immortality of the soul would be misunderstanding it: "soul" in this context means only "living being". Life was indeed introduced into Adam by inflation of Allah's spirit, but death does not seem to be explained as the departure of this from the body. The seat of both intelligence and the emotions is clearly the heart. The Qur'an was brought down to Mohammed's heart. The eyes of the unbelievers are not blind, rather are the hearts blind which are in their breasts. Hardness of heart means obstinacy: the hearts of the Israelites were harder than stone: this is the Qur'anic equivalent of the Biblical 'stiff-necked'. Another word, which is identical with that used for "heart" in Hebrew and Aramaic, seems to be employed in the Qur'an exclusively in

the sense of intelligence: it is always preceded by a word meaning "persons possessed of", whence we might infer that it could correctly be rendered "brains", for which the language has an equivalent, not found in the Qur'an. Yet a third word is supposed to mean "heart", regularly associated with sight and hearing, apparently as the organ of intelligence, but also the seat of emotions and of courage: thus our own colloquial use of the word "heart" is in some respects similarly to that of the Qur'anic synonyms, except that of intelligence we do not speak of heart, but of brain.

"Expansion of the breast," a phrase which meets us frequently, seems to mean increase of receptivity, usually applied to belief, but once to unbelief. For the latter, however, "narrowing of the breast" which also occurs would seem to be more appropriate, though the comparison of one so affected to a man who tries to ascend into heaven has given trouble to the commentators: perhaps the word rendered "heaven" should rather be rendered "ceiling", and the reference is to strangulation. It is the breast which harbours rancour, and is healed by the gratification of revenge. It can be narrowed by vexation.

Some importance is assigned in the language of the Qur'an to the face. A Muslim is one who surrenders his face to Allah: on judgment Day the faces of the damned will be black, those of the saved white: when these texts were communicated we must suppose that Islam had few, if any, negro adherents. The faces of those who entered Paradise would not be afflicted with poverty nor humiliation. The faces of the evildoers will be as though they were covered with

pieces of the night. The face of Allah is used in the sense of the favour or the person of the Deity: men can spend money "seeking the face of Allah"; everything on the earth will perish, and only the face of Allah remain.

One other part of the body to which some significance is assigned is the neck. "To every man's neck We have attached his bird" is a text which has given the commentators serious trouble. The most plausible explanation is that the bird means the fortune, since we hear a good deal of divination from the flight of birds, and elsewhere in the Qur'an the word is used in some similar sense. What it has to do with the neck is less clear.

The views of the human character expressed in the Qur'an are somewhat unfavourable. Man is ungrateful to his Lord, miserly, hasty, indeed created out of haste: ignorant, iniquitous: the most litigious of things, unbelieving. When trouble overtakes them at sea they have no one to invoke save Allah: when they get safely to shore they discard Him. The same is the case when it befalls on land: they implore Allah in all postures of prayer, and when the trouble is removed, go their way as though they had never uttered a prayer. According to another passage: "When We bestow bounty upon a man he turns aside, and when evil befalls him, he despairs."

Since, as has been seen, the main, if not the whole, purpose of creation is said to be the service of mankind, the question arises: What is the ulterior purpose for which mankind and the institutions needed for their maintenance and comfort were created? Plato's

solution that it was for the amusement of the gods is rejected by the Qur'an: "Think ye," it asks, "that We have only created you for amusement?" "We did not create the heavens and the earth with what is between them for sport; had We wished to play a game, We should have taken one from hard by (?), had such been Our intention." No, there must have been some serious purpose, and this is told us in another Surah: "I created not the jinn and mankind but in order that they should serve Me. I want from them no sustenance, neither want I that they should feed Me." Although, as will be seen, sacrifice, which in many ancient religions was the normal form of worship, has left one trace in Islam, the idea that the deity was sustained by this sort of food is rejected here and elsewhere. The service for which jinn and mankind were created is the execution of orders. The character which the Qur'an ascribes to the human race, and which is illustrated by the narratives which it iterates, can scarcely lead to any other conclusion than that the difference between the Platonic and the Qur'anic solutions of the problem is negligible. It must be said in the Prophet's favour that though his revelations luxuriate in torments, there is no evidence that he himself took any pleasure in inflicting them.

## IV

### *ETHICS*

THERE are numerous passages in the Qur'an which furnish a series of commandments for conduct, or an enumeration of virtuous acts, in which recommendations are mixed with injunctions, justifying the distinction drawn by later Muslim jurists between what is enjoined and what is recommended, what is forbidden and what is disapproved. The following may be taken as examples of such lists (Surah vi. 152).

Say: Come, let me recite what Allah has forbidden you:

1. Associating anything with Him.
2. (He enjoins) kindness to parents.
3. Ye shall not slay your children by reason of poverty: We shall sustain you and them.
4. Ye shall not approach foul proceedings, the external thereof and the internal.
5. Ye shall not slay the soul which Allah has declared sacrosanct except for due cause.
6. Ye shall not approach the property of the orphan except with such action as is better, until he attains puberty.
7. Use true measures and weights.
8. When ye speak, be just, even were it (about) a relation.
9. Keep Allah's covenant.

When after the taking of Meccah various women came to be received into the Islamic community, the Prophet made the following conditions (Surah lx. 12).

O Prophet, when believing women come to profess allegiance to thee (they shall do so) on condition that:

1. They shall associate nothing with Allah.
2. They shall not steal.
3. They shall not commit sexual offence.
4. They shall not slay their children.
5. They shall not produce any falsehood which they fabricate between their hands and their feet (variously interpreted, e.g. of fathering supposititious children on their husbands).
6. They shall not disobey thee in any matter that is right.

In Surah xvii. 24-40 the former of these lists is repeated with some explanations and additions: the whole is here described as "the wisdom", a term which occurs frequently in the Qur'an, and of which the import is somewhat uncertain. The passage is as follows:

Thy Lord hath decreed that:

1. Ye shall worship none save Him.
2. Kindness to parents. If one or both of them attain old age, thou shalt not say "Fie" to them, neither rebuke them, but speak generously to them, and lower unto them the wing of humility, out of mercy, and say: "Lord, have mercy on them, even as they reared me when I was small;" your Lord knows best what is in your souls if ye be pious, for He forgives those that repent.
3. And give his due to the relative, the poor man, and the vagrant, only squander not: they that squander

are brethren of the Satans, and Satan was ungrateful to his Lord. And if thou shouldst turn away from them seeking mercy which thou hopest from thy Lord, speak gently unto them. Set not thy hand chained to thy neck neither stretch it out to the utmost, lest thou sit censured and remorseful. Verily thy Lord extends sustenance to whom He will and He is able to do this: verily He hath knowledge and insight concerning His servants.

4. And slay not your children for fear of poverty: We shall sustain you and them. Verily slaying them is a capital error.
5. And approach not sexual sin, verily it is a foul thing and an evil course.
6. And slay not the soul which Allah hath declared sacrosanct except for due cause. If one be slain wrongfully, we have assigned to his next of kin authority, and let him not be extravagant in slaughter, for he is worthy of help.
7. And approach not the property of the orphan except with such action as is better until he attains puberty.
8. And keep the covenant — verily the covenant is demanded.
9. And give full measure when ye measure out, and weigh with a correct balance: that is better and fairer in the long run.
10. And pursue not that whereof thou hast no knowledge: verily the hearing, the sight, and the heart — all these there is responsibility concerning.
11. And walk not on the ground proudly. Verily thou shalt not penetrate the ground, nor attain the mountains in altitude.

That which is evil in all this is disapproved with thy Lord. This is some of the wisdom which thy Lord hath revealed unto thee.

It will be seen that these lists of commandments have much in common with the Biblical Decalogue, but both omit and add. They agree in putting monotheism at the head of the list: respect for parents comes second in the Qur'anic lists, fifth in the Decalogue. Both forbid murder, though the Qur'an restricts this to certain cases, and sexual irregularity. Theft is forbidden in the abridged code for women, whereas in the longer code only certain forms of dishonesty are specified as unlawful.

The prohibition of images and pictures which is emphasized in the second commandment of the Decalogue is not found clearly in the Qur'an, though perhaps the words found in one list "and avoid the foulness of idols" may have that meaning: commentators point out that Solomon (a prophet) had images made for him by the jinn, and 'Isa (also a prophet) made of clay figures resembling birds, to which he gave life. Still the Tradition according to which the Prophet destroyed both images and pictures is probably trustworthy, and images till quite recent times were forbidden in Islamic countries, while some communities permitted art in two dimensions.

The Sabbath which occupies the fourth place in the Decalogue was according to the Qur'an only enjoined on those "who differed about it (or him, Abraham)", a phrase of which the exact import is uncertain, but in any case means that it was not part of the code of Abraham, which the Prophet claimed to restore. For the Saturday which is the Jewish day of rest the Qur'an substitutes Friday, but only for the time in which public worship is being performed:

"When there is the call to prayer on the Friday, hasten to make mention of Allah, and cease selling that is better for you if ye only know. But when prayer is over, spread about the land and seek of Allah's bounty." This doubtless means "go about your business as usual". The choice of the Friday was intended to separate the Muslim community from the Christian no less than from the Jewish. Possibly the loose observance by Christians of the Sunday as compared with the rigidity of the Jewish Sabbath was regarded as one of the relaxations which the Qur'an regards as belonging to the mission of 'Isa. The rule for the observance of the Friday relaxes still further.

The injunction of kindness to parents underwent modification. In the instructions of Luqman to his son, which resemble those translated above, he is careful to add: "If they urge thee to associate with Me that whereof thou hast no knowledge, obey them not, only be kindly in thy association with them," but when the refugees in Medinah were in constant war with their Meccan relatives, the treatment to be given to unbelieving parents and relatives became harsher: "Take not your parents nor your brethren for friends if they prefer unbelief to belief: whoso among you befriend them are evildoers." The Believers are forbidden to ask forgiveness for the associators even if they are closely related, Abraham's having done so for his father is, as we have seen, excused, but not to be taken as a model. Indeed Abraham seems to have gone as far as to say "Fie" to his parent (xxi. 67). He and his fellow-believers were to be a

model in declaring that there was perpetual enmity between them and their relatives until the latter believed. The believers are not to make friends of unbelievers in preference to believers; if they do so they are out of all relation with Allah. Particularly they are warned not to make friends of Jews and Christians: whosoever makes friends of them is one of them.

The prohibition of killing is restricted to the case of those who are sacrosanct, i.e. believers; where such killing has occurred unintentionally, certain modes of atonement, partly by payment, are specified. The rule that a believer shall not suffer death for killing an unbeliever, though not stated in the Qur'an, seems to be a correct inference from it. Indeed killing may be said to be regarded as a civil rather than as a criminal offence, various rates of payment for it being prescribed according to the religion and status of the parties.

It is noteworthy that a form of atonement for involuntary homicide is manumission of a believing slave, and the same act serves as atonement in some other cases of transgression. Clearly then manumission of a slave is regarded as a pious act: but to argue thence that the Qur'an discourages the institution of slavery is to introduce an idea which has no place in it. The institution is assumed: those who make concubines of their slave-girls are said to incur no blame. The purchase of freedom by slaves is regulated. The humane ordinance whereby a slave concubine acquires certain rights by motherhood is not found in the Qur'an, and is indeed based on the statement in

Genesis that Ishmael's mother was a woman of this status to which the Qur'an itself contains no allusion. Ishmael being regarded as the ancestor of the Prophet, the Muslim jurists did not accept the principle whereby his inferiority to Isaac was assumed, as appears in the narrative which St. Paul supposed to be allegorical.

According to ii. 216 the Prophet was to be asked about wine and the arrow-game, a form of gambling which the archæologists are unable to describe very clearly but which seems to have been a common diversion of the pre-Islamic Arabs. He was to reply that "there was in them great guilt and utility for mankind, only the guilt was greater than the utility". In another passage nothing is said of the utility: they are both of them expedients employed by Satan for causing enmity and hatred, and diverting from the mention of Allah. The occasion for the prohibition of wine is said to have been some disorderliness occasioned by excessive drinking after the battle of Badr; but the fact that wine enters into the religious rites of both Jews and Christians rendered the prohibition of value for the Prophet's purpose. It was also a notable departure from the practice of the pagan Arabs, whose poets — at any rate in the odes ascribed to them — boast of squandering their resources in the purchase of liquor, tell us whence the best wine came, and how the cup should be passed. The Hebrew phrase for "profligate" retains an old participle of an Arabic verb meaning "to buy wine". The reason given in the Qur'an for both these prohibitions is no doubt adequate; moreover the arrow-game is likely to have had distinctly pagan associations.

Though the keeping of covenants as enjoined in these codes is a prohibition of perjury, resembling the third commandment of the Decalogue, this enactment was modified after a time. This is stated distinctly in a Surah of the Medinah period "Allah has ordained for you the solution of your oaths", the reference being to v. 91, where the use of an oath merely as an expletive is regarded as negligible, but violation of a serious oath demands atonement, a meal of the normal sort to ten poor persons, manumission of a slave, or the like. The Tradition assigns to the Prophet a maxim: "If a man takes an oath and presently thinks some other course (than that to which he has sworn) better, let him make atonement for the oath and do that better thing." Whether this tradition be genuine or not, it seems to be an adequate statement of Qur'anic doctrine, and this is not the place to discuss what it involves. Clearly it modifies the ordinance of the Decalogue against taking the Divine Name in vain, in two ways. On the one hand it permits the use of an oath as an expletive, and indeed Sprenger's observation that no Arab can utter ten words without an oath is scarcely an exaggeration; on the other hand it gives the person who has taken an oath the choice between keeping it and violating it.

When the Hebrew prophets denounce the slaying of children the reference is to a religious practice common, it would seem, among the Canaanites, and of which the Mosaic legislation preserves some traces. That which is forbidden in the passages of the Qur'an translated above is infanticide for economic reasons; the conditions imposed on women employ a word

which should certainly include male children, and according to a tradition it was so interpreted at the time, though this practice does not seem to be otherwise recognized. Elsewhere in the Qur'an the form of killing is said to be burying alive, and the infants female: according to xvi. 61, when the birth of a daughter was announced, the father's face blackened, and he hid himself for shame, hesitating whether to rear the infant in humiliation or to hide it in the ground. The reason alleged in the prohibition is fear of poverty, which Allah promises to avert. To what extent this crime was prevalent in the community addressed by the Prophet we have no means of ascertaining: the archæologists regard it as the practice of certain tribes only. In a Surah which bears the mark of an early Meccan period one of the events of the Last Day will be that the girl who had been buried alive will be asked for what sin she had been slain, whence we cannot doubt that the practice was a familiar one at the time, though it does not seem to have seriously affected the female population of a polygamous community. Its prohibition is justly regarded as a valuable reform.

Muslim writers claim that the Qur'anic legislation first gave women the right of inheritance, though this seems refuted by the tradition that the Prophet's first wife, Khadijah, was an heiress. Probably the legislation which fixed the proportion of the estate which was to fall to widows and daughters, or other female relatives, regulated and enforced what had previously been optional.

A legal marriage required a wedding gift from the

bridegroom to the bride, which she retains if divorced. As with the Jews and the nations of classical antiquity divorce was an easy matter, at any rate for the husband. The Prophet at one time contemplated divorcing all his wives and replacing them. The matter forms the subject of several passages, especially a number of verses in Surah ii. 226-232, where the expression is not free from obscurity, but which are generally understood to mean that if the formula "I divorce thee" be pronounced twice only, it may be revoked, but becomes binding if it be pronounced three times, and the parties can only be remarried if the wife has in the interval been married to and divorced by someone else. From another Surah we learn that if a particular formula be employed, before the parties can remarry atonement must be made even more serious than that required for the violation of an oath. Provisions of various sorts are made to prevent hardships, into which we need not enter; a woman can obtain a divorce by returning her wedding gift, an improvement on the Jewish law, which, according to Josephus, gave the wife no means of divorcing her husband.

It was rightly observed by Sir William Muir that these facilities for the dissolution of marriage rendered the veil desirable; hence there are strict rules as to the class of men to whom the women may exhibit their "ornament", a phrase which is thought to mean such parts of the person as are ornamented, certainly including the face. The technical term "the screen" from behind which men who are not near relations may address women is employed in one late Surah. It is unlikely that the veiling of women was an in-

novation of Islam: this is not, however, a matter on which we could expect any light from epigraphy, which is almost our only source for the antiquities of pre-Islamic Arabia.

If this legislation offers strangers few or no opportunities for falling in love, the evidence which it requires for infidelity in the case of wives is such as only in exceptional cases could be procured. One Surah (xxiv) is mainly devoted to the defence of the Prophet's young and favourite wife, 'A'ishah, from a slander of the sort: a slander which had a powerful effect on the future history of Islam, since there is no doubt that the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, 'Ali, had something to do with circulating it, and the resentment harboured by 'A'ishah made her a bitter enemy of 'Ali: when after three of the Prophet's Companions had been raised to the Caliphate over his head he accepted the office from the murderers of the third, 'A'ishah helped to start a rebellion against him, and actually took part in a battle, which however he won. This family quarrel started the division of Islam into sunnah and shi'ah (the party of 'Ali), which survives to this day, and has at times led to persecutions and hostilities.

The punishment for adultery in the Qur'an is a hundred stripes for each party, and incapacity for marriage except with persons similarly convicted or "associators". The penalty for bringing a charge of the sort against a woman with fewer than four witnesses is little less severe: eighty stripes and forfeiture of the right to give evidence. Where, however, the accuser is the husband, the matter is to be settled

by oaths, where the wife can clear herself by swearing to her innocence the same number of times (five) as the husband swears to her guilt — unless indeed he can produce four witnesses. This is one of the matters on which the Tradition is inconsistent with the Qur'an, as according to the former the punishment of the guilty parties should be stoning, which according to a narrative found in some copies of the Fourth Gospel was practised by the Jews, though it is not found prescribed in the Mosaic law, which merely requires death without specification of the form.

An enactment which has seriously affected the economy of the Islamic countries is the prohibition of usury, the taking of interest on loans. The Jews are rebuked for taking it when they had been forbidden by the Mosaic law to do so: the Believers are forbidden to take it "many times over", and indeed to take it at all: the plea that sale is not different from usury, i.e. that each is a case of making profit on money — is rejected on the ground that Allah has permitted the former, but forbidden the latter. In the passage which contains this prohibition the taking of usury, interest on money, is contrasted with the bestowal of alms: indeed the alternative recommended is spending money by night and by day, secretly and openly. The doctrine of the mediæval Church was identical, and the consequences to the community equally serious.

Charity is indeed constantly enjoined in the Qur'an, sometimes as "lending Allah a good loan", a phrase for which there is authority in the Old Testament, but which nevertheless provoked the mirth of Medinese Jews, who asked whether they were rich and Allah

poor, and were answered with a violent rejoinder. The recommendation of lavish expenditure is unusual: in the lengthiest of the codes cited above a middle course is advised: the hand is not to be fastened to the neck, nor to be stretched out fully. "The servants of the Rahman are those who when they spend (i.e. give in charity) do not lavish, neither do they stint, but something between the two." Indeed a word which means "the extravagant" is used almost as a synonym for unbelievers.

Although the Tradition, not the Qur'an, contains the sentiment that the middle course in all things is the best, it represents very fairly the teaching of the latter. The "People of the Book" are told not to be fanatical in their religion: indeed the practice which is ordinarily regarded as characteristic of the Shi'ah sect, concealment of one's religion when confession of it involves danger, has authority in a Qur'anic text. An example of this principle is to be found in the theory of retaliation. The Mosaic rule "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" &c. is quoted, but only as given to the Israelites: demanding life for life is said to be a condition of existence, only it should be done with moderation; a murder should not be avenged by a massacre. Similarly among the virtuous are reckoned those who when they suffer injustice protect themselves, inflicting the same amount of mischief as they have sustained; if they forgive the offence, Allah will reward them. A trifling amount of even capital offences will be forgiven.

The principle of moderation in all things can be traced in the amount of toleration extended to op-

ponents of Islam, though here there is much variety due to the vicissitudes of the Prophet's career. In a Surah assigned to the Meccan period Noah prays "Lord, leave not on earth a single unbeliever; for if Thou leavest them, they will seduce Thy servants, and not generate any but evil-doers and unbelievers." Power had to be acquired before the execution of such a plan was a practicable proposition, and indeed while the system was slowly gaining adherents, the gentlest measures in dealing with opposition are recommended. The believers are told to return good for evil; to exercise kindly forgiveness: to argue with opponents in the way that is better (i.e. with courtesy): "When thou findest people discussing Our texts, turn away from them till they plunge into some other topic." "Bid the believers forgive those who hope not for the days of Allah;" the associates (i.e. the pagan objects of worship) are not to be reviled, lest their worshippers revile Allah. We are reminded of Josephus, who writing in pagan Rome finds a Mosaic law forbidding the abuse of pagan deities, whereas his contemporary Pliny with more justice speaks of the Jews as notorious for their contempt of the gods.

With the Migration this attitude is not immediately abandoned: a distinction is made between those Meccans who had taken part in the expulsion of the Prophet and his followers, and those who had not done so: there was to be no objection to friendly treatment of the latter. In Surah ii, which is made up of matter belonging to different Medinese periods, the believers are told to forgive those Jews who would like to bring them back to unbelief, " until the com-

mand of Allah comes" — when more drastic measures would be in place.

Towards the end of the Prophet's career an injunction is given quite in accordance with Noah's prayer: "When the sacred months are ended slay the associators wheresoever ye find them." "When ye meet those that disbelieve, behead them, until ye have made a massacre of them, and then make fast their bonds: after which either be gracious or take ransom." "A prophet has no right to take prisoners till he has made a massacre in the land."

There is indeed a text found in two Surahs which states that, "Those who have Judaized and the Christians and the Sabians, whosoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good, they have their reward with their Lord, there is no fear upon them, neither shall they grieve". This would seem to exclude from the penalty three non-Muslim communities, Jews, Christians, and Sabians — more probably the sect established in Harran than the Mandæans of Mesopotamia, with whom they have been identified: according to the tradition Mohammed was supposed by his Meccan opponents to have adopted Sabianism, a system practising certain rites which formed part of the Islamic ritual. It is, however, clear from the Qur'an that at any rate Jews and Christians earn the epithet "associators", whence some skill would be required to harmonize this text with "the text of the Sword", were it not that by a special enactment the "People of the Book", i.e. Jews and Christians were assigned a certain degree of toleration: in ix. 29 the Muslims are bidden not to slay them, but to fight

with them until they humbly pay tribute. In accordance with this order the Islamic system recognized two communities as having the right to exist: the Muslims, who were to be dominant, and the People of the Book who were to be subjugated: all others were to be exterminated. The technical term for the tolerated communities, "People of the Covenant", which is used in later literature, is not found in the Qur'an, though the word used for Covenant occurs. The Covenant means the promise to pay tribute and submit to such other regulations as the dominant community imposed. It seems clear that the Prophet had no intention of banishing these tolerated sects from Arabia, and in charters ascribed to him the free exercise of their religion is stipulated: his second successor, Omar, banished them all from the peninsula of Arabia.

In accordance with the principle of moderation in all things asceticism was not encouraged by the Prophet, though we are told that some of his followers were in favour of it, and the mystical Orders called Sufis, which practise different forms of it, often claim origin from the heroes of early Islam. A Surah enumerates as things desired "women, children, hundred-pound weights of gold and silver, pedigree horses, cattle, agricultural land"; the tradition makes him select women and scent as the most desirable things in this world. It also makes him disapprove certain luxuries, such as silken raiment and silver plate. His ring was of iron. Although his followers accumulated fortunes, as the plunder of whole countries reached Medinah, court luxury came in with the establishment of a hereditary dynasty.

Dietary laws form an important part of the Jewish code, and the Qur'an asserts that the prohibition of various good foods was a punishment to the Israelites for atrocities of which they were guilty, and that it had been part of the mission of 'Isa (Jesus) to abrogate some of these taboos. The list of forbidden foods repeatedly given in the Qur'an resembles that which the Church of Jerusalem according to the Acts sent to Gentile converts: "that ye abstain from meat offered to idols and from blood, and from things strangled": in Surah vi the list of forbidden foods is "what has died a natural death, or blood spilt, or swine's flesh, or unclean meat which has been consecrated to other than Allah": this is repeated in two other passages, but in the Medinese Surah v there is some further specification: to the above four are added "what has been strangled, what has been beaten to death, what has died of a fall, or been gored by another animal, or partly eaten by another". The camel and the horse were too important sources of food to the Bedouin to permit of the Mosaic law which tabooed them to be adopted: but swine's flesh was to be no less of an abomination to the Muslims than to the Jews. The food of those to whom the Book had been given (Jews and Christians) was declared lawful for Muslims and vice versa. This probably refers to the mode of slaughter. Other Semitic communities beside the Jews tabooed the pig, as we learn from classical authority, and what is told us of the Sabians of Harran: whether the pre-Islamic Arabs did the like is unknown. Where the hungry had no other food available the use of these prohibited meats was pardonable.

Ethics cannot easily be separated from ritual, with which indeed the Muslim law-books commence. It is remarkable that the Qur'an contains no mention of the Abrahamic rite, which however is practised by Muslims, the age being that at which it was according to the Biblical narrative performed on Ishmael, not infancy as in the case of Isaac. It is likely to have been a pre-Islamic practice in the case at any rate of some tribes, and is sometimes called Sunnah, a word which originally was used for pre-Islamic practice not abrogated by Islam, though presently it came to signify the Prophet's practice as recorded by tradition in distinction from Qur'anic enactments. The omission of this subject is surprising, since Mohammed claimed to be recalling his countrymen to the religious system of Abraham, who, it rightly asserts, was not a Jew; he is described as a Hanif, and not one of the associators. Hence Hanif is used by early writers as a synonym for Muslim. The word is one of the puzzles of the Qur'an, which seems in one place to explain it as "a follower of natural religion": this is expanded by a tradition into the doctrine that every child is naturally a Muslim and only made Jew or Christian, &c., by its parents. The Hebrew word which most resembles Hanif in the Old Testament means "impure" or "impious", in the language of the Rabbis "hypocrite"; the Syriac word which resembles it means "heathen", and is said to have been applied in particular to the community of Harran, called by Muslim writers Sabians. Abraham is said to have invented the name Muslim, which is explained as "one who surrenders his face to Allah": the word according to the Qur'an

had already been employed by Noah, and was employed by later monotheists; the Egyptian magicians who were converted by the miracle of Moses designate themselves Muslims, and likewise the Apostles who were "helpers" of 'Isa. Nevertheless in several passages Mohammed himself is commanded to be "the first of the Muslims" — perhaps with reference to the Meccan community.

From passages in the Qur'an and doubtless from the practice of the Prophet when ruler of a state the later jurists enucleated the Canons or main principles of Islam. They are five in number.

1. The Creed or Attestation, wherein the proposition that there is no god but (if not) Allah is followed by another, that Mohammed is Allah's messenger, i.e. the sole source whence the will of Allah can be known. It is true that the sacred books of Jews and Christians are described as guidance sent down by Allah, and confirmed by the Qur'an; yet this concession is rendered ineffective by the charge brought against the Jews of corrupting their Torah, and afterwards against the Christians in reference to the Gospel; a charge on which the jurists based the rejection of all non-Muslims as witnesses in a court of law: if they could not be trusted not to tamper with their sacred books, how could any reliance be placed on their evidence? The Prophet is said to have discouraged or actually prohibited the study of these Scriptures; the later literature surprises us sometimes by its knowledge, sometimes by its ignorance of their contents. Thus the names of Eve, Abel and Cain (the latter transformed into Cabil), Shem, Ham, and Japheth, which

are not mentioned in the Qur'an, are familiar to Arabic authors; Ezekiel and Daniel, who also are not mentioned, meet us occasionally. There is moreover a whole collection of passages found in the Old and the New Testament interpreted as foretelling the mission of Mohammed, made by converts to Islam, but repeated by Muslim writers. But even without the belief that the texts of the Scriptures had been willfully corrupted, the Qur'an which claims to contain "a detailed account of everything", wherein nothing is neglected, would have rendered the earlier books superfluous.

Although then Muslim jurists discuss the question whether they are bound by previous revelations, so far as these are not abrogated by the Qur'an, orthodoxy restricts this inquiry to the case of laws quoted in the Qur'an as belonging to them.

Short as is the Islamic equivalent for the Creed, it involves the whole Islamic system, since according to it Mohammed is not *an* Apostle but *The* Apostle of Allah, the message which he brought being the Qur'an: pronunciation of this formula involves the acceptance of the Qur'an as the Word of God, which is the phrase whereby it is quoted.

2. Prayer, or perhaps we should say Liturgy, since like our own it is not confined to petitions, but includes reading of the Sacred Book and praise. The specification of five daily liturgies with accurate fixation of the times of day assigned them is not found in the Qur'an, which has only vaguer phrases like "praise Allah in the evening and the morning", "before sunrise and before sunset, and in the hours of the night and ends

of the day": one passage in a late Surah which mentions the prayer of dawn and the prayer of evening, comes near the canonical practice. At an early period of the Prophet's mission the time spent in devotion seems to have been much longer: "the night save a little, half thereof or a little less", and there is added subsequently "only a third". The tradition supposes the number of five liturgies to have been prescribed to the Prophet during his ascent into heaven, an event of which the foundation seems to be a verse of the Qur'an wherein Allah is said to have "taken His servant by night from the sacred Mosque (the sanctuary at Meccah) to the farthest Mosque, around which We have blessed", supposed to mean the Temple area at Jerusalem.

The postures of worship, standing up, bending over, and prostration with the forehead on the ground, are similarly mentioned in the Qur'an, but their assignation to different parts of the service seems to have been a gradual process. The "Muslims have their sign on their faces from the effect of prostration": both the Torah and the Gospel are cited for this, but the references are uncertain. Kneeling in the Qur'an is only mentioned in connexion with the Day of Judgment, when mankind and the demons will be gathered kneeling round Gehenna. This is said to be the attitude of those who are being judged.

Prayer is to be made in a state of legal cleanness, the amount of the body to be washed differing according to minor or major uncleanness. Hence mosques are provided with lavatories in which these rites can be performed. That water was not always easily pro-

curable by the community addressed might be inferred by the perpetual description of Paradise as a place beneath which rivers flow. When it could not be obtained for legal purification sand might be employed as a substitute. We learn from some pre-Islamic inscriptions that the religion of the time prescribed some ceremonial washing.

The direction of prayer which, having been first towards Jerusalem, was afterwards towards Meccah, is of great importance: it would appear that the compass was used for determining it before it was employed for navigation.

The liturgy is measured by the number of inclinations of the body, reduction of the number being permitted under certain circumstances. Allowance too is made for infirmities.

3. The Fasting Month. There is only one passage of the Qur'an wherein this is prescribed, and it is there asserted that fasting had also been ordained for "those that were before you", apparently the Jewish and Christian communities. With both these fasting was (and still to a certain extent is) regarded as an act of piety: the Jewish idea of fasting is abstention for a whole day from food: the Christians at some time took to observing Lent, a period of forty days, as a sort of fast, which however does not mean abstention from all food, but only from particular viands. The practice instituted in the Qur'an is a combination of these two: complete abstinence from food and drink from sunrise to sunset for the whole of a lunar month, Ramadan, the ninth in the Muslim year. It was chosen because the Qur'an was sent down therein,

probably meaning that the first revelation came down in it. Since the lunar year bears no relation to the seasons, it shifts as the years pass from summer to winter. If for some adequate reason the Muslim is excused from observing the fast during this month, he may substitute an equal number of days from some other.

4. The Pilgrimage. This is visitation of the pre-Islamic sanctuary in Meccah, called the Ka'bah, with the performance of a number of ceremonies occupying the first ten days of the last month of the year, called Dhu'l-Hijjah, "that of the Pilgrimage". This is the one month of the whole series whose name is also found in pre-Islamic inscriptions: but of course it does not follow that the Ka'bah was the sanctuary which was visited by all the communities. Whereas prayer is a daily duty, fasting a yearly one, once in a lifetime is sufficient for the pilgrimage, though pious men often repeat it. We have in English quite a number of volumes describing the ceremonies written by Englishmen who have participated therein, with some risk to themselves if they had not previously joined the Muslim community: for though there is a difference of opinion among the law-schools as to the admission of non-Muslims to a mosque, there is none about their exclusion from the sacred city. The most celebrated of these narratives is the brilliant journal of Sir Richard Burton, whose example inspired Count Maltzan, who adopted the ingenious expedient of borrowing the personality of an Algerian Muslim, enabling him to give a consistent account of himself. Some years ago a work was published with

the title *Christians at Meccah*, summarizing the travels of these visitors, whose number has since been swollen.

It is doubtless the teaching of the Qur'an which designated the Ka'bah as "the first House established for men", and found thereby the footprint of Abraham, who according to the book raised its pillars assisted by his son Ishmael. It is implied that the region was sanctuary like the Israelitish cities of Refuge, though how far this was recognized in pre-Islamic times cannot be determined. The instructions given to Abraham on the subject are recorded in Surah xxii, thus: "Cleanse My House for those that make the circuit (thereof), and that stand, and incline themselves, prostrate themselves. And proclaim among mankind the Pilgrimage, they shall come to thee on foot and on any jaded beast from every distant path, that they may witness things profitable for them, and make mention of Allah's name on fixed days for the beasts fit for food wherewith He hath provided them — eat thereof and feed the wretched poor: then let them do away with their filth, pay their vows and make circuit of the Ancient House."

In ancient religions the chief method of propitiating the gods was by sacrifice, and sacrifice means ordinarily the slaughter of some living thing. One of the earliest narratives in Genesis records how an offering of fruits was rejected, one of animals accepted; and no statement in the Old Testament has given more trouble than Jeremiah's assertion that the Israelites, when they were rescued from Egyptian bondage, were given no instructions to sacrifice. According to the Pentateuch instructions on the subject were numerous and elabor-

ate —" without shedding of blood there was no remission of sin". The South Arabian inscriptions record vast slaughter of animals in honour of gods, and the northern tribes are likely to have done the like. Indeed the Qur'an charges the "associators" with giving preferential treatment to their "associates " in sacrifices of both cereals and animals over Allah, and even sacrificing children to the former. The Jews could no longer offer sacrifice, because by their system that could only be done in Jerusalem, which was no longer in their hands; and the Christians had abandoned the practice. That it meant in the main furnishing the Deity with food is both obvious and stated clearly by the prophet Ezekiel, but such a notion is unworthy of spiritual religion. One relic of the practice was retained by Islam in the ceremonies of the Pilgrimage. "The *budn* (camels sacrificed on this occasion) We have appointed for you among the rites of Allah: in them there is good for you, and mention Allah's name over them as they stand on their legs, and when their sides fall, eat of them and feed whosoever is willing or is in need thereof; thus have We put them in your power, perchance ye may be thankful." The interpretation, however, that this sacrifice was Allah's food is rejected in what immediately follows: "neither their flesh nor their blood will reach Allah, only piety on your part will reach Him".

The retention of sacrifice at the Pilgrimage, whereby an ancient rite was maintained, is comparable with the kissing of the Black Stone, in one of the walls of the Ka'bah, which is one of the ceremonies of the Pil-

grimage, though not mentioned in the Qur'an. Some of the Prophet's puritan followers are said to have disliked this: it certainly has the appearance of being a relic of stone worship, which seems to have played a considerable part in the pre-Islamic system.

5. Almsgiving. The pious in the Qur'an are frequently said to "spend from what We have bestowed upon them", and though there is no suggestion of community of goods between Believers, the maintenance of the community during its infancy and adolescence must have depended on the support of the poorer members by the wealthier. "Ye shall not attain unto charity until ye disburse of that which ye like," is a maxim which demands actual self-sacrifice: something more than merely giving away what is superfluous. The Qur'an, however, seems to leave it to the individual to bestow according to his means. Until more precise instructions were given charity could not be reckoned among the canons of Islam; hence the Tradition specifies the rate of taxation and the nature of the earnings on which it is to be levied.

These five duties were doubtless selected as constituent of Islam on the ground that they are incumbent on every Muslim, independently of sex and status. Other duties, such as the Sacred War, enjoining right and forbidding wrong, though incumbent on the community at large, are delegated to certain members of it.

There is perhaps no department of sociology about which the Qur'an contains so little guidance as politics. The maxim "Obey Allah and obey the Apostle" is

constantly urged, not only in Medinese Surahs: the two injunctions do not differ, since "who so obeys the Apostle obeys Allah", and only through the Apostle could the will of Allah be known. In a late Surah "those that are in authority among you" are added to those to whom obedience is enjoined, and to these reports of enemies' movements should be communicated. On the occasion of the Prophet's defeat at Uhud certain of his followers complained that they had no say in the direction of affairs, and alleged that if they had been allowed some, lives would not have been lost. Although the Qur'an replies that the direction belongs solely to Allah, and that men who are destined to die at a certain time will die in any case, some attention is paid to these complaints, as later on in the revelation the Prophet is told to consult them.

The Prophet then is dictator of the community, but has counsellors or councillors, whom he is advised to hear, though the decision rests entirely with himself. It is noteworthy that the Prophet had no vizier, since in the Qur'anic narratives of Moses, he asks and is permitted to have his brother Harun (Aaron) in that capacity. The institution, which afterwards was to be found in every Muslim court, was not introduced till long after the Prophet's time.

If the text of the Qur'an can be trusted, Mohammed contemplated the possibility that he might die or be slain, but it contains no provision for a successor. He himself, as the Qur'an admits, left no son: "Mohammed is not the father of any of your men," and the opinion that his cousin and son-in-law 'Ali was his "legatee", the successor appointed by himself,

was held by few at the time: the community acquiesced in the appointment of the companion known as the Faithful Friend, mentioned, though not by name, in the Qur'an as having shared his refuge in the cave during his migration or expulsion from Meccah, who was also the father of his favourite wife, in whose room he had died; he was succeeded by another father-in-law, and then by "the possessor of the Two Lights", a man who had married two of the Prophet's daughters. The succession was therefore in the Prophet's family, and even the founder of the first hereditary dynasty, son of his chief opponent, was his brother-in-law. The text which furnished a title to this aspirant after the murder of the third successor reads "if a Muslim be slain wrongfully, We have given authority to his next of kin (his natural avenger)": probably meaning authority to put the murderer to death. When the person murdered was the sovereign, it might be inferred that the sovereignty went to the avenger.

The name whereby the Islamic sovereigns were known, *khalifah*, "Caliph", occurs in a pre-Islamic inscription in the sense of deputy-governor, and appears to have been used in the Prophet's time of the deputy whom he left in charge at Medinah, when he himself was engaged on expeditions. In the Qur'an it is used of either Adam or man, who was to be created as Allah's deputy on earth, and of king David, who is enjoined to judge justly. As first applied to an Islamic sovereign it doubtless meant substitute for the Prophet, but in later times it is interpreted as Allah's deputy; a ribald Caliph might claim as "deputy of

Allah" to be superior to the Messenger of Allah, since a deputy was undoubtedly superior to an ambassador. But indeed there could be no substitute for the Prophet, as he was "the seal of the prophets", interpreted as meaning the one who closed the list.

The inscriptions of the pre-Islamic states, especially Kataban, reveal so much political development that the absence of allusions to such institutions as councils and public assemblies is surprising; but then the Qur'anic legislation is mainly occasional, replies to questions which required replies. The formula is "They shall ask thee" and the Prophet is told what reply he should give.

It does not come within the scope of our subject to consider to what extent the ethics of the Qur'an directed the conduct of the succeeding generations of Muslims. If Allah is said to have provoked enmity and hatred between the Christians until the Day of Judgment, the unity produced by the Prophet among his adherents even in his time was not quite unimpaired, and twenty-five years after his death civil wars broke out, sectarianism developed, and right gave way to might. Between the mediæval history of Christendom and that of Islam there is in this matter little difference: Christians are ceaselessly fighting Christians and Muslims Muslims, while war is going on between the two religious communities. Still the conduct of Muslims through that period and the scarcely more quiet time that followed did not diverge as widely from the precepts of the Qur'an as that of Christians from the Sermon on the Mount.

## V

### *ESCHATOLOGY*

BELIEF in the Last Day is a cardinal doctrine of Islam, and the Surahs of the Meccan period constantly quote the pagan arguers as ridiculing the idea of Resurrection: though in one text they admit that they and their fathers had been promised it before. The Prophet's opponents are at all periods of his career taunted with preferring the present life to the future. It followed that some idea of the difference in the future life which would result from belief and unbelief was desirable, and next to the unity of Allah there is no subject on which the Qur'an dilates more, or more repeatedly insists.

The moral to be drawn from what had happened to the opponents of other prophets was not so much that they were destined to Hell fire as that some disaster awaited them in the present world. The Meccans were threatened with the like, and as such catastrophe was slow in arriving they kept asking when it was going to happen. (This is repeated six times.) They were told that it would come suddenly, but only Allah knew when. They were advised not to try to hurry it. The assertion that the reckoning for mankind was near could be explained by the doctrine that what men thought distant Allah thought near,

and indeed in Allah's calculation one day was equal to a thousand years of theirs. Nevertheless the distinction between the immediate catastrophe and the final reckoning was at first vague, and was not finally elucidated till the opponents of the Prophet were successively subdued.

The commentators find the distinction between a temporary calamity and the final doom in the verse (xxxii. 21): "We shall give them a taste of the minor punishment besides (or before) the greater punishment, on the chance that they may return (repent)," and suppose the threat to have been realized in the form of a famine lasting seven years which overtook the Meccans. There is a text which certainly suggests that they did suffer some disaster which might be regarded as materialization of the threat, but had no effect on their conduct. This is xxiii. 78: "And assuredly We have afflicted them with punishment, but they did not yield to their Lord, neither do they humiliate themselves." It is not quite certain that this refers to some happening in the Meccan period, as a very similar passage occurs dealing with what had repeatedly happened to communities which rejected their prophets. The context, however, seems to belong to the treatment of Mohammed himself, and the form of the sentence best suits some contemporary event. The commentators have a story that Mohammed had, like Elijah, been stopping the rain, and that famine had resulted. It is quite likely that during the ten years of his preaching in Meccah either a famine or a pestilence had taken place, which he might regard as the penalty of their stubbornness. The disaster, however, of which

the Prophet had been told to warn his countrymen was a natural convulsion like that which had befallen 'Ad and Thamud. This was indeed so long in coming that the Prophet was warned that he might die before it came about. Some suppose that the text xlv. 14 "verily we shall remove the punishment a little" refers to the cessation of a famine owing to the Prophet's intercession.

The Last Day as foretold in the Qur'an has numerous appellations. "The Day of Judgment", in which the Hebrew sense of the word rendered Judgment is retained: in an early Surah it is treated as a strange expression, needing explanation. The gloss furnished is "The day when no soul shall possess anything for a(nother) soul, and the matter that day will be Allah's" — a gloss which certainly suggests that the sense to be given to the group DYN is rather the Arabic "debt" than the Hebrew "judgment": the day when there will indeed be general indebtedness, but Allah be the sole creditor: as indeed in the opening Surah, which as has been seen corresponds with the Paternoster, Allah is called according to one reading "Owner of (or on) the Day of DYN". Other names for it are: The Day of the Approaching; The Day of Reckoning; The Day of Mutual Invocation; The Day of Assembling; The Day of Separation; The Day of Resurrection (where the latter word is borrowed from the Syriac); The Hour — an expression which the Meccans professed not to understand; The Day of Menace; The Day of Perpetuity; The Day of Coming Forth; The Falling; The Day of Mutual Disillusion; The Certain; The Striking.

These various names correspond with different aspects of what is to take place at the time.

In the Gospel those that have done evil are threatened with Gehenna, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. This of course is the Hebrew *Gay Hinnom*, valley of Hinnom, where bodies were said to be burned, used by the Jews in New Testament times for the name of the place of punishment for the damned. Since neither the Greek nor the Syriac forms of the name retain the M, it would seem that the Qur'anic form *Jahannam* comes from the Hebrew. Very similar to this is another Qur'anic name for Hell, *Jahim*, which the Arabs derive from a verb of their own, said to mean "to burn". A third name is *Nar*, the usual Arabic for "fire". This is also the sense of a name *Sa'ir*. For two other names the Qur'an provides glosses: *Saqar* is explained as what will not spare nor leave, and scorches the skin. *Hutamah* is glossed as Allah's kindled fire, which will ascend to the hearts.

No assertion is of more frequent occurrence in the Qur'an than that the destination of unbelievers and indeed all opponents of the Prophet is Hell-fire, whereas that of the Believers is a garden or gardens beneath which rivers flow. Occasionally the garden is called Eden, more rarely by the Persian word which is the source of "Paradise". A name which also occurs is *Al-Ghurfa*, with plural *Ghuraf*, usually meaning "chamber"; and indeed in one place the destination of the pious is said to be "chambers with chambers above them built", apparently a building in many storeys, and that there are "degrees" of reward and punishment in both regions is stated.

The Last Day will be ushered in with a number of catastrophes. "When the sun is rolled up, when the stars are darkened, when the mountains are set in motion, when the she-camels that are about to bring forth are neglected, when the wild beasts are gathered together, when the seas are stirred up". "When the heavens split, when the stars are scattered, when the seas are set in motion, when the graves are overturned." The trumpet will be blown and indeed twice: at the first blast every one in heaven and earth will be thunderstruck, except those whom Allah will: then there will be a second blast, when all will stand up, gazing. The earth will shine with the light of its Lord, the Book will be set, prophets and witnesses will be brought and judgment declared. Either before or after the blowing of the trumpet the sky will emit smoke which will cover mankind.

Men's deeds will be weighed in scales. "Those whose scales are heavy " — whose good deeds outweigh their bad deeds — are the fortunate: "those whose scales are light" are the ruined. It would seem, however, that what will be put in the scales will not be every action, since the canceling of good deeds is frequently mentioned, and evil deeds too can be forgiven. Even such an offence as raising the voice above the Prophet's might cause the canceling of good deeds.

Another account of the scene distinguishes between those whose book will be put into their right hand who will want it to be read, or read it themselves, and those into whose left hand it will be placed, and who will wish that it had not been given to them at all. In

one text the book is said to be of the community rather than of the individual. It would seem to be written by Allah himself: "Verily We give life to the dead, and We write what they have done before and their efforts, and We have enumerated everything in a clear original." Elsewhere it is said to be written by angels the book of the evil-doers is said to be in *Sijjin*, a strange word glossed as "clearly written". That of the well-doers is in *Iliyyun*, to which the same gloss is given. The books will be brought out on Resurrection Day, and the person whose actions one records will find it unfolded. The wicked will say: Alas for this book, it omits no offence, small or great, but enumerates it. Any good deeds which they may have executed will be pulverized. On the other hand for evil deeds committed before repentance good deeds will be substituted.

It is probable that both the scales and the books are to be regarded as figurative, though it might not be quite easy to put what is meant into plain prose. Indeed the two figures seem to be mutually exclusive: for if the contents of the "books" settle into which hand they are to be placed, i.e. whether the individual is to be saved or damned, there would seem to be no function for the scales.

Although heaven and hell are the ultimate destinations, we learn something of what happens between death and judgment. Men are not to call those who have been slain in the Path of Allah (fighting unbelievers) dead, but alive: they are with their Lord, receiving sustenance, rejoicing in the bounty which Allah has bestowed upon them, and gratified with

the knowledge that those who have not yet followed them are free from fear and sorrow, gratified also with Allah's favour and bounty, and the knowledge that Allah does not let the Believers lose their reward. This is evidently before the "rising of the Hour", i.e. the arrival of the Day of Judgment. And similarly, it would seem, the evildoers are to have a foretaste of hell, as Pharaoh's folk are to be exposed to the Fire morning and evening, though only on Judgment Day shall the angels be told to send them to the severest punishment. The unbelievers ask to be sent back to this world where they may do better, but there is a barrier between.

The tradition records how the Prophet asked the corpses of the Meccans who had fallen at Badr whether they were now convinced of the truth of the Prophet's message. Asked by surprised followers whether the dead could hear and understand, he replied that they could. (This would seem to be inconsistent with the assertion in the Qur'an "Thou canst not make those hear who are in the tombs".) And indeed the further off the final reckoning receded, the greater the need for some immediate difference in the states of those who had fallen for and those who had fallen against Islam.

Even after the final judgment there is to be an intermediate state, to which several verses of Surah vii are devoted. "Between the two (the blest and the damned) there is a screen, and on the passes there are men who know each by his badge. To those who are inhabitants of Paradise they call Peace upon you! not (themselves) having entered it, only desiring (to

enter): and when their gaze is turned to the inhabitants of Hell, they say: Lord, set us not with the wrongdoers. The people on the passes call to men whom they know by their badge, saying: What has availed you your amassing and your pride? Are these the ones whom ye swore Allah would not reach with His mercy? Enter Paradise, there is no fear for you, neither shall ye grieve." The commentators seem rightly to hold that the "men of the passes are those whose good deeds just balance their evil deeds whence they are neither good enough for Paradise nor bad enough for Hell. Probably after some delay they will be admitted to the former.

Nevertheless the weighing of merits and demerits seems to be excluded in certain cases. Allah has promised believing men and women gardens beneath which rivers flow to abide in them for ever. The fire of Gehenna has been promised to hypocrites, male and female, and to unbelievers, and there they too are to abide for ever.

Descriptions of Hell and its torments are numerous. From one text we learn that it has seven gates, each one leading to a special part. There is a suggestion that the different names which we find for the abode of the damned belong to these seven gates respectively. The commentators suppose them to be separate storeys, similar to those of the heavens. They assign the lowest storey to the Hypocrites (those Medinese who, while ostensibly accepting Islam, secretly worked against the Prophet, otherwise called those in whose hearts there is sickness), the sixth to the "associators" or pagans, the fifth to the Mazdians, the fourth to the

Sabians, the third to the Christians, the second to the Jews, the topmost to Muslims who had committed offences. Whether this assignation goes back to the Prophet or not, it probably on the whole interprets the passage correctly. One would, however, have expected the Christians to be higher up than the Jews. The order comes near that of a list given in Surah xxii of those between whom Allah will settle on Resurrection Day. This list has not got the Hypocrites, a party which had not come into existence during the Meccan period to which this Surah is assigned. It agrees in putting the Jews second, but gives the third place to the Sabians and the fourth to the Christians. It is not probable that any order of merit or demerit was intended in the passage.

A whole dialogue between the weaklings and the magnates whom they charge with having misled them is reported in Surah xxxiv. The former will say to the latter: Had it not been for you, we should have been Believers. The magnates retort: Did we divert you from the guidance after it had come to you? Nay, ye were criminals! The weaklings make rejoinder: Nay, it was the plotting night and day, when ye bade us disbelieve in Allah and assign Him equals.

The state of the damned is sometimes depicted generally, at others in detail: examples of both may be cited.

xxiv 33. For them which disbelieve there is the fire of Gehenna, they shall not be dispatched so that they die, neither shall the torment thereof be lightened.

xxv. 13. When it (Hell) sees them from a distance, they will hear its growling and crackling, and when they are flung chained into a narrow spot thereof they shall cry "Ruin!"

xli. 18. They shall be gathered into Hell and be marshaled, until they shall have come to Us, when their eyes, ears, and skins shall testify to what they did. They shall say to their skins "Wherefore testify ye against us?" They shall reply: "Allah hath made us speak."

lvi. 40. The folk of the left, what of the folk of the left? They are in hot air and boiling water, with a shade of black smoke, such as is neither cool nor comforting. Then ye who go astray and disbelieve shall eat of a tree of Zaqqum (a tree whose roots are at the base of Hell, and whose fruit is like the heads of demons) and fill therewith your bellies: and drink upon it hot water like those whose thirst cannot be slaked. That will be their entertainment on the Day of Judgment.

Elsewhere the sole food of the damned is called *Ghislin* and *dari* (the latter a plant of the desert disliked by camels).

iv. 59. Each time that their skins are thoroughly roasted, We shall replace them with others, that they may taste the torment. xvii. 99. Whenever the fire burns low, fresh fuel will be added.

xxii. 20. For those that disbelieved garments of fire are cut out, the hot water shall be poured over their heads, wherewith their entrails and their skins shall be melted, and there shall be for them scourges of iron whensoever they would depart from it in

their pain, they shall be sent back thereto: "taste now the torture of burning". xxxix. 18. They shall have canopies of fire above them and below them.

Ixix. 31. After being thrown into Hell the damned person is to be loaded with a chain seventy cubits in length.

Some difficulty is occasioned by the statement that the unbelievers will be raised on their faces, blind, dumb, and deaf. There is something analogous to the parable of the wise and foolish virgins in lvii. 12, where the light of the Believers, male and female, will, we read, move in front of them, and the hypocrites, male and female, will ask leave to get a light from the Believers: but a wall will be raised between them, with a door, on the inside whereof there will be mercy, and on the outside torment.

Finally in an early Surah, where Saqar is explained, there is added "over it are nineteen", which in what is evidently a later addition is said to be the number of the angels on guard. Probably these are the same as the Zabaniyah, mentioned elsewhere, as having some duty in the infernal regions.

An endeavour has recently been made to show that Dante got some of the material for his Inferno from the Islamic Jahannam. There is, however, between the two the important difference that with the Italian poet different torments are assigned to different classes of evildoers, a system of which there is little or no trace in the Qur'an, whereas the idea of appropriate penalties is found in the Homeric Inferno (Odyssey xi), and separate treatment for different

crimes in that of the Apocryphal Acts of Thomas. In the constant references to future reward and punishment which permeate the Qur'an we rarely hear of any but the two classes, the blest and the damned: and the lesson which the reader's mind is most likely to retain is that the Muslim will enter Paradise, and the non-Muslim Hell. The stages of Hell, as has been seen, are thought to correspond not with different offences, but rather with different sects: "By thy Lord, We shall raise them with the demons, then we shall present them round Gehenna, kneeling, then we shall select from every party whichever of them is most rebellious against the Rahman." Of the two propositions the latter (that every non-Muslim is destined to damnation) is the view taken by the ordinary theology of Islam: to any such person the phrase "enemy of Allah" may be applied. Doughty tells us how in Arabia he was reproved for his "enmity to Allah"; when a Jewish physician is employed — and this profession was so monopolized by Jews, Christians, and Harranians that Muslims who wished to practice it were tempted to masquerade as members of one or other of these communities — the patient is being treated by an "enemy of Allah".

The other proposition (that every Muslim will enter Paradise) has no such general acceptance: as has been seen, the notion of purgatory, though by no means emphasized in the Qur'an, is not quite absent from it.

The descriptions of the delights of Paradise indicate some acquaintance with the luxuries of a court, or at any rate of the wealthy. Here are some

xviii. 30. They (those who have believed and wrought good works) shall have gardens of Eden with rivers flowing beneath them, wherein they shall be decked with golden bracelets and pearls and shall don green garments of silk and satin, reposing on couches.

xxiv. 31 (after the same as the above). They shall say: Praise be to Allah, who hath removed from us sorrow — who hath set us in the abiding place out of His bounty, where no weariness shall touch us, where there shall touch us no fatigue.

xxxvii. 40. They shall have appointed sustenance, fruits, being held in honour, in gardens of delight, on thrones facing each other, and there shall be passed round to them a cup from a fount, white, a pleasure to the drinkers, harbouring no harm, neither shall they be intoxicated therewith, and with them shall be (maidens) looking only on them, broad-eyed, like eggs hidden (in the sand).

In other places their female companions are called broad-eyed houris: xliv. 54. "Even so, and we have wedded them to broad-eyed houris."

The same description with some further details is found in lv. 46-78, where the clauses are separated by the refrain: "And which of your Lord's favours will ye deny?" The further details here are that there will be two gardens with trees and two springs flowing in them containing two sorts of every kind of fruit; the couches whereon they will rest are to be lined with brocade, and the fruit of the gardens will be near at hand. Further, the houris will resemble ruby and coral. In lii. 22, after the thrones and the houris and the company of their believing descendants there is added: "And we shall supply them with such fruit

and such meat as they shall desire. They shall hand to each other a cup wherein is no idle talk nor guilt, and there shall wait upon them lads of theirs like unto hidden pearls. And they shall accost and ask one another."

Something more is told us in lxxvi. 12 foll. "And for their patience He hath rewarded them with a garden and silk, wherein they shall repose on thrones, seeing therein neither sun nor chill (?), aye, a garden whose shades are nigh unto them, and whose fruits are subjected unto them; and wherein they shall be waited on with vessels of silver and tankards, (like) crystals, crystals of silver, of just measure; and wherein they shall be given to drink a cup flavoured with ginger, aye, a fount therein called Salsabil. And there shall wait on them lads immortal, when thou seest them thou fanciest them loose pearls. And when thou lookest there, thou seest delight, and mighty kingdom, covering them are green garments of brocade and shot silk, and they are decked with bracelets of silver, and given by their Lord pure liquor to drink".

Some further details are added to the description quoted from Surah lv, whence we learn that there will be two other gardens of lower rank than the first two: the springs of these will spout rather than flow: besides other fruit-trees there will be palms and pomegranates, and the blest will repose on green cushions and fair work of 'Abqar. Similarly in Surah lvi the "winners in the race" get greater delights than the "people of the right hand" — or at any rate this seems to be what is intended.

There are details about the houris which may be

omitted. In the main what the Believers are promised in the next world is the sort of life which the grandees of the Byzantine and Persian empires enjoyed in this. Caliphs and other Islamic potentates afterwards anticipated in this life the joys of Paradise.

Still just as we found that though the Qur'anic notion of the Deity is predominantly anthropomorphic, there are texts which seem rather pantheistic, so there are some verses in which Paradise is brought into connexion with something less material than the gratification of carnal desires. In addition to the gardens and the houris the Believers are occasionally promised "good will from Allah", and indeed in one text that is said to be the greatest of all, the mighty prize. These passages could be utilized for the teaching of the Sufis, the ascetics and pantheists of Islam, whose notion of absorption in the godhead could not easily be reconciled with these mundane enjoyments: the blest, according to them, would turn away with contempt from the silken raiment, the couches, and the wines. Still, a hell of torture, nauseous drink, and unappetizing food must have for its antithesis a heaven of creature comforts and royal luxury. So the Gehenna of the Gospel is contrasted with Jerusalem the golden, with milk and honey blest. That the state of both the saved and the damned is everlasting is repeatedly asserted. The former "Shall not taste therein (in Paradise) save the first death"; when the damned say "Lord, Thou hast caused us to die twice and to live twice", the first of these assertions gives trouble to the commentators.

There is no reason to doubt that both the threats

and the promises were taken literally by the Prophet's adherents, and since the delights of Paradise were to be secured by martyrdom, i.e. falling while fighting for the propagation of Islam, we may believe anecdotes of adherents who were not only ready, but even anxious to end their lives in this way. It would seem that fighting in the path of Allah was not to the taste of many members of the community, and the military spirit had to be encouraged by the most emphatic assurances that death or even defeat in the holy war would be rewarded with Paradise. "Let those fight in the path of Allah who would sell the present life for the future, and whosoever fights in the path of Allah and is slain or defeated, to him shall We give a grand reward." Scorn is poured on those who were thankful that by staying at home from an unsuccessful encounter they had escaped martyrdom, but indignant that they had not taken part in one which had resulted in the acquisition of booty.

Although the doctrine of the Last Day and the Final Judgment is nowhere abandoned, when Islam had drawn the sword and used it effectively, the promises and threats could not await fulfilment for a day whose date was incalculable. The Muslim who died on the battlefield must enter immediately into bliss: the unbelieving enemy into torment. But the man who takes part in a battle risks his life equally whether he falls or survives: if the former case earns Paradise, the latter must earn it also. Little room is therefore left for a Final Judgment, since Paradise is a place wherein the blest are to abide for ever: and the same is the case with Hell.

That the Qur'an maintains the resurrection of the body cannot be disputed: it is asserted in countless passages. It is not so easy to answer the question whether the Qur'an holds the immortality of the soul, though in one or two passages it seems to be represented as leaving the body at death. Still when the Qur'an declares that those who have been slain in the path of Allah are not dead, but alive, it adds "receiving sustenance", which is a function associated with the body: we receive no light on the relation of the personality, which in such a case survives, to the body which at the last day is to be raised from the dust. It was the latter doctrine which evoked the wonder and ridicule of the Meccans: there are reasons for thinking that they recognized some sort of survival of human personality.

Portrayals of the future life are, owing to the difficulties which we have seen and others, unsatisfactory and unconvincing, and the treatment of the subject in the Qur'an shows that it is somewhat easier to intimidate by devising tortures than to attract by enumerating pleasures; its Paradise, a combination of an everlasting tavern with (as Palgrave put it) an everlasting brothel, is by no means attractive to even every Arab: The notion of a body being constantly renewed simply for the purpose of enduring torment is indeed calculated to horrify: but a deity who proclaims such a purpose must be grimly jesting when he calls himself merciful.

The possibility of transmigration might seem to be suggested by the statement found three times in the Qur'an that certain Jews for violating the Sabbath

had been transformed into apes — once transformation into swine is recorded — and we occasionally hear of Muslim sects who believed in transmigration. The Qur'an once mentions it as a possibility in the case of unbelievers generally. It would be difficult to reconcile the doctrine with the matter that has been summarized above. For transmigration implies a fresh lease of life on earth whether in human or some other form: and this is precisely what, according to the Qur'an, the damned will desire but will be refused. There is, as has been seen, slightly more authority to be found in the Book for the Sufi doctrine of absorption: but the view that such absorption is meant when the Qur'an records the drowning of Pharaoh's hosts can commend itself only to mystics.

It would seem from the above that in spite of the frequency and the detail with which the future life is handled in the Qur'an the result is not more luminous than what is to be found in other infernos, from the Odyssey's early effort. The Muslim is one who believes in the unity of Allah and the last day; yet in the case of the Muslim "martyr", the last day is clearly the day of his death, since he is immediately transferred to Paradise. Further, since a sufficient number of human beings to fill Hell are predestined to go there, the final judgment is a case in which the verdict will precede the trial; the weighing of merits and demerits will be superfluous. The notes taken by the recording angels will, if accurate, be only copies of a book written before the creation of the world.

Just as the Tradition has copious details about the Prophet's ascent into heaven, about which the Qur'an

knows no more than that he was taken by night from "the sacred mosque" (the Ka'bah?) to "the farthest mosque" (the Temple in Jerusalem, which had been destroyed several hundred years before), and shown "some of Our signs", so it furnishes an abundant supplement to the eschatology of the sacred book. Tradition supplies details about the geography and topography of the next world which at times are traceable to hints in the Qur'an, whereas for others some foreign source is assumed. Thus whereas an early Surah begins, "Verily We have given thee the *Kauthar*," a word of which the sense was unknown to at any rate most hearers, some guessed that it meant "copious blessings", but others are able to find in it an interesting addition to the topography of Paradise: the Prophet, we are told, being asked for an explanation, stated that he had entered Paradise and there he saw a river whose banks were tents of pearl, and when he dipped his hand into the water, he found it to be "fragrant musk". He asked Gabriel what this was, and received the reply that it was the *Kauthar* which had been given the Prophet. Other traditions add to the description: its water is sweeter than honey, whiter than milk, colder than ice, softer than cream: its banks are of topaz, vessels of silver are provided for the drinker, who after a draught of the water will never thirst again. Some are satisfied with the explanation that it is a tank or pool in Paradise. Similarly when it is stated that on the Last Day *maubiq* will be placed between the "associators" and their "associates", and the natural sense of that word is somewhat inappropriate, someone discovered that it was

the name of a wadi in Hell. In these cases we have expansion of hints in the Qur'an; even more obscure are those which furnish the source of the *Sirat*, the bridge over Gehenna, thinner than a hair and sharper than a sword, over which the saved will pass with ease whereas the damned will fall down from it into the fire.

Among the delights of the Caliphs' courts, which though frequently associated with wine and houris is somewhat sublimer in character, was one not to be found in the Qur'anic Paradise, music. Similarly, though it is prominent in the religious services of both Jews and Christians, it has no place in the Qur'anic scheme of worship, and even the word which we might be tempted to render by "intone" is said to mean "pronounce clearly". There is no mention in the sacred book of any musical instrument, except indeed the Trumpet which is to be blown on the Last Day. Neither is there any allusion to vocal music: the Arabs have a word for the singing of a camel driver to encourage his beast, but it does not occur in the Qur'an. "Where", asks Doughty, "be the Aphrodisiastic modulations of the fair singing women in these Arabian deserts of the Time of Ignorance? The hareem sing not in their new Arabian austerity of a masculine religion." The introduction at a later period of music into the liturgies of some Sufi Orders with the institution of concerts met with violent opposition from orthodox theologians, who at times demanded the destruction of musical instruments. Since some of the delights of Paradise are forbidden to Believers in this world, e.g. wine, vessels of silver,

silken raiment, it might have been expected that the sort of music to which Doughty refers, and which is described in ostensibly pre-Islamic poetry, might have been included in the list. Its absence is probably to be connected with the attitude taken by the Prophet towards poetry, which is so closely associated with music that "to sing" often means no more than to compose in verse. The charge of being a poet is rejected by the Prophet with vehemence; Allah had not taught him the art of versification, neither did he require it. The little that is said about poets in the Surah which bears their name is in condemnation of them. Although what professes to be pre-Islamic poetry has so little in it that savours of paganism that a scholar of mark has maintained that most, if not all, of its authors were Christians, it is probable that the poets with whom Mohammed was acquainted in the early part of his prophetic career were exponents and advocates of the national religion, and therefore hostile; when to the title prophet he could add those of sovereign and conqueror, like other monarchs he had a court poet, and converts sought his favour by presentation of poetical eulogies. The tradition, however, asserts that he himself had absolutely no ear for verse, and this may account for his Paradise not including a pleasure in which he would not have participated.

There is indeed an oft-quoted tradition according to which the Prophet admitted that there was wisdom in poetry, and some surprise is occasioned by the Meccans supposing him to be a poet, whereas he disclaimed the appellation, which implies that he was

better acquainted with the difference between prose and verse than they. Some theologians dislike the application of the term for rhymed prose, which does not occur in the Qur'an, to its style: that, however, the rhyme is intentional is obvious and even demonstrable.

## VI

### *PRE-ISLAMIC HISTORY*

THE Qur'an repeatedly claims that it confirms the contents of earlier revelations, of which it names some four: the Taurat, doubtless the Torah of the Jews, which, though properly applied to the Pentateuch, is often used for the whole Old Testament: the Injil, probably from the Ethiopic Vangel, a shortened form of the Greek Euangelion, which we render Gospel: the Zabur, a word related to the Syriac name for the Psalms, but apparently accommodated to an Arabic word used in ostensibly pre-Islamic poetry for writings on stone: and the Furqan, which bears some resemblance to Pirqe (construct state of Peraqim), the name of some treatises containing Sayings of the Jewish Fathers. The Psalter is actually cited in the Qur'an xxi. 105 for the text (xxxvii. 11) "The meek shall inherit the earth", though the citation is not quite accurate and is otherwise problematic. Similarly the Torah is quoted in v. 49 for the law of talio, life for life, eye for eye, &c., as found in Exodus xxi. 23, 24, with fair accuracy. The same Surah contains a quotation of "what We wrote for the Children of Israel" which is similar to something to be found in the Rabbinic Tradition. The extent to which the claim of the Qur'an to confirm the earlier Scriptures would be admitted varies with

people's ideas of accuracy. It records much of persons and events only known from the Jewish and Christian books, and, though it tells the stories in its own style, it is often in fair agreement with what they contain: it has narratives that are parallel with what is found in Genesis and Exodus, and a little which agrees with the historical books of the Old Testament: of the literary prophets it recognizes Jonah (Yunus). Further it has the story of Job. Of the New Testament it has matter which is similar to what is found in St. Luke's Gospel, and some which is found in Apocryphal Gospels. If the challenge addressed in the Qur'an to sceptics to ask "the People of the Book" who would confirm its veracity was accepted, a Jew or Christian who was asked if their Scriptures contained the story of creation in six days, of the Fall, of the Flood, of the drowning of Pharaoh's host, &c., the reply was certainly in the affirmative. If, however, the matter were submitted to close examination, differences, in certain cases quite serious, would be noticed.

Outside the scope of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, Apocrypha, and Tradition — to the last of which we may assign the story of the Seven Sleepers — the Qur'an tells about the Man of the two horns, who built the wall against Gog and Magog (Yajuj and Majuj); these two names are found in Ezekiel, and the Man of the two horns is ordinarily identified with Alexander the Great. Some narratives remain to which nothing analogous has as yet been discovered. The successors of the "people of Noah", the victims of the Flood, were the tribe 'Ad, of

excessive stature: to them a prophet Hud was sent, who warned them against the consequences of idolatry and unnecessary building. They rejected his admonition and were destroyed by a cold wind which blew for seven nights and eight days continuously. They were followed by the tribe Thamud, whose name is known to the classical geographers, and can be located in N.W. Arabia, where their residence, Mada'in Salih, called after their prophet Salih, has been visited in recent times and proved the source of archaeological material. They built palaces out of the plain and hewed themselves houses out of the mountains: these "houses" as we know from the inscriptions first copied by Doughty were tombs. In their story the camel, of which the Bedouin has been called the parasite, plays a part: the prophet warned the tribe not to interfere with Allah's camel, but disregarding his warning, they slew it, and were punished in consequence — a story which reminds one of the oxen of the Sun in the Odyssey.

In the Pentateuch Hobab the Midianite is called the father-in-law of Moses, and this name seems to be rightly identified with the Shu'aib of the Qur'an, the Syriac script accounting for the alteration. In the Qur'an Shu'aib figures as a prophet sent to the people of Midian, who appear to have been guilty of dishonesty in matters of weights and measures, of idolatry, and of waylaying travellers — of which the purpose is stated rather obscurely. They rejected the admonitions of the prophet, and were destroyed, apparently by either a cloudburst or an earthquake. In one place they are identified with "the people of

the Thicket", mentioned elsewhere among communities which had been destroyed for rejecting the warnings of the prophet sent them. Another community, called "the people of al-Hijr", whose story was similar, is identified by commentators with Thamud, on the ground that like that tribe they excavated for themselves houses in the mountains. The identification is in this case uncertain, since the text speaks of messengers in the plural being sent to al-Hijr, whereas we hear only of Salih in the case of Thamud. We have seen above that only conjectures could be offered for the location of a community called al-Rass, who also suffered for rejecting the warnings of divinely appointed messengers. On the other hand the "people of Tubba' " who also suffered the consequences of disbelief must be one of the South Arabian states. Epigraphy, which tells us much about the history of these states, furnishes no explanation of the Qur'anic allusion.

A story is told in xxxvi. 12-26 at some length of a city to which two messengers were sent, strengthened (afterwards?) with a third. The mission was in the main unsuccessful, but one convert was secured. As neither the city nor the messengers are named, the reference is obscure.

In lxviii. 17-32 there is a narrative about the owners of an orchard who, without making the exception "if Allah will", swore that they would gather the fruit of the orchard and give none to the poor. The orchard was denuded of its fruit during the night. Here too no names are mentioned.

A Surah, xxii, records the counsels given by Luqman to his son, this person being, if not a prophet, at least

a monotheist. The later literature assigns him a collection of fables, and has some information about him. He must be regarded as one of the puzzles of the Qur'an.

To the history of Arabia and the neighbouring countries during and before the rise of Islam there are some allusions. One, which perhaps enables us to date a Meccan Surah, states — according to the ordinary vocalization — that the Romans (i.e. the Byzantine Empire) have been defeated in the near land, but that they will at a later period be victorious. This most probably refers to the taking of Jerusalem by the Persians in A.D. 614, and the prophecy was fulfilled by the later victories of Heraclius. Since the Surah adds that "on that day the Believers will rejoice", the Prophet's attitude to the Christian power must at that time have been friendly. It is however possible to vocalize the consonants in such a way as to reverse the meaning. Oracles seem ordinarily to have been ambiguous.

To Arabian history there are a few references. In xxxiv. 14 something is said of Saba, the last and greatest of the South Arabian states, whose kings have left inscriptions which enable us to reconstruct their annals for many centuries. The Muslim historians inferred from the statement in the Qur'an that the realm had been ruined by the breach of the dam at the capital Marib, and that the people had in consequence been scattered far and wide. From inscriptions on the dam copied by the Austrian archaeologist Glaser, we learn that it had been repaired as late as the year A.D. 543, under the rule of the Christian viceroy of

the Abyssinian king, and it has been rightly observed that the ruin of a dam would be more likely to be the consequence than the cause of the ruin of a state. The narrative of the Qur'an is exceedingly obscure and epigraphy offers little in explanation of it.

An event which is the subject of some Christian literature and is thought to be that of some early verses in the Qur'an (lxxxv. 4-9) belongs to the brief period wherein Judaism — or some form of it — was dominant in S. Arabia. Some Christians were, according to the narratives, martyred by the Jewish ruler, being thrown into a flaming pit. The place was Najran, the Negrana of classical geographers, and the seat of a bishopric. The Qur'anic account is not in complete agreement with the Christian records, since according to the former the victims suffered for monotheism, whereas according to the latter they suffered for their Christian beliefs, which neither Muslims nor Jews would designate as monotheism.

The persecution of Arabian Christians is said to have led to Abyssinian interference, and it has been seen that within the sixth century South Arabia was under Abyssinian rule. An early Surah (cv) is thought to refer to an attempt made by an Abyssinian invader to take Meccah: he brought an elephant, whence his force is called "the folk of the Elephant", and the Surah records how the danger was miraculously averted by wonderful birds, which flung brickbats at the enemy. The Surah contains no names, and there has been considerable speculation as to the historical nucleus of this story; if Meccah was really invaded and the invader forced to withdraw, such an event

would be likely to be remembered, and the elephant, if one accompanied the enemy, would not be forgotten. The Surah which follows enjoins on the Prophet's tribe Quraish worship of the Lord of this House, doubtless meaning the Ka'bah, and it is possible that the connexion of the elephant with Meccah is due to this juxtaposition: and it is to be noted that elsewhere in the Qur'an, where the privileges of Meccah are recorded, nothing is said about this case of divine intervention on its behalf. Since Meccah enters into history with the Prophet's mission, and neither classical geographers nor Arabian epigraphy know anything about the place, the interpretation of the Qur'anic narrative is uncertain.

These would seem to be the only allusions which the Qur'an contains to recent history. If the Prophet's life prior to his mission had been spent in Meccah, this would not be surprising: the place is difficult of access, and was little likely to come in contact with the great empires of the time, the Byzantine and the Persian, whose politics affected the Arabs of the North and of the South. Hence only an occasional echo of some important event like the Persian conquest of Palestine would reach the ears of the inhabitants.

The tradition, however, that the Prophet was a traveller, is borne out by many a Qur'anic passage, which speaks of ships sailing the sea, and the dangers and discomforts endured by mariners: it mentions that Noah's ark remained as a sign, which would seem to be a reference to the supposed relics of the Ark on mount Ararat, called in the Qur'an Judi, and after recording the fate of the "people of Lot", adds

"ye pass by them at morning and night", which must mean that the sites of the cities were pointed out to travellers; put more clearly where it says "we have left thereof (of Lot's town) a clear sign for people that understand", i.e. traces that remain. The dwellings hewn in the rock by Thamud, which are mentioned repeatedly, are doubtless the tombs of Mada'in Salih with epitaphs first copied by Doughty, who fancied that the discovery that they were tombs, not houses, might discredit the Qur'an. Indeed the opponents of the Prophet are asked whether they have not travelled in the earth and seen what had happened to earlier peoples who had been of greater power and had left greater monuments than they. Hence the extreme scantiness of references to recent history with all its momentous occurrences in Arabia and elsewhere must occasion some surprise.

The narratives which occupy so much of the book are, as has been seen, similar to what is found in Jewish and Christian Scriptures: the charge that the Prophet had obtained them from those sources is indignantly repudiated. The agreement with the canonical Scriptures is indeed often very loose. It will be sufficient here to call attention either to additions to the Biblical narratives or to serious differences from them.

Of the miraculous birth of John (the Baptist), called, perhaps owing to the ambiguity of the Arabic script, Yahya, there is a sketch in the Meccan Surah xix, said to have been sent for recitation to the Abyssinian king who harboured some of the early refugees, and one somewhat more detailed in the Medinese Surah iii,

supposed to have been communicated to a delegation from the Christians of Najran. In this it is suggested that John's birth was later than that of Christ, which differs from the Gospel account. It is noteworthy that the Qur'an knows of the former only as a holy man and a prophet, and says nothing of his baptizing or being a forerunner of Jesus.

The Nativity of Jesus — called in the Qur'an 'Isa, a transposition of consonants for which many conjectures have been offered — is recorded with some detail in both these Surahs. The father of Mary — called by the Syriac form of her name, Maryam, is given the name 'Imran (Hebrew 'Amram), and she is addressed as sister of Harun (Aaron); clearly therefore she is identified with the Miriam who in the Exodus is sister of Moses and daughter of 'Amram. The story of her birth is told in fair agreement with the apocryphal *Protevangelium Jacobi Minoris*; but there are differences, since according to the Qur'an lots were drawn for her guardianship, an office which fell to Zachariah, whereas in the apocryphal gospel they are drawn for the choice of a husband for Mary. Some details which have been traced to pagan myths are to be found in Surah xix: she leans against a palm tree during the pangs of parturition, and her chastity is demonstrated by the newborn child speaking in the cradle. For the Christian doctrine of the fatherhood of God the Qur'an substitutes the assertion that the case of 'Isa was similar to that of Adam: each of them was created by a fiat out of the mould.

Besides the miracles of healing and raising the dead

which the canonical Gospels record, the Qur'an, in accordance with the apocryphal Gospel of Thomas the Israelite, states that 'Isa made figures of birds out of clay which, when he blew on them, became living birds "by the permission of Allah"; he could also tell people what they eat and what they store in their houses, which is reminiscent of the "whatever I did" of the woman of Samaria. He was also taught supernaturally "the scripture, the Wisdom, the Torah, and the Gospel". His mission besides the working of miracles was to abrogate some of the Mosaic prohibitions (of food), and to settle some of the matters on which his people differed.

The career of 'Isa is not followed closely in the Qur'an, but it would seem to have resembled in some respects that of Mohammed. When he perceived the unbelief of his contemporaries, he called for Helpers unto Allah (the sense of the preposition here is obscure): the Apostles, who are called by their Ethiopic name, responded. The Helpers — in Arabic *Ansar*, which would seem to be an etymology of the name Nazarene, for which in our time a somewhat similar origin has been suggested — seem like Mohammed's Ansar to have fought 'Isa's opponents and defeated them.<sup>1</sup> In a Medinese Surah the Jews are charged not only with slandering Maryam, but with falsely claiming to have slain 'Isa by crucifixion: this claim is vehemently repudiated, and said to be due to an illusion: the Jews were counterplotted by Allah, who raised 'Isa to heaven. It seems clear that this view of the matter is traceable to the doctrine of Basilides, according to whom Simon of Cyrene, who in the canonical Gospels

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<sup>1</sup> There is no relationship between the Hebrew root NAZAR and the Arabic root NASARA. The first word means to separate, consecrate or abstain from something. A Nazarite is one who is consecrated or set apart for God. The Arabic equivalent to NAZAR is NATHara (TH as in wiTH or THAT) which denotes a vow or a commitment. Whereas, Ansar in Arabic comes from the root NASARA, and it means to uphold, support, or to help someone achieve victory. [Footnote was not in the book. It has been added by the one who prepared this electronic document.]

carries the cross, was the person on whom the likeness of Jesus was cast, and who was crucified; Jesus watched the crucifixion and then ascended into heaven. A remarkable addition to the narrative is the prophecy that there is none of the People of the Book (the Jews) but before his death shall believe in 'Isa.

After the Ascension Allah, we read, asked 'Isa whether he had commanded people to take him and his mother as two deities besides Allah, and 'Isa replied that he had only commanded what he had been told to command, the worship of Allah.

Though, as has been seen, the Apostles are mentioned in the Qur'an, it records none of their names: a prophet whom it mentions has the name Idris, which may well represent Andreas (Andrew), but what is said about him scarcely suits the Apostle, knowledge of whom would surprise us in a work which ignores such important personages as Peter and Paul. In the Christology of the Qur'an we can trace some development due to increasing acquaintance with Christian beliefs. In the Meccan Surah xix to which some polemical matter was afterwards added, the infant 'Isa says, repeating what has been said of Yahya, "peace upon me the day I was born, and the day I shall die, and the day I shall be raised to life", a formula which ignores both the Christian and the Qur'anic view of the Ascension: in Surah iii, of which parts are as early as A.H. 3, whereas much is later, Allah says to 'Isa "I shall cause thee to die and shall raise thee unto Me"; in Surah iv, which is later still, the death of 'Isa is omitted: the Jews, it says, did not slay him, but Allah raised him.

The Surah which is called "The Table" derives its name from a miracle about which the Gospels are silent. The Apostles asked for a table to be sent down to them from heaven. 'Isa at first remonstrates, but on their insisting that they require this miracle for the food, for the satisfaction of their minds, and as evidence of 'Isa's veracity, he prays that such a table may be sent down, to be a feast for the first of us and the last, and to be a sign; and this prayer is granted by Allah, who threatens any who disbelieve thereafter with severe punishment. It seems that we have here a combined reminiscence of the feeding of the multitude and the institution of the Eucharist; somewhat as in another Surah the narratives of Gideon and Saul are inextricably mixed. The phrase "the Lord's Table" in connexion with the Eucharist is used by St. Paul. Another element may be derived from St. Peter's dream of a sheet containing all sorts of animals being let down from heaven.

It is surprising that whereas the Lucan narratives of the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus are twice reproduced in the Qur'an in detail with fair accuracy, so little else of the content of the New Testament has found its way into the Qur'an. The title Apostle taken by the founder of Islam cannot be dissociated from that which was borne by the first Christian missionaries; the Qur'an however calls them by their Ethiopic designation, at the sense of which its commentators make infelicitous guesses, seems to think of them as a fighting force, and knows none of them by name. If the monk Bahira is a historical personage, he must have been singularly secretive.

On the other hand the language of the Qur'an here and there exhibits the influence of New Testament phraseology. One of the epithets of Allah *muhaimin*, "faithful", is a Syriac word used in the Syriac version of the Pauline Epistles in a similar context. Its import is more obscure when applied to the Qur'an. The Arabic form of the same participle is used for Believers, i.e. converts to the new religion, which also is reminiscent of New Testament usage. St. Paul's phrase "the times of ignorance" has often been regarded as the origin of the word *jahiliyyah* applied to the pre-Islamic religions of Arabia: the verb whence it is derived can certainly mean "to be ignorant", but it has been observed that the sense "ferocity" is more in accordance with early usage. A remarkable borrowing of a phrase from the Gospel is in Surah vii. 38: "They shall not enter Paradise until the camel goes into the eye of a needle," where the same artifice has been employed by commentators to mollify the hyperbole as we find in the Christian exegesis. There seems to be a reference to the parable of the Sower, where the pious are compared to "sown corn that sendeth forth its shoot and strengtheneth it and riseth firm upon its stalk, delighting the sowers", for which the Gospel is quoted. "A grain of mustard seed" which is mentioned once is reminiscent of the Gospel, but the context in which it occurs is very different.

Much more of the narrative matter in the Qur'an is parallel to Old Testament history. It can be described as records of prophets and their missions: but whereas in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures a

prophet is a man in possession of mysterious information whether about the past, the present or the future, in the Qur'an he is a person empowered to teach monotheism. He has certain privileges, indeed he is the divinely appointed dictator of his community, but is not always given the power to work miracles. A number of Old Testament personages figure in the Qur'an as prophets and preachers who in the Hebrew Bible have no claim to either title. Thus in Surah xxvi, where the paragraphs are separated by the refrain "Verily therein was a sign, yet most of them did not believe, and verily thy Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful", a whole series of prophets, Moses, Abraham, Noah, Hud, Salih, Lot, Shu'aib, all deliver the same message, to a considerable extent in the same terms. Of these personages Abraham and Moses are styled prophets in the Old Testament, but the name is not given to Noah or Lot. A different list of prophets or messengers is given in Surah xxxvii, where the paragraphs about them terminate with the refrain "And We have left upon him in posterity 'Peace upon Noah,' &c. Thus do We reward the well-doers; verily he was one of our believing servants." The messengers enumerated are Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Moses and Aaron, Elias: to these from xl. 36 we must add Joseph, who was a messenger to the people of Egypt: and from other Surahs Jacob, Ishmael, Idris, the (twelve) tribes, Job, Aaron, Solomon, and David. Of some who appear in these lists a fair amount is told.

Muslim theologians regard Adam as a prophet, but this is not clearly stated in the Qur'an. The story

of Cain and Abel is told briefly without mention of their names, nor indeed of the nature of the sacrifices which they respectively offered, though that would seem to furnish the central idea of the narrative. According to the Qur'an when the one whose sacrifice was rejected threatens to kill the other, the latter declares that he will not attempt the like, in the first place for fear of Allah, in the second because he wishes his brother to bear the guilt of both, and be an inmate of Hell. (The commentators find a good deal that requires explaining away in Abel's retort.) After the murder has been committed Allah sent a raven to disturb the soil with the view of showing the murderer how to dispose of the corpse; the murderer was chagrined, not, it would seem, at having committed the crime, but at finding himself in possession of less intelligence than the raven. The detail of the raven comes from a Jewish comment on the Biblical narrative, and indeed the "writing of Allah" is here quoted for a deduction from it. The story told by the Rabbis makes the bird more helpful to Cain; having fought with and killed another raven the victor proceeded to bury the victim in the ground.

Abraham — whom we had best call by his Qur'anic name, Ibrahim — is the son of Azar, from whom he parts after vainly remonstrating with him for worshipping idols. As we have seen, his opposition to the prevailing idolatry was drastic: he smashed all the idols save an exceptionally large one, to whom he mockingly attributed the work. The idolators, resenting his conduct, decide to burn him: but Allah counterplots, bidding the fire "be cold and safety

for Ibrahim". (Some of this is traceable to Jewish Midrash, based on the name Ur of the Chaldæans.) Ibrahim with Lot are saved to the land "which We have blessed": this would appear to be Palestine, but at some time he must have gone to Meccah, where he "settled some of his offspring in a valley without vegetation by Thy Holy House"; the pillars of this house — the Ka'bah — were raised by Ibrahim with his son Isma'il, and the former left his footprint on a stone there.

The Qur'an leaves it doubtful whether Isma'il or Ishaq (Isaac) was in danger of being sacrificed by Ibrahim; the narrative of the affair does not differ materially from the account in Genesis.

It does not come within the scope of this study to offer an explanation of the attribution to Abraham of the Meccan establishment. If Mohammed was really called a Sabian by the Meccans, and by Sabian they meant one who followed the system of Harran where there may have been a cult of the patriarch, we might have expected Harran to be mentioned in the Qur'an, which is not the case. If on the other hand the connexion of Abraham with Meccah is based on the notion derived from Genesis that Ishmael was progenitor of the North Arabian tribes, it might be expected that Ishmael would have a more prominent place in the narratives of the Qur'an, which has no detail about him besides that mentioned above. There is a whole Surah which bears Ibrahim's name, and the story of his controversy with the idolators is frequently told. When late in life a son was born to the Prophet he called him Ibrahim, not Isma'il. The

religious system to which he claimed to be recalling the Meccans was that of Ibrahim.

Jacob chiefly figures in the story of Joseph, which occupies a whole Surah, and is called "the best of stories": to the Biblical narrative it adds some decidedly interesting details. When the wife of Potiphar (the Qur'an does not name either, but gives the latter the title "the Mighty") made improper advances to Joseph and the two ran to the door, Joseph's garment of which she had got hold was torn: each proceeded to charge the other with impropriety, but someone suggested that if the garment were torn in front the blame would be his, if from behind it would be hers, and the latter was found to have been the case. The lady's conduct was censured by Egyptian women, so she invited them to a banquet at which they were provided with knives. Joseph was then produced, and his beauty so entranced the women guests that they cut their hands. That, she said, is the person you censure me for loving!

Jacob became blind with weeping over Joseph and Benjamin when the latter had been retained in Egypt: Joseph sent his cloak, and when this was put over Jacob's face, the sight of the latter was restored.

Although there is much verbal repetition when the same narrative is told in different Surahs, the separate accounts at times contain details of their own, not always traceable to a Jewish source. Thus whereas the story of Salih the prophet of Thamud is told six times with mention of the camel which the tribesmen wickedly slew, only in xxvii. 49, 50, do we read about a conspiracy of nine persons who agreed to murder

Salih in the night, and then tell the relative who was bound to avenge his death that they had not witnessed it (apparently owing to the darkness). The story of Noah is told over and over again but only in Surah xi do we learn that a son of his declined to enter the Ark and was drowned: Noah remonstrated with Allah, but had to ask pardon for doing so. Only in Surah lxvi. 10 do we ascertain that Noah's wife was no better than Lot's: each of them betrayed her husband, and earned Hell fire.

Similarly the story of Moses and his dealings with Pharaoh is told many times with minor variations but Surah xl derives its name "The Believer" from a "believing man of the family of Pharaoh who had been concealing his faith", who advises Pharaoh against killing Moses and delivers a discourse which is quite indistinguishable from those uttered by the Qur'anic prophets. Here and in one other Surah we learn that Pharaoh commissioned his vizier Haman to build a tower so high that he would reach the guardhouse of heaven and obtain access to the god of Moses (if there was such a deity). This is the nearest allusion which we can find in the Qur'an to the Tower of Babel.

Some variations between the Qur'anic account of Moses and the Biblical narrative may be noticed. In Surah xxviii his being thrown into the Nile and subsequent adventures are in fair agreement with Exodus: only the wife of Pharaoh is substituted for the daughter as his adopted mother. Further, Moses attributes his slaughter of the Egyptian to the operation of Satan, and implores Allah's forgiveness for the act. The

seven daughters of the priest of Midian are reduced to two, and in order to obtain the hand of one of them Moses has to undertake service for eight or optionally ten years — a trait similar to the Biblical narrative not of Moses but of Jacob and Laban.

The number of the plagues, which in Exodus is put at ten, is reduced to nine, or perhaps seven, since two miracles, which were not plagues, seem to be included. Further, according to the Qur'an, the Egyptian magicians were converted to monotheism by the achievement of Moses, and were even prepared to suffer for their faith; a matter about which Exodus has no information. Another discrepancy of some importance is that whereas in the Bible the land which the Israelites acquire by right of inheritance is Palestine, in the Qur'an it seems to include Egypt, since the gardens, wells, and treasures of Pharaoh and his hosts were given as inheritance to the Children of Israel. Further, according to one Surah, Pharaoh himself is converted when about to drown, and though reproached for his misconduct is saved from the water. His wife must have been converted before, since she prayed that Allah might build for her a house in Paradise, and save her from Pharaoh and all his works. The house to be built in Paradise is a theme about which there is much in the Apocryphal Acts of Judas Thomas.

Of the Biblical history after the Exodus the notices in the Qur'an are more scanty. Into the episode of the golden calf a personage called the Samaritan is introduced; it is by his advice that the calf is made, and he explains that he had taken a pinch of the dust

from the footprints of Moses, and cast it, perhaps into the fire in which the ornaments borrowed from the Egyptians were smelted, and so produced a calf which lowed. Aaron, when rebuked by Moses, excuses himself for not intervening by his fear of causing dissension. The Samaritan is punished by Moses with being declared untouchable, and threatened with something worse in the future.

The second Surah, which is in some respects a resume of the teaching, takes its name "The Cow" from a dialogue between Moses and the Israelites, in which the latter, being ordered to sacrifice a cow, desire the former to obtain detail after detail from Allah, and only when answers to all their questions have been obtained agree that he is telling the truth.

The same Surah furnishes a narrative about Talut, who partly corresponds with the Biblical Gideon, partly with king Saul. He goes to war with the forces of Jalut (Goliath), who is slain by Dawud (David): it is to be noticed that all three names have the same grammatical form. To Dawud Allah gives the kingdom and the Wisdom, and teaches him some of the things he wanted to know. Among these we learn from an earlier Surah was the fabrication of cuirasses, iron being softened for him for the purpose. The story of the poor man's ewe lamb and the rich man's flock, which in the Biblical narrative is Nathan's parable, appears in the Qur'an as an actual case brought before David for decision: his judgment appears to be just, but he implores forgiveness, the reason for which is not explained in the Qur'an. The Biblical account of the affair seemed to the Muslims so inconsistent

with the character of a prophet that the Caliph 'Ali threatened anyone who repeated it with a hundred and sixty stripes.

Some of the Qur'anic information about Solomon has already been reproduced. In Surah xxvii there is an account of the Queen of Saba's visit to him, which differs from the Biblical narrative in many details. The Queen does not pay it because she has heard of Solomon's wisdom, but is peremptorily sent for by Solomon, who has heard that she reigns over worshippers of the sun. Her throne is brought to the king by "one who has knowledge of the Book", and is disguised in order that it may be seen whether she will recognize it: which she does with some hesitation. At first in lieu of coming she sends a gift which the king refuses, telling her that his possessions are superior to hers. She is taken into an edifice of glass which she mistakes for water, and when convinced of her mistake is converted to Islam.

To Solomon besides control over the jinn there was given power over the winds, which blew gently according to his direction, but violently to the land "whereon we have blessed": some further details are obscurely expressed, but the meaning seems to be that the wind could carry Solomon and his hosts in one morning or one evening a distance which would ordinarily occupy a whole month. He was also given a well of liquid copper. There is besides an account of his inspection of some fine horses, which has led to various interpretations, since some suppose that he slaughtered the horses, others that he merely patted them. The same passage records a temptation endured by this

king, but that too is obscure. Whereas in the Bible he is commended for praying for wisdom only, in the Qur'an he prays for a kingdom such as no successor of his should have.

Of Elijah there is a very brief notice in Surah xxxvii, where we learn that he unsuccessfully denounced the worship of Baal, and he with Elisha is mentioned in lists of saints. The story of Jonah is told in fair agreement with the book which bears his name, and his "people" are noticed as an exception to the rule that prophets are always disbelieved. That of Job (called Ayyub) is sketched with the detail that after his trial his family was given him with an equal number besides: in the Biblical account the children whom he had lost were not restored to him. There is a further detail which is not in the Biblical record. Job was told to strike with his foot when cold water for him to wash in would gush forth. And one which is exceedingly obscure is that he was told to take a sheaf into his hand and not perjure himself. He also figures in lists of prophets, and with this some Rabbis would agree, who even confer the title on his comforters.

In one Surah only does Moses divest himself of his character of prophet and preacher, and figures as a person who after promising to ask no questions is unable to restrain his curiosity. He started with his attendant on an expedition to the meeting place of the two seas: they had taken as provision for the journey a live fish. When they reached this place, and Moses wanted a meal, the attendant found that the fish, about which he had forgotten, had managed

to escape into the sea. On their homeward journey they found "one of Our servants to whom We had given mercy and on whom We had bestowed knowledge from Us". The Muslim tradition gives this personage the name al-Khidr, and he is by some identified with Elijah, or Elisha; Sufi saints at times claim to be in communication with him. Moses asks permission to follow him and receive instruction from him, which this Servant only consents to give when Moses has promised to ask no questions about anything which the former does till he explains it. They embark on a ship, which the Servant proceeds to scuttle. Moses forgets his promise and remonstrates. Reminded of his promise Moses apologizes, and presently they meet a lad, whom the Servant kills. Once again Moses breaks his promise and expresses his horror at the performance. Again reminded of it he offers to relieve the Servant of his company if he asks another question. They proceed with their journey, and coming to a town ask the people of it for food which is refused them. The Servant seeing a wall "wishing to collapse", puts it right, and Moses tells him that he might have demanded a fee for the service. The Servant tells Moses that he will have no more of his company, and proceeds to give the explanation of his conduct in each case.

In the later history of Islam we often hear of the Qass, who tells stories in the Mosque, partly for edification, but also to some extent for entertainment. That some of the narrative portions of the Qur'an might come under the latter category could be admitted even by Muslims: the stories of Joseph and

the ladies who wounded themselves, of Moses and his mysterious companion, of Solomon and the Queen of Saba, and some others might be described as tales of wonder and delight. It may be that the reason why that of Moses and the magicians is so frequently repeated is that it was found by experience to attract listeners, and might even be called for. Strict accuracy is not demanded from the "story-teller" — the sense which we ordinarily give the word indicates this — and though the identification of the Virgin Mary with the sister of Aaron, and the assertion that Moses was sent to Pharaoh, Haman, and Corah may bewilder the historian, parallels to them are to be found in works of such high reputation as Shakespeare's plays. Where the purpose is to entertain and to edify, instruction in history is at best a by-product, and of little importance. Quite at the end of his career, as shown in Surahs viii and ix, the Prophet abandoned story-telling: his messages are the rescripts of a ruler and need not be spiced with "the tales of the ancients", as his opponents used to designate his Surahs. The narrative form, however, seems to have dominated the revelations for the duration of the public mission at Meccah, and with the caution characteristic of the Prophet's activities he only slowly departed from it. It must, indeed, have been a serious annoyance to him at Medinah that there were Jewish scholars who could point out discrepancies between his Surahs and their Old Testament, and since the former claimed to be the Word of God, their presence constituted a perpetual danger. He is said to have forbidden consultation of their books, a step demanded in the

interest of self-preservation; for though there is no unsounder generalization than *magna est veritas et prævalebit*, such consultation might in some cases lead to apostasy. In a book of *Tales of the Sagacious* we read of a Jew who endeavoured to refute the Qur'an by quoting the Torah; he was silenced — if nothing worse happened to him — by the observation that the only Torah which a Muslim could recognize was one which was confirmed by the Qur'an. It is argued that since sacred books are literally the words of God, the latest revelation must be the most trustworthy: earlier editions, where they disagree with it, must have been either wilfully or accidentally corrupted.

Owing to the scantiness of Qur'anic allusions to the New Testament as compared with the frequency of its references to the Old, consultation of the latter by Muslim historians and theologians is not uncommonly found, whereas acquaintance with the former is rarely displayed. The desire to know more about the personages who figure in a sacred or even a classical work has repeatedly led to the composition of what may be called cyclical literature, such as grew up round the Homeric poems. The Apocryphal Gospels are mainly intended to gratify such a desire. In Islamic literature we have volumes called *Tales of the Prophets* which endeavour to satisfy this form of curiosity. *Israelitica* are often cited, especially by mystics, sometimes for matter to be found in the Old Testament, sometimes for such as has no place in it. Ingenuity has at times been exercised in providing substitutes for Biblical books mentioned in the Qur'an, e.g. the Psalms of David. In lieu of quotations from

the Gospels, which are infrequent, we find great numbers of sayings ascribed to 'Isa, for which there is no Christian authority, the greatest purveyor of such apocrypha being the famous theologian Ghazali in his *Revival of the Religious Sciences*. A more ambitious fabrication, the "Gospel of Barnabas", is preserved in Italian, but seems to have been unknown to the Muslim communities prior to its publication recently in that language.

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M. stands for Mohammed; Q. for Qur'an.

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