

difficulty of Ibn Saud's position is that the "Ikhwan" hate the Christian with a fierce hatred, and yet at the same time it is British support which has made possible the conquests of Ibn Saud with his "Ikhwan" army. Again and again in this book we see how great was the prejudice against Mr. Philby, in spite of all that Ibn Saud said and did, and in spite of money and presents distributed by Mr. Philby with an extremely lavish hand.

The book shows beyond a doubt that Mr. Philby has little faith in "Arab unity"—that dream of Sir Mark Sykes and a few others who have more enthusiasm for, than knowledge of, Arabia. It is impossible to read this book without realizing the hopeless antagonism between "The King of the Hejaz" and Ibn Saud, which after all, is only one of the antagonisms of Arabia. Meanwhile, Great Britain is helping both Hussein and Ibn Saud. There is no doubt that Ibn Saud's integrity is of a very high order, but just how great a strain his loyalty to Great Britain can stand, is one of the important phases of the question of Central Arabia. The Arab has ever an eye to the main chance, and his lust for gold is insatiable. In this last, or lust, Ibn Saud is no exception. It is hard to believe that Ibn Saud was quite guiltless in the matter of contraband passing through his territory during the late war. On one occasion (September, 1917), at all events, Mr. Philby admits that Ibn Saud was indirectly responsible for the passage through Buraida of a Shammar caravan of 3,000 camels en route for Hail, and presumably eventually for Damascus or some other Turkish center of activity.

With reference to Ibn Saud's family life we are afraid we cannot quite agree with Mr. Philby's very lenient treatment of the subject of divorce. The fact is that Ibn Saud is a veritable *Haroun al Rashid*. A man who, in the prime of life, has run through 75 real wives, and no one knows how many concubines, is hardly a model of domestic idealism. Perhaps Mr. Philby, like the

Arabs among whom he was living at the time, has failed to consider the question from the woman's point of view.

We are glad that Mr. Philby mentions Dr. Harrison as having visited Riyadh twice, though it is but a grudging recognition of a man who has to his credit the finest record of surgical achievement in Arabia, a record of successful work done under every possible disadvantage. Paul Wilberforce Harrison enjoys the distinction of being the first white man to enter the Nejd at the invitation of its ruler. With him were no money bags, with him were no camels loaded down with gifts, with him were no credentials from powerful governments. His own personality and his consciousness that he was on a mission from the King of kings were the equipment that carried him safely to Riyadh and back twice.

We agree with Mr. Philby when he advises Europeans to wear Arab clothes in the desert, but if on page 87, Vol. I, he means to suggest that a Christian should be ready to deny his faith if necessary, we can only refer him to Doughty's immortal epic. Doughty never concealed the fact that he was a Christian, in fact he was ever ready to defend his faith. God forbid that the standards of Carlo Guarmani, the Levantine Italian, should ever be adopted by Christians and Englishmen.

A very brief reference is made to slavery. We confess ourselves sceptical as to the likelihood of the King of the Hejaz ever doing anything to put down slavery. Slaves are too important a part of the domestic life of Arabia. It is probably true that slaves for the most part are well treated, but the exceptions to this rule are often terrible, especially in connection with the pearl industry.

Mr. Philby is surprised at the type of horseshoe he saw in Riyadh, but surely this is the same shoe that we find all over Syria, Palestine and Asia Minor. The hole in the center is for ventilation. In our experience, six nails are used, not four.

The Masqat *baiza* is stated to be the equivalent of the Indian *paisa*, but, at par, there are 64 of the latter to the

rupee, and of the former anything from 140-190, according to the rate of exchange.

We are glad to see the generous measure of honor and praise accorded to Shakespeare, who, we feel confident, would have been one of Arabia's very greatest men, had he lived to the end of the war. We heartily endorse the idea of a memorial well at Jerrab. Shakespeare's initials, however, should be W. H. I., not W. H. C. as stated by Mr. Philby.

In the list of plants given in the appendix, we miss the Jadeh or Yadeh, one of the most popular medicinal plants which the desert of Arabia produces.

It is a great book—too great for a brief review. The *Times* reviewer suggests that it is heavy reading. We cannot agree with him.

*Kuweit, Arabia.*

C. STANLEY G. MYLREA.

## SIN AND GRACE IN THE BIBLICAL NARRATIVES REHEARSED IN THE KORAN

---

Much has been written by many scholars on the subject of Mohammed's indebtedness to the Scriptures. In particular his use of the Biblical narratives as the basis of much of his preachment in the Koran has awakened a variety of comment, and from authors varying all the way from the professional Arabist to the missionary apologist. Moreover, since 1833, when Abraham Geiger published his study<sup>1</sup> entitled *What Did Mohammed Adopt from Judaism?* there has been a growing literature on the genetic relation sustained by Judaism to Islâm, including on the one side an investigation of the Moslem commentators, and on the other side a comparison of all the cognate material in the Jewish midrash-literature. That this last-named comparison, however, is not even yet felt to be fairly completed, is indicated by the present appearance of a new work<sup>2</sup> on *The Haggadic Elements in the Narrative Portion of the Koran*.

Similarly, it may be felt that, with all that has hitherto been said, and well said, concerning Mohammed's use of the Old Testament characters and events, the last word has not yet been written on even this familiar subject. There is yet lacking, for example, a systematic grouping of the material, the usual arrangement of which has been the chronological order—surely a principle as foreign as possible to Mohammed's unchronological mind! Let what has been said, then, suffice as an apology for the choice of the subject of this paper, which will not pretend to say that "last word," but will seek, within well-defined limits, to contribute something to this comparison, which

---

<sup>1</sup> *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen?* by Abraham Geiger, Bonn, 1833.

<sup>2</sup> *Die haggadischen Elemente im erzählenden Teil des Koran*, by Dr. Israel Schapiro; Heft I covers the life of Joseph.

is so fruitful for the correct understanding of Mohammed and his mission.

What those limits are, is indicated in the title. By it the inquiry is limited, first, to those parts of the Koran which are indebted to the Bible for their subject-matter; second, within these, to that which deals with persons, places and events,—the narrative-material; and third, within this again, to the treatment of the themes of sin and grace, which play so large a part in the purpose of the story-teller both in the Bible and in the Koran.

In order to have the facts before us, in their broad outlines, it will be necessary, first, to state as briefly as possible what Biblical narratives are reflected in the Koran.

Of the first eleven chapters of Genesis much is represented: the stories of creation, including matter from both the first and second chapters; the fall; the brothers' quarrel; Enoch (?); Noah and the flood; the dispersion of the nations; and the family of Terah.

With Abraham we reach a character whose career is expanded in both the Old Testament and the Koran. His separation from Terah, the ratification of the covenant in chapter 15, the birth of Ishmael and of Isaac, the episode of Lot, and the sacrifice of Isaac—to all these portions of Abraham's biography reference is made by Mohammed with greater or less fullness.

As Isaac appears only in connection with Abraham, so Jacob, apart from a couple of bare allusions to him, appears only as a character in the story of Joseph. But there is a wealth of detail in the treatment of Joseph's life, most of which is covered in the long Sûra devoted thereto.

With Exodus, Moses is reached, and there is no other Biblical character so thoroughly appropriated by the Koran as is Moses. The story begins with the oppression by Pharaoh and the slaying of the male children. Moses' rescue from the water by the wife (*sic*) of Pharaoh, his adoption, and the part his own mother and sister play in the drama, are all reflected in the Koranic story. The

two attempts to help his Hebrew brethren, the consequent flight to Midian, the meeting with Jethro's daughters, and his marriage with one of them and service of their father as shepherd, the account of the burning bush with the divine call, the accrediting miracles and the commission of Aaron as spokesman:—all this leads up, in Mohammed's account as in Exodus, to the narrative of the plagues. From the contest with the Egyptian magicians to the departure from Egypt by night, most of the story of the plagues is recorded or alluded to. The Egyptian pursuit, the crossing of the sea dry-shod and drowning of the enemy, the manna and quails, the arrival and covenant at Sinai, God's rendezvous with Moses on the mount, Aaron's lieutenancy together with the whole episode of the golden calf, Moses' wrath, intercession and publication of the tables of the Law—this fills in with tolerable completeness the outline of the historical portions of Exodus. The remainder of Moses' career, as depicted in portions of Numbers and Deuteronomy, is represented in the Koran by allusions to the smitten rock, the murmuring of the Israelites, their refusal and consequent prohibition to enter the "holy land," the revolt of Korah, and—what is purely legal in the Old Testament, but is transformed into a story by Mohammed,—the red heifer of Numbers 19, combined with the heifer mentioned in Deuteronomy 21.

There is no indication that the contents of the books of Joshua and Judges were known to Mohammed, save one reference to Gideon's odd test of his followers by drinking, and this is erroneously ascribed to Saul. But with Samuel and the choice of Saul we again reach stories for which the Koran finds a place. The earlier part of the struggle with the Philistines is probably represented by an allusion to the ark as "coming" to Israel. David's victory over Goliath is expressly mentioned. David's skill in music and his authorship of the Psalms, his sin and repentance, together with the substance of Nathan's parable and the restoration of David to divine favor:—these

constitute all of the remainder of Samuel that finds a place in the Moslem scriptures.

Solomon plays a larger rôle. In the Koran, as in other Oriental literature, his judgments, his splendor, his build-ings, his wisdom and knowledge of nature, and the visit to him of the Queen of Sheba, have appealed to the author's imagination. Elijah's contest with the Baal-worshippers is the only other incident in the books of Kings to receive Mohammed's attention. Elisha is barely named. Ezra is mentioned, merely to rebuke the Jews for saying of Him that He is the Son of God.

Among the narratives embedded in the poetical and prophetic books of the Old Testament, those which have appealed to Mohammed are the story of Job and the story of Jonah. Job's afflictions, prayers, patience, deliverance, and acceptance with God, all find a place in the few verses that refer to him. And of Jonah we learn from the Koran that he was a prophet, how he withdrew from God's mission, of the casting of the lots on the ship, his being swallowed by the fish (he is known to Mohammed as "He of the fish"), his prayer from its belly, his deliverance, the growth of the gourd, Jonah's preaching and its success.

Turning now to the New Testament, we find none of its narratives reproduced, save a perverted version of the angelic announcement to Zacharias, his dumbness for a season, and the birth and naming of John; and, mingled with the events in this family, the similar events in the kindred family of Jesus: the annunciation, the miraculous conception and the birth of our Lord. But through the crassest anachronism this cycle of the sacred story is united with the cycles of Moses-stories and Samuel-stories, by the confusion of Mary (Maryam) with Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, and the confusion of Anna, the (traditional) mother of Mary, with Hannah, the mother of Samuel. So that it is hardly too much to say that for Mohammed there are no New Testament narratives; such as he knows are amalgamated with those

of the Old Testament. For references to Jesus' life and death amount to little more than allusions; as, for instance, to His miracles, His mission to Israel, His institution of the Supper, His promise of the Paraclete (Ahmed, i. e., Mohammed), His attitude toward the Law, and the Jews' hostility to Him resulting in their crucifying—not Jesus but a man who resembled Him, Jesus Himself being translated without tasting of death. Our Lord's apostles are barely mentioned, under the style Hawârî,—a word borrowed from the language of the Abyssinian Church, since the Arabic equivalent, Rasûl, is Mohammed's favorite appellation of himself and his predecessors as the "Sent" of God.

Such being the material available for our inquiry, we proceed first to note certain characteristic formal differences, that have had the effect of molding this material, taken as a whole, into different forms from those it exhibits in the Bible.

The first of these formal peculiarities of the Koran is that every word of it is supposed to be uttered by Allâh himself. This oracular style is not foreign to the Bible, but it is there confined for the most part to limited portions of the prophetic discourse and to the laws. By no means all of the matter introduced or completed with a "saith Jehovah" is so molded by the prophets as to read like a divine utterance to them or, through their lips, to the people. In fact there is so constant a variation between the first and third persons in such passages, when referring to the revealing deity, that it amounts to what may be termed a consistent inconsistency, and only logical analysis can resolve the blended personality of the revelatory subject. We should err in using of an Isaiah so harsh an expression as has been used of Mohammed,<sup>3</sup> that "he falls out of his rôle." Mohammed's claims are quite different from those of the Hebrew prophets. The dictation, or rather recitation (Koran = reading aloud)

<sup>3</sup> E. g. by H. P. Smith in *The Bible and Islam*, p. 66, in referring specially to *Sura xi. 37*.

of a portion (*âya*) from a heavenly book by the archangel Gabriel to the listening Mohammed, is quite unlike what the prophets of Israel have to say of their revelations, even when they insist most strongly upon their objectivity, certainty and divinity.

If this is true of the Biblical prophecies, how much greater still is the contrast between the utter freedom of the Biblical narratives and the stiffness of the Koran! It is obvious that these must undergo a great change in being recast in accordance with the conception that God is the speaker. The facts and actors must be viewed as from the seventh heaven. History must be conceived *sub spècie aeternitatis*.

And it must be said to the credit of Mohammed that this exalted level is remarkably well maintained. The hold of this book upon Islâm through all the centuries and lands is undoubtedly due to its power to appeal to the religious imagination, to transport its readers into the same frame of mind, to enable men of narrow views to see themselves and one another as transient, trivial and helpless creatures of an eternal, almighty, self-sufficient Lord. Even the woeful lapses from this high God-centered ideal of the Koran have not been able to destroy its power of lofty appeal, because Mohammed succeeded in so interweaving his own personality and interests with those of deity, that even selfish ends, the temporary make-shifts of a time-server, and the weaknesses of a sinful man are made to appear in the rosy light of a divine interest and commendation.

Yet Allâh in the rôle of a story-teller has necessarily something absurd about it. "We are going to relate to thee the best of stories in our revealing to thee this recital,"<sup>4</sup>—such is the introduction to the long narrative of Joseph's life; and at its close the divine story-teller warns his human *râwî* that he is "not to demand pay for"<sup>5</sup> reciting the story. And at the conclusion of the story of

<sup>4</sup> *Sura* xii. 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

Moses in *Sûra xxviii*. Allâh is actually made to boast of His superior facilities in obtaining the information implied in the teller of these tales, seeing that He was present and active in those scenes: "Thou wast not present on the Westward Side<sup>6</sup> when we communicated the Commandment unto Moses, nor wast thou among the witnesses . . . nor wast thou dwelling among the people of Midian rehearsing our revelations unto them; yet we have sent (thee) as (our) messenger."<sup>7</sup>

The second pervasive difference in the form of these narratives arises from their being addressed primarily to an individual. Like all the rest of the Koran, they are intended for the ears of many—for Mohammed's own tribe of Koreish in the earlier *Sûras*, later for various groups of men, Jews, Christians, "Helpers," "Emigrants," all men of Arabian speech, or even all the "sons of Adam";—but only through Mohammed's mediation. Whenever there is a "ye" of direct address, there is an actual or an implied "say thou" preceding it, and much of the Koran would have to be printed between quotation marks, if the devices of modern printing were employed. Often also Allâh talks to Mohammed about those who are to be influenced by the revelation, referring to them in the third person.

When this peculiarity of the Mohammedan revelation in general is considered in connection with the narratives in particular, its effect upon them is seen to be striking. There is such a complication in the machinery of expression as to cumber the whole, and the machinery threatens at any moment to break down. There are wheels within wheels. The actual human author (Mohammed) has to represent the supposed author (Allâh) as telling the real author to tell others about how somebody else did this or that, or—worse still—said this or that. When these characters in the story are to answer their interlocutor, or when former words of Allâh

<sup>6</sup> Viz., of Sinai.

<sup>7</sup> *Sûra xxviii*. 44 f.