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# Arab Prophets of the Qur'an and Bible

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In his discussion of the prophet Ṣāliḥ and the people of Thamūd, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) mentions a dispute concering references in the Bible to the Arab prophets mentioned in the Qur'an:[1]

> As for the People of the Torah, they allege that there is no mention of ᶜĀd, Thamūd, Hūd and Ṣāliḥ in the Torah. Their word among the Arabs in pre-Islamic and Islamic times is like the repute of Abraham and his people.

The idea that the Jews, or 'People of the Torah', refused to acknowledge the Bible as a confirmation of the Qur'an, and, by extension, the authority of the Prophet Muḥammad, is not uncommon in Muslim exegesis. There are a number of well-known cases in which exegesis of certain verses, such as Q. 3:93 and Q. 2:222, focuses on a challenge made by the Jews to the Prophet.[2] In his history, Ibn al-Athīr repeats the remark made by al-Ṭabarī, adding a comparison of the denial of the Arab prophets with the Jews' rejection of Jesus as the Christ.[3] These passages indicate that denying the mention of Hūd and Ṣāliḥ in the Bible is part of the larger motif of the Jews rejecting the claim that the prophethood of Muḥammad was foretold in the Bible as a continuation and fulfillment of ancient Israelite prophecy.

The following pages examine some of the evidence for the existence of the Arab prophets Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, and Shuᶜayb outside of the text of the Qur'an, focusing on how Muslim exegesis identifies and incorporates extra-Qur'anic materials into its definition of the history of prophethood. Section one begins by identifying and exploring the significance of the concept of the 'Arab prophets' as found in ḥadīth reports, Muslim exegesis, and other genres of scholarship such as history, geography, and genealogical works. Section two surveys the evidence for the Arab prophets, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, Shuᶜayb, and Muḥammad outside of the Qur'an, in the Bible, other ancient and late antique literature, and in documentary sources such as inscriptions and archaeological deposits. The conception of the 'Arab prophets' epitomises a more generic relationship between authoritative texts and the social identity of certain closely related religious groups, demonstrating how shared scripture creates the conditions for exegetical ingenuity and competition.



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## Arab Prophets

In his collection of prophetic ḥadīth reports, Muḥammad ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354/965) cites, from a number of authorities, a long conversation between the Prophet Muḥammad and Abū Dharr. During the conversation Abū Dharr asked Muḥammad about prophets:[4]

> [Abū Dharr said] I said, 'Apostle of God, how many prophets (*anbiyāʾ*) are there?' He said, 'One hundred and twenty thousand.' I said, 'Apostle of God, how many of them are messengers (*rusul*)?' He said, 'Three hundred and thirteen altogether.' I said, 'Apostle of God, who was the first of them?' He said, 'Adam.' I said, 'Apostle of God, was he a prophet sent as a messenger?' He said, 'Yes. God created him with His hand, breathed into him from His spirit, and spoke with him face to face.' Then he [Prophet Muḥammad] said, 'Abū Dharr, four [prophets] are Syrian: Adam, Seth, Enoth – he is Idris, the first to write with a pen – and Noah. Four are Arab: Hūd, Shuᶜayb, Ṣāliḥ and your Prophet, Muḥammad.'

The statement attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad about the 'Syrian' and 'Arab' prophets appears to delineate two categories of prophets. It may be that the terms used here for the prophets refers to the languages they are supposed to have used during their missions. A number of Arabic and Muslim sources claim that the antedeluvian prophets used Syriac, and that Syriac was the original language spoken by Adam when he was in the garden of Eden. Arabic Hermetic traditions, for example, state that the Tabula Smaragdina (*lawḥ zabarjad*) was written in Syriac, 'the primordial language' (*lisān al-awwal*).[5] According to a report preserved in Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Thaᶜlabī (d. 427/1035), a man from ᶜAsqalān saw Elijah, years after he had lived his regular life on Earth, performing two special prayers in Syriac, a language he did not understand.[6]

There is also evidence suggesting that some early Islamic traditions regarded it as necessary for the original language of God to be translated into Arabic when revealed to the Prophet. According to ᶜAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), one opinion regarding how the Qur'an was revealed holds that Gabriel brought down the specific or general meaning of the 'preserved tablet' in Heaven and communicated this to Muḥammad in Arabic.[7] This is, perhaps, related to the tradition that God's words of revelation sounded like a chain (*silsila*) to the inhabitants of Heaven.[8] On the authority of Dāᶜūd ibn Abī Hind, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) reports that al-Shaᶜbī said that Muḥammad received his first revelations in a language other than his own:[9]

> Prophethood descended upon the Prophet when he was 40 years old. Isrāfīl was assigned to oversee his prophethood (*qarana bi-*

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> *nabūwatahu*) for three years, and he would teach him and speak with him, but the Qur'an was not revealed in his language. After three years, Gabriel was assigned to him, and the Qur'an was revealed in his language.

Muslim exegesis on the 'Arabic Qur'an' (*Qurʾān ᶜArabī*) mentioned in Q. 12:2, Q. 20:113, Q. 39:28, Q. 41:3, Q. 42:7 and Q. 43:3 also preserves traditions in which Syriac is said to be the original language of people, but other authorities report that all revelations were sent down in Arabic and translated into different languages by each prophet.[10]

According to Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabāʾī (1888–1969), the reference in Q. 14:4 to God sending an apostle 'in the language of his people' means that prophets were sent to proclaim a message in the language of the people to whom they were sent and among whom they lived, even though this might not necessarily be the original languages spoken by those prophets.[11] Lot, for example was sent as a prophet to a people who were not his own and spoke a different language. In reference to this verse, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210) mentions the opinion of a group of Jews from the ᶜĪsāwiyya who claim that Muḥammad was sent as an apostle to the Arabs only because the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic and the Prophet Muḥammad had no 'people' except for the Arabs.[12] Ismāʾīl ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373) cites a ḥadīth report from Ibn Ḥanbal on the authority of Abū Dharr in which Muḥammad says, 'God sent no prophet except with the language of his people'.[13] He then cites Q. 7:158 and another ḥadīth report from al-Bukhārī and Muslim supporting the claim that the Prophet Muḥammad was the one prophet sent to his people and to the rest of the people in the world.

Other exegesis supports the notion that the designation of some prophets as 'Arab' refers to the people to whom these prophets were sent. Q. 10:47 states that every people (*umma*) has an apostle who will judge between them, and in Q. 28:59 it is written that God will not destroy a place (*qurā*) until he has sent to its centre (*ummihā*) an apostle relating God's signs to them. Q. 35:24 states that there is no people without a warner (*nadhīr*) having been sent among them, and in Q. 26:208 God says he did not destroy any place that did not have warners. The 'witness' (*shahīd*) to be raised from each people at the end of time mentioned in Q. 16:84 and 89 is interpreted to be the messengers sent to each of the people while they were living on the Earth. According to Ibn Kathīr these prophets will each bear witness to God for his people in their language.[14] Abū'l-Suᶜūd (d. 982/1574) relates the role of each prophet over his people, as mentioned in Q. 4:41, to the function of Jesus on the Day of Resurrection as a witness against the Christians in Q. 5:117.[15]

Certain passages in the Qur'an, however, appear to describe the Prophet Muḥammad as the first prophet sent to the Arabs. According to Muslim exegesis, it is

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Muḥammad whom God addresses in Q. 28:46 as being sent to warn a people to whom no warner had come before. Q. 32:3 likewise describes a warner, identified by Muslim exegesis as the Prophet Muḥammad, sent to a people to whom no warner had come before. ᶜAbd al-Ḥaqq ibn ᶜAṭiyya (d. 546/1151) relates that the Arabs were a people who had been taught by Abraham and his sons but had received no messenger like the Prophet Muḥammad before.[16] Ibn ᶜAṭiyya also reports that Ibn ᶜAbbās and Muqātil ibn Sulaymān interpret the statement about there being no warner before in Q. 32:3 to refer only to the period of time between Jesus and Muḥammad.[17] Maḥmūd ibn ᶜUmar al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144) explains also that the lack of a warner mentioned in Q. 28:46 and Q. 36:6 refers to the 550 years between Jesus and the Prophet Muḥammad.[18]

It is possible that the unique role of Muḥammad among the Arabs is related to the distinction made by Muslim scholarship between the 'apostles' (*rusul*) and the prophets (*anbiyāᵓ*). Muḥammad ibn Saᶜd (d. 230/845) reports that the number of apostles, including the Prophet Muḥammad, is 315, and the total number of prophets is 2,000:[19]

> Ibn ᶜAbbās: Between Moses ibn ᶜImrān and Jesus ibn Mary were 1,900 years and there is no pause between them, for between them were sent 1,000 prophets from the Israelites, equal to what was sent from non-Israelites. Between the birth of Jesus and the Prophet [Muḥammad] were 569 years.

In the ḥadīth report preserved in Ibn Ḥibbān from Abū Dharr the number of apostles is given as 313, but the number of prophets is 120,000. Other scholars place the number of prophets at 224,000. Amongst the smaller number of prophets who are also apostles are included those people who are sent with a revealed book or a message capable of supporting a full-fledged legal system such as the scriptures revealed to Adam, Seth, Idris and Abraham: the Torah, the Psalms, the Gospel and the Qur'an. ᶜAbd Allāh ibn ᶜUmar al-Bayḍāwī (d. 691/1292) states that an apostle is sent by God with a renewed law (*sharᶜīa mujaddada*) whereas the prophet calls people to a law already established by an earlier apostle.[20] Most exegetes do not regard the prophets Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, and Shuᶜayb as having brought new revealed law to the peoples to whom they were sent, despite the fact that each one of the three are identified as 'apostle' (*rasūl*) in the Qur'an (Q. 26:125, 143 and 178).

None of the Arab prophets, save Muḥammad, however, are directly identified as a 'warner' (*nadhīr*).[21] Some scholars have suggested a connection between the use of the term *nadhīr* in the Qur'an and the 'Nazirite' of the Bible and early Christianity. In particular, the regulations against drinking wine and cutting the hair seem to correspond to the Muslim prohibition on wine and the practice of growing the hair during the pilgrimage to Mecca. Samson (Judges 13:5, 12–14), Samuel

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(1 Samuel 1:11), and John the Baptist (Luke 1:15) are described as having taken Nazirite vows.[22] Early Christian exegetes such as Eusebius and Tertullian, following the Septuagint, interpret the *nazōraios* of Matthew 2:23 as referring not to 'Nazareth' but to the special holiness of Jesus.[23] Numbers 6:1–21 appears to define the category of the Nazirite as an archaic custom predating Biblical legislation, and the customs associating special vows with the activities of priestly and prophetic figures in the Arabian Peninsula is widespread in pre-Islamic inscriptions.[24]

The notion that an apostle or prophet was sent to every people or place in the world parallels the concept of apostleship in other late antique religions. Al-Bīrūnī (d. 442/1050) cites a Manichaean belief from the Shābuhragān that a prophet was sent to each people:[25]

> Wisdom and deeds have always from time to time been brought to mankind by the apostles of God. So in one age they have been brought by the apostle called Buddha, to India, in another by Zaradust to Persia, in another by Jesus to the West. Thereupon, this revelation has come down and this prophecy has appeared in the form of myself, Mani, the envoy of the true God in the land of Babylon.

A Parthian text refers to Manichaean apostles sent with books to different lands, 'writings of light' sent to 'Byzans' in the hands of scribes.[26] Apostles are said to have brought the 'Gospel' to the Roman empire, the 'Treasuyre of the Living' to the Parthian speaking regions of the East, and the 'Book of the Giants' and the 'Ardahang' to Marw.[27]

It has been debated whether this Manichaean model might be adapted from, or otherwise related to, the early Christian conception of apostles sent to specific locations in the world. The apocryphal Acts of Thomas states that the regions of the world were divided and assigned to each of the twelve disciples:[28]

> At that time we apostles were all in Jerusalem, Simon called Peter and Andrew his brother, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the publican, James [the son] of Alphaeus and Simon the Cananaean, and Judas [the brother] of James; and we divided the regions of the world, that each one of us might go to the region which fell to his lot, and to the nation to which the Lord sent him. According to lot, India fell to Judas Thomas, who is also [called] Didymus.

The Acts of Thomas, along with four other apocryphal Acts, were part of the Manichaean canon of Acts subsituting for the canonical Acts of the Apostles of the New Testament.[29] According to the early church historian Eusebius, citing from Origen's commentary on Genesis, the disciples received the lands by lot: Thomas to

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Parthia, Andrew to Scythia, John to Asia, Peter to Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, Asia and Rome, and Paul to Rome.[30] In his revision of Eusebius, Rufinius adds that Matthew was assigned to Ethiopia and Bartholomew to India.[31] This list is similar to that found in the canonical Acts of the Apostles (2:7–11) in which the disciples, in advance of being sent out from Jerusalem, find themselves able to speak the languages of the Parthians, Medes, Elamites, people of Mesopotamia, Judaea, Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and Libya, Rome, and of Cretans and Arabs.

The tradition of the twelve disciples of Jesus being sent to twelve regions in the world is supplemented by the tradition that Jesus appointed and sent 70 or 72 apostles (Luke 10:1–20). Ephrem the Syrian mentions that Mani divided the Earth among his 'preachers' (*kārōzē*), and al-Bīrūnī mentions a 'Gospel of the Seventy' which is attributed to a Salam ibn ᶜAbd Allāh who transmitted it from Salmān al-Fārisī.[32] The author of the apocryphal Acts of John, identified as Prochorus, claims to be 'one of 70 disciples,' and the apostle Addai is said to be 'one of the 72 apostles'.[33] This number might be related to the wide-spread late antique idea that the world was divided into 70 different peoples and languages, and that over each people was assigned an angel, and to each of whom a prophet or apostle was sent.[34] Muslim sources, likewise, speak of 70 prophets who made pilgrimage to Mecca, representing all the peoples of the world.[35] Other apocryphal texts mention Matthew being sent to the 'land of the Kahenat', and James to Spain.[36]

The idea that the Prophet Muḥammad was one of a number of prophets sent to the Arabs but also the first of a certain type and thus unique is reflected in the Muslim exegesis of Q. 33:40, *Muḥammad is not the father of any of your men but the Apostle of God* (*rasūl Allāh*) *and the Seal of the Prophets* (*khātam al-anbiyīn*).[37] According to many exegetes, the phrase 'seal of the prophets' means that Muḥammad was the last of the prophets. Ibn Kathīr cites a number of ḥadīth reports in which the Prophet Muḥammad says there is no apostle (*rasūl*) nor prophet (*nabī*) after him.[38] Among these is one of Muḥammad's statements about his own prophethood:[39]

> I have many names: I am Muḥammad, I am Aḥmad. I am the one by whom God eradicates unbelief. I am the one who gathers the people under my feet. I am the last after whom there is no prophet.

These reports, and others, emphasise that Muḥammad was considered to be the last in a line of prophets stretching back to Adam, but the concept of Muḥammad as the 'seal of the prophets' might also be related to his special standing as a culmination of all earlier prophethood.

Muḥammad Ibn ᶜAbd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī (d. 548/1153) reports that Mani claimed to be the 'Seal of the Prophets' culminating a long line of prophets including Adam, Seth, Noah, the Buddha, Zoroaster, and Jesus.[40] According to al-Bīrūnī, Mani

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also claimed to be the 'Paraclete foretold by Jesus,' a claim also found in the Coptic Kephalaia (14:3), paralleling the Muslim understanding of Q. 61:6.[41] Ephrem the Syrian describes a 'chain of light' that binds Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, the house of David, and Joseph to Jesus.[42] In the Coptic Manichaean homilies, Mani claims to be the last in a series of three prophets, sent to culminate the prophetic mission of those who came before him in the central land of Babylon:[43]

> Apostles and messengers I have sent out into all countries so that the earlier apostles, who had come before them, have not done anything corresponding to this that I have done during this difficult generation, with the exception only of Jesus, the son of greatness, who is the father of all apostles … But now the third apostle, the savior, was sent to [Babel]. He has already revealed himself to her. He will abide with her to the end of the world, the third apostle who has been commanded and sent to her.

A similar claim is repeated by al-Bīrūnī:[44]

> This revelation has been sent down, this prophethood, in this last generation, through me, Mani, the apostle of the true God, to the land of Babel.

The Kephalaia also states that Seth was the first prophet in a line followed by Enosh, Enoch, Shem, the Buddha, Zoroaster, Jesus and Paul, a prophet being sent for each generation until the coming of Mani the prophet sent to the last generation.[45]

The concept of prophethood found in Manichaeism and other late antique religions is that the coming of the final prophet initiates a new historical era. Not unlike the Manichaean series of three prophets sent for each age, Mandaean religion envisions prophethood as occurring in groups of three: Hibīl and Shītīl, the 'keepers of the epoch', foretell the coming of Anōsh the savior and last of the three great apostles.[46] The Mandaean 'Creation of Man' describes the three Uthras, Hibīl, Shītīl, and Anōsh who are sent into the world by Ptahīl the 'father' of the Uthras.[47] A similar concept is found in the Ismāᶜīlī doctrine of the cyclical manifestations of the divine mind through various prophetic figures stages in groups of three.[48] In a not dissimilar fashion, the Prophet Muḥammad appears to be defined as the first of the Arab prophets to bring a revelation, in the form of the Qur'an, which is unique in being the only revelation recorded in Arabic. In eastern Manichaean literature, Mani is portrayed as the 'divine Mani Buddha' and the 'Buddha of Light,' perhaps linking him to the Buddhist notion of Maitreya the future Buddha whose coming heralds the end of this age and the beginning of a new epoch.[49] Mani, not unlike the Prophet Muḥammad as the second Adam, appears to have been considered the prophet whose mission culminates, in the inauguration of a new age, the line of prophets initiated by Adam.

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In Q. 6:92 and Q. 42:7, the Prophet Muḥammad is portrayed as a prophet (*nadhīr*) sent to the 'mother of the cities' or 'metropolis' (*umm al-qurā*) with an Arabic revelation:

> *This is a book which we have sent down, a blessing, confirming that which is in his hand, that you might warn the umm al-qurā and from all around it those who believe in the next world, who believe in it [the book] and keep their prayers* (Q. 6:92).
>
> *We have revealed to you an Arabic Qur'an so that you might warn the umm al-qurā and all around it, warn of the day of assembly of which there is no doubt, a group in Paradise and a group in the blazing fire* (Q. 42:7).

Abū ᶜAbd Allāh Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229) records that Mecca is called '*umm al-qurā*' because it is situated in the geographical centre of the world and represents the symbolic centre of civilisation.[50] According to reports preserved by al-Ṭabarī, Mecca is called '*umm al-qurā*' because it was the point from which all of the Earth was spread out and created. Mecca was the first point on Earth where Adam established civilisation, and it is the point on Earth to which the last prophet is sent, from where his message is conveyed to the lands surrounding to include all of the world.[51] Muḥammad's special status as the last of the Arab prophets makes him unlike all other prophets in that his mission is intended to be universal in scope. He is the 'second Adam', coming to inaugurate a new age and a new civilisation just as did Adam, as the prophet to all humanity, when he fell from the garden of Eden.[52] It is not that the Prophet Muḥammad was sent to the Arabs alone or with a revelation only for those who understand Arabic, but rather that the Arab prophet, Muḥammad, who is the last of all the prophets, brings a message to Mecca and from there to the rest of the world.

## Arab Prophets Outside the Qur'an

It is remarkable that the four Arab prophets mentioned in the ḥadīth report of Abū Dharr cited at the beginning of this article – Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, Shuᶜayb and Muḥammad – appear to be the only prophets mentioned by name in the Qur'an whose existence in the Biblical record is called into question. There are other prophets, identified by name in Muslim exegesis, such as al-Khiḍr (Q. 18:60–82) and the prophet associated with the 'People of the Well' (Q. 25:38–9 and Q. 50:12–14, usually called Ḥanẓala ibn Ṣafwān). The name Dhū'l-Kifl given to the prophet in Q. 21:85 and Q. 38:48 is considered by Muslim exegetes to be an epithet of the son of Job referring to this prophet's habit of keeping (*kafala*) the commandments and following the requirements of religion.[53] Other prophets, alluded to but not mentioned by name in

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the Qur'an, Muslim exegesis identifies with commonly recognised Biblical figures such as Jeremiah and Daniel (see Q. 2:259).

That the coming of the Prophet Muḥammad is foretold, and that he is mentioned by name in the Bible and other revealed texts is evident from the Qur'an and Muslim exegesis.[54] Q. 21:105 explicitly quotes from the Bible, although Muslim exegetes hold different opinions regarding the exact identification of the book that is cited:

> *We have already written in the Psalms (al-zubūr), after the reminder (al-dhikr): My servants, the upright, shall inherit the land.*

Most scholars consider this verse to be a citation of Psalm 73:29:[55]

> The righteous (*ṣadīqīm*) shall inherit the land, and dwell upon it forever.

According to al-Zamakhsharī, the 'reminder' in Q. 21:105 is considered to be the Torah, a generic name for the books that were sent down to the prophets, or the 'Mother of the Book' (*umm al-kitāb*) which, he says, is the preserved tablet from which all revelation is taken.[56] Ibn ᶜAbbās is reported as saying that 'the land' (*al-arḍ*) is the garden of Eden, but others say that it refers to the Holy Land (*al-arḍ al-muqaddisa*), and that the followers of Muḥammad are those who will inherit it. Ibn ᶜAṭiyya states that 'the land' refers to the the land of this world, all of that which is bestowed upon the believers.[57]

Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī (d. 671/1272) explains the verse in more detail, closely linking the Prophet Muḥammad with Moses and the Israelites:[58]

> [We already wrote in the Psalms] the Psalms and the Book (*al-kitāb*) are one, and it is permitted to say 'psalms' for the Torah and Gospel, as in 'I wrote it' (*zabartu*), i.e. 'I wrote it (*katabtu*) and collected it into writings (*zubur*)'. Saᶜīd ibn Jubayr says: 'Psalms' (*al-zubūr*) is the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur'an.'
>
> [After the reminder] which is in the Heavens [that the land] the land of the Garden [my servants, the upright, shall inherit], Sufyān relates from al-Aᶜmash, from Saᶜīd ibn Jubayr: The 'Psalms' are the Psalms of David. The 'reminder' is the Torah of Moses. Mujāhid and Ibn Zayd: The 'Psalms' are the books of the prophets, and the 'reminder' is the Mother of the Book which is with God in the Heavens. Ibn ᶜAbbās says: The 'Psalms' are the books which God revealed after Moses to his prophets, and the 'reminder' is the Torah revealed to Moses …

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> It is better to interpret 'the land my servants, the upright, shall inherit' as referring to the land of the Garden just as Saᶜīd ibn Jubayr says because the land of this world has already been inherited by the upright, and others. This is the opinion of Ibn ᶜAbbās, Mujāhid, and others.
>
> Mujāhid and Abū'l-ᶜĀliya: This interpretation points to the word of God: *Praise God who has fulfilled his promise to us and caused us to inherit the land* [Q. 39:74]. According to Ibn ᶜAbbās: It is the Holy Land, and also attributed to him: It is the land of the unbelieving nations which the followers of Muḥammad took as a bequest in the conquests.
>
> It is said: The intention of this [viz. the 'land'] is that of the Israelites. An indication of this is the word of God: *We caused the people who were considered weak to inherit the land, from the East to the West of it, that which we blessed* [Q. 7:137].
>
> Most of the exegetes are of the opinion that the intention of the 'servants' and the 'upright' is the followers of Muḥammad.

In his exegesis of Q. 21:105, al-Ṭabarī records the opinion of Ibn ᶜAbbās that the verse means that God announced in the Torah, the Psalms, and all previous knowledge, before the creation of the Heavens and the Earth, that the followers of Muḥammad would inherit the Earth, he would cause them to enter the Garden of Eden, for they are the upright.[59]

Q. 61:6 is considered by Muslim exegetes to be a reference to the Gospel, and appears to cite the Gospel of John 15:25–6:[60]

> *When Jesus the son of Mary said: Israelites, I am the apostle of God to you, fufilling the Torah that is in my hands, heralding an apostle who comes after me whose name is Aḥmad. When he came to them with clear signs they said: This is clear sorcery* (Q. 61:6).
>
> But all this was only to fulfil the words written in their law: 'They hated me for no reason.' When the Paraclete comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the spirit of truth who issues from the Father, he will be my witness, and you too will be my witnesses, because you have been with me from the outset (John 15:25–6).

A similar statement is found in Ibn Isḥāq's biography of the Prophet Muḥammad, in which John 15:23–6 is cited, apparently from a Syriac source:[61]

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> But when the Comforter (*munaḥḥemanā*) has come whom God will send to you from the Lord's presence, and the spirit of truth which will have gone forth from the Lord's presence, he shall bear witness of me and you also, because you have been with me from the beginning.

Ibn Isḥāq adds that *munaḥḥemana* is Syriac for Muḥammad, and that in Greek it is *baraqlīṭus*, both of the terms being used by Jesus as references to the coming of the Prophet Muḥammad.[62]

Additional passages are adduced by Muslim exegetes as examples of references in the Bible to the Prophet Muḥammad and his mission. Many of these are also used in Christian exegesis as examples of Old Testament prefigurations of the coming of Jesus.[63] In a number of different contexts, usually associated with the figure of Kaᶜb al-Aḥbār, Isaiah 42, for example, is taken as a depiction of a future prophet who will bring a new Torah to the Gentiles.[64] ᶜAlī ibn Rabban al-Ṭabarī (fl. 3rd/9th century) takes Isaiah 40:3–5, which are used in the Gospel of Luke (3:4–6) as a prophecy repeated by John the Baptist in reference to Jesus, as pertaining to the coming of Muḥammad.[65] Muḥammad ibn Ẓafar (d. 565/1170) relates images from Isaiah 54 and 60, taken by Jewish and Christian exegesis as references to the desert Jerusalem, to Mecca.[66] The image of the vineyard transplanted into the desert, found in Ezekiel 19:10–14 is interpreted by Ibn Rabban as a reference to Mecca, and other scholars refer to passages in the Psalms that relate to Mecca and the Prophet Muḥammad.[67]

There are also passages in the Qur'an which Muslim exegetes identify as allusions to Biblical prophecies foretelling the coming of the Prophet Muḥammad. In his exegesis of Q. 2:129, Ibn Kathīr emphasises the universal nature of the prophet whom Abraham asked God to send to Mecca from among his descendants:[68]

> The prayer of Abraham for the people of the Meccan sanctuary (*al-ḥaram*) that God send among them an apostle from them, i.e. from the seed of Abraham. This prayer had already been answered by the foresight of God in specifying Muḥammad as an apostle to them and to the rest of the non-Arabs, both people and jinn.
>
> Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal reports on the authority of ᶜAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī, on the authority of Muᶜāwiya ibn Ṣāliḥ, on the authority of Saᶜīd ibn Suwayd al-Kalbī, on the authority of ᶜAbd al-Aᶜlā ibn Hilāl al-Salmī, on the authority of al-ᶜIrbāḍ ibn Sāriyya: The Apostle of God said, 'I was the Seal of the Prophets with God when Adam was still unformed in the clay, and I will relate to you what this means: [I am] the prayer of my father Abraham, the good news of Jesus, and the vision of my mother which she saw just like the mothers of all the prophets see.'

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Muslim exegetes situate the larger account of Abraham's journey to Mecca and his rebuilding of the Ka$^{c}$ba into the Biblical narrative of the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael found in Genesis 21:22–34 through a conflation of Beersheba and Zamzam.[69]

Not unlike their exegesis of Biblical passages to demonstrate the authority of the Prophet Muḥammad, Muslim exegetes use the Bible, and Jewish and Christian exegesis of it, to interpret the account of the prophet Shu$^{c}$ayb as it is related in the Qur'an. Outside of the Bible and Qur'an, there is little direct evidence to which Muslim exegetes and historians can point for the historicity of the prophet Shu$^{c}$ayb and the people to whom he was sent. According to a report, given on the authority of Wahb ibn Munabbih, Shu$^{c}$ayb died in Mecca along with a group of his followers, all of whom were buried to the west of the Ka$^{c}$ba.[70] In his exegesis of Q. 2:125, al-Suyūṭī reports that Shu$^{c}$ayb, along with Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, Ishmael, and Noah are buried in the sanctuary at Mecca.[71] Tāqī al-Dīn al-Fāsī (d. 832/1429) records a number of traditions preserving reports that large numbers of prophets were buried near the Ka$^{c}$ba in Mecca.[72] There is also a tomb around which is built a mosque in the Wādī Shu$^{c}$ayb in Jordan just outside of the city of al-Salṭ which is said to be the tomb of the prophet Shu$^{c}$ayb.[73]

The name 'Shu$^{c}$ayb', and variants of it, appears to have been popular and is well-documented in pre-Islamic inscriptions.[74] The root *š$^{c}$b* appears in Safaitic inscriptions six times from locations in Wādī Gharz and al-$^{c}$Isāwī, and in Minaean inscriptions from al-$^{c}$Uqla in northern Arabia two times.[75] Variants of the name occur with a suffix, *š$^{c}$bw* from Madā$^{\partial}$in Ṣāliḥ and the Sinai,[76] from Timna$^{c}$ and in multiple South Arabian inscriptions as *š$^{c}$bm*,[77] Safaitic inscriptions from the Jabal al-Drūz and the basalt desert of Jordan and Iraq as *š$^{c}$bn*[78] and *š$^{c}$byn*,[79] the possible feminine forms as *š$^{c}$bt*,[80] *š$^{c}$bh*,[81] with a prefix in Qatabanian as *$^{c}$mš$^{c}$bm*,[82] and with an attached theophoric element the name appears as *š$^{c}$b$^{c}$l* in Phoenician,[83] and *š$^{c}$bnyw*[84] and *š$^{c}$b$^{\partial}$mr* in Safaitic.[85] The name 'Midian' (*mdyn*) associated with the people to whom Shu$^{c}$ayb was sent, is attested as a name for a people or tribal grouping in Safaitic, and is found as an element in personal names in Nabataean inscriptions from the Negev.[86] Numerous literary sources, especially from Jewish and Christian authors, refer to Midian and the Midianites, including Philo, Origen, and Eusebius, and the names '*midyan*' and '*medan*' appear in Greek sources as the names of cities in the area east of the Gulf of Aqaba.[87]

Midian, as the name of an individual, a people, and a location, is also known from the Bible and Jewish and Christian exegesis.[88] The Midianites are mentioned as being merchants (Gen. 37:25–36), as a group of people defeated by the king of Edom (Gen. 36:35), as having kings (Num. 31:8, Josh 13:21), as having elders (Num. 22:4, 7), and as enemies against whom Gideon fought (Judges 6–8) a battle later commemorated in Psalm 83:9–12 and Isaiah 9:3 and 10:26. More prominent

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than these references, however, is the relationship between Moses and Midian in Exodus 2–4, 18 and Numbers 25 and 31. Muslim exegetes maintain that Shuᶜayb, closely associated with Midian in the Qur'an, is to be identified with Jethro mentioned in Exodus and elsewhere as the Midianite father-in-law of Moses. Both al-Thaᶜlabī[89] and Ibn Kathīr[90] provide a Biblical genealogy for Shuᶜayb:

> Muslim scholars disagree concerning the genealogy of Shuᶜayb. The People of the Torah say he is Shuᶜayb ibn Ṣayfūn ibn Ephah (*ᶜAyfā*) ibn Thābit ibn Midian ibn Abraham. Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq says he is Shuᶜayb ibn Mīkāʾīl ibn Yashjar ibn Midian ibn Abraham, and his name in Syriac is Jethro (*Yathrūn*). His mother is Makīl the daughter of Lot, and Shuᶜayb was his uncle (al-Thaᶜlabī).
>
> Shuᶜayb is their prophet. He is Ibn Makīl ibn Jokshan (*Yashjan*) according to Ibn Isḥāq. He says: In Syriac he is called Yatrūn, but this is speculation. He is called Shuᶜayb ibn Issachar (*Yashkhar*) ibn Levi ibn Jacob. He is also called Shuᶜayb ibn Nuwayb ibn Ephah (*ᶜAyfā*) ibn Midian ibn Abraham, and he is called Shuᶜayb ibn Ḍayfūr ibn Ephah (*ᶜAytā*) ibn Thābit ibn Midian ibn Abraham, and there are other opinions also (Ibn Kathīr).

In his commentary on Q. 28:25, Ibn Kathīr also states that according to the 'books of the Israelites' the name 'Jethro' (*Thayrūn*) is the name of Moses' father-in-law who is said to be the cousin of Shuᶜayb.[91]

The genealogies provided by Muslim exegesis link Shuᶜayb with a number of related Arab peoples and tribal groupings known from the Bible and other historical sources. Genesis 25:1–4 lists the sons of Abraham and Keturah, his third wife:

> Abraham married another wife whose name was Keturah. She bore him Zimram, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah. Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan, and the sons of Dedan were the Asshurites, the Letushim, and the Leummim. The sons of Midian are Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida and Eldaah. All these are sons of Keturah.

In the genealogies provided by the Muslim exegetes, Shuᶜayb is said to be a descendant of Midian, which would account for his being identified as a Midianite in the Qur'an, or a descendant of Jokshan the brother of Midian. The connection with Midian would place Shuᶜayb in the area near the Gulf of Aqaba in the northwestern part of the Arabian Peninsula. The Assyrian annals of Tiglath-Pileser III (734 BC) and Sargon II (716 BC) also seem to place the tribe of Ephah, the most renowned of the sons of Midian, in the northwestern corner of the Arabian Peninsula.[92]

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Through these Biblical genealogies, Muslim exegesis also links Shuᶜayb to Arab peoples and tribes in the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula. Ibn Kathīr includes in his genealogies one linking Shuᶜayb to two Israelite tribes, through Levi and Issachar (Yashkhar) to Jacob (Gen. 30:17–18), apparently making Shuᶜayb an Israelite prophet. But Yashkhar could be a variant of Jokshan, or of Joktan ibn Eber who is, like Jokshan, also said to be the father of Sheba (Gen. 10:25–30).[93] The southern Arabian connection is also made through Ephah who is associated with Sheba in Isaiah 60:6, and the names of two of Ephah's brothers, Abida and Eldaah, are attested as names of South Arabian kings: Abiyada and Yadail.[94] There is evidence that the prominent ancient city of Dedan, modern al-ᶜUlā at the head of the Wādī al-Qurā, in the northern Arabian Peninsula, had close ties with the Minaean people of the southern Peninsula.[95]

In his *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* and his commentary on Q. 28:25, Ibn Kathīr explains that, historically, the prophet Shuᶜayb cannot be identified with the father-in-law of Moses, although Moses and Shuᶜayb were related by marriage, because Shuᶜayb lived in the time of Abraham and Lot, more than 400 years earlier than the time of Moses.[96] By identifying Shuᶜayb and Jethro, however, Muslim exegesis garners Biblical references to highlight the relationship between the Arab and Israelite prophets. It is Shuᶜayb, rather than another of the descendants of Abraham, who is custodian of the prophethood passed onto Moses and the Israelites. Muslim exegesis identifies Moses with Israel by conflating the account of Moses in Midian (Q. 28:21–8) with the account of Jacob and Laban in Genesis 29. Muslim exegesis also links the acount of Jethro instructing Moses in the administration of God's justice in Exodus 18 with the story of Moses and al-Khiḍr in Q. 18:60–82.[97]

In a similar fashion, Muslim exegesis uses Biblical and other historical references to provide a fuller picture of the prophets Hūd and Ṣaliḥ, exemplifying the role of the Arabs in the history of prophethood. The names of Hūd and Ṣāliḥ occur relatively frequently in the text of the Bible. Hod (*hōd*), one of the sons of Zophah, is mentioned in 1 Chronicles 7:37, and the Abihud (*abīhūd*), a descendant of Benjamin, is mentioned in 1 Chronicles 8:3. Also attested are theophoric names related to Hūd and Ṣāliḥ such as Ammihud (*ᶜammīhūd*) (Numbers 1:10, 2:18, 7:48 and 53, 10:22, 34:20 and 28; 2 Samuel 13:37; 1 Chronicles 7:26, 9:4), Hodaviah (Ezra 2:40; 1 Chr. 5:24, 9:7), Hodiah (Neh. 8:7, 9:5, 10:10, 13 and 18; 1 Chr 4:19), Hodevah (Neh. 7:43).[98] The name Shelah (*šelaḥ*, *šēlā*; Greek *sala*) is found in the theophoric Methuselah, and could be a divine name, perhaps a reference to the Canaanite deity Ṣalaḥ.[99] The name Hūd and its variants, primarily in theophoric names such as *hwdyh* (Hūd+Yahweh), appear almost a dozen times in pre-Islamic inscriptions in Safaitic, Aramaic from Elphantine, Canaanite, Palmyrene, and Nabataean.[100] A close variant of the name also occurs in Assyrian inscriptions (*ḫu-da-a-a*, *ḫu-ud-da-ia*)[101] and in Iranian (Hūdīn).[102] The name Ṣāliḥ (*ṣlḥ*) appears on a number of Safaitic

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cairns found in the basalt desert of Jordan and Iraq,[103] and in variants such as *slī* in Amorite from Mari,[104] *ʾṣlḥ* in Punic and Safaitic,[105] *ṣlḥm* in Haḍramī,[106] with a patronimic suffix (*ṣlḥdw*) in Nabataean found near Dedan,[107] and an Assyrian inscription, dated to 742 BC, has the name *sa-la*.[108]

The names of the people and places associated with Hūd and Ṣāliḥ are also attested outside of the Qur'an and Muslim tradition. An Assyrian inscription of Sargon II, dated to 710 BC, mentions the victory of Sargon II over an Arab tribe named 'Thamūd,' the 'Ibādidi', and the fortress of 'Adumu' of Arabia.[109] The city of Dumah, rendered with an initial *alif* in the LXX, is mentioned in Isaiah 21:11 as a place in the Edomite region of Seir, and could be associated with the Dumat al-Jandal (modern al-Jawf) of the northern Arabian desert on the road between Babylon and Taima.[110] Another Assyrian inscription commemorates the victory of Sennacherib's army against the Arabs and the chasing of the Arab queen to the desert fortress of Adummatu.[111] Also, an 'Iyād' is mentioned in a Palmyrene inscription, and the Greek geographer Ptolemy mentions the 'Oaditai' as a people living in northwestern Arabia.[112]

A number of hellenistic and late antique sources refer to the Thamūd. The Greek historian and geographer Pliny reports that the 'Thamudaei' controlled Dedan and Dumah in the Seleucid period.[113] A fifth-century AD list, the Notitia Dignitatum, representing a military organisation from the reign of Diocletian, mentions the 'Thamudeni' on the Egyptian frontier, and the 'Equites Thamudeni Illyriciani' in Palestine.[114] Diodorus and Pliny state that the 'Thamoudōnoi' dwell along the coast of the Red Sea between al-Muwayliḥ and Rāʾs Karkūma.[115] A Nabataean temple foundation text dated to 166 BC from Rawafa, refers to a Thamudic tribal confederation (*šrkt tmwdw*) operating under Roman control.[116] Another Thamūdic inscription from the area of the northwestern Arabian Peninsula records a war with the 'people of Thamūd' (*ʾl ṯmd*).[117] In other Thamūdic inscriptions, people refer to themselves as being 'Thamūdic' or 'from the Thamūd'.[118]

Archaeologists have identified two separate sites as possible locations for the ruins of the city of Iram, associated with the people of ʿĀd in the Muslim exegesis of Q. 89:6–8. At one of these sites, in Wādī Ramm in the desert east of Aqaba, was discovered a stone reused in a ruined Nabataean temple on which was inscribed in North Arabic the phrase 'Allat the Great who is at Iram' (*ʾlhtʾ rbtʾ dy bʾrm*).[119] The other site, in the gravel desert north of the Dhofar region of Oman toward the Empty Quarter, is a caravan city from the first millennium BC. The combinations *ʿd*, *ʿdty*, *ʿdʾ*, *ʿwd* and *ʿwdw* occur regularly in Thamūdic, Palmyrene, and Nabataean as names of individuals and, perhaps, names referring to groups of people.[120] The term *ʿdd*, attested in Thamūdic and Old Aramaic could also mean a 'messenger' or a 'diviner,' from the root *ʿdd* with the meaning of 'to count'.[121] Iasmakh-Addu appears

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as a royal name at Mari,[122] and Idi-bi-ᵓ-lu the Arab (*a-ru-bu*) is mentioned as being assigned to the Egyptian frontier.[123]

Muslim exegetes provide two distinct genealogies for Hūd and Ṣāliḥ, one of which ties both of these Arab prophets directly into the descendants of Shem listed in Genesis 11:10–26. According to al-Suyūṭī, Ibn Hishām states that Hūd is Eber ibn Arpachshad ibn Shem ibn Noah, and this same genealogy is repeated by Ibn Kathīr.[124] Bedouin traditions regarding the tombs of Hūd and Ṣāliḥ in the Ḥaḍramawt maintain, in parallel with this genealogy, that Ṣāliḥ is Shelah the father of Eber or Hūd.[125] In the Dhofar region of Oman, local tradition preserves the tombs of Hūd ibn Eber (ᶜĀbir), Eber ibn Hūd, and Ṣāliḥ ibn Hūd.[126] In his history, al-Ṭabarī preserves a tradition regarding Noah's prayer for prophets to issue from among his descendants:[127]

> Others besides Ibn Isḥāq have said that Noah prayed that prophets and apostles would be descended from Shem and that he prayed that kings would be among the descendants of Japeth … To Shem were born Eber, Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud and Aram. Shem's place was in Mecca. From the descendants of Arpachshad came the prophets and apostles and the best of humanity, all the Arabs, and the Pharaoahs of Egypt. Descended from Japeth ibn Noah were all the kings of the non-Arabs such as the Turks, the Khazars, and others as well as the Persians.

This prophecy coincides with the genealogy of Genesis 11 where Shem's line through Noah, Shem, Arpachshad, Eber and Shelah culminates in Abraham.[128] In Luke 3:35, Shelah the son of Eber forms a line which culminates in Jesus.[129]

The other genealogies given by Muslim exegetes use the Biblical lineage of Shem to link Hūd and Ṣāliḥ to the Arab peoples who were destroyed by God for not following their prophets. According to al-Suyūṭī, Wahb ibn Munabbih relates that Ṣāliḥ was a son of ᶜUbayd ibn Ḥāyir ibn Thamūd ibn Ḥāyir ibn Shem ibn Noah, and al-Thaᶜlabī gives the list as Ṣāliḥ ibn ᶜUbayd ibn Āṣif ibn Māshaj ibn ᶜUbayd ibn Hādhir ibn Thamūd ibn ᶜĀd ibn Uz ibn Aram ibn Shem ibn Noah. Hūd was a son of ᶜAbd Allāh ibn Rabāḥ ibn Ḥāwidh ibn ᶜĀd ibn Uz ibn Aram ibn Shem ibn Noah.[130] The genealogies of both Hūd and Ṣāliḥ use Shem or his grandson as the Biblical point onto which is grafted the origins of the divisions among the ancient Arabs. In the Biblical account, Uz is located in northwestern Arabia (Jeremiah 25:20, Job 1:1, Lamentations 4:21), between Dedan and Edom, and thus associated with the origins of the peoples of Arabia.[131] On the authority of Ibn Isḥāq, al-Ṭabarī writes writes that it was during the lifetime of Eber's son and his descendants that the world was divided into regions and the language of each region became different. The Biblical

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Peleg, son of Eber, is called 'Qāsim' ('one who divides') in Arabic because of the division of the Earth at his time.[132]

Muslim genealogists divide Arabs into two groups, the 'original Arabs' (*al-ᶜArab al-ᶜāriba*), also known as the 'extinct' of 'long-ago Arabs' (*al-ᶜArab al-bāᵓida*), and the 'arabicised Arabs' (*al-ᶜArab al-mustaᶜriba*):[133]

> Aram ibn Shem ibn Noah begat Uz ibn Aram, Gether ibn Aram, and Hul ibn Aram. Then Uz ibn Aram begat Gether ibn Uz, ᶜĀd ibn Uz, and ᶜUbayl ibn Uz. Gether ibn Aram begat Thamūd ibn Gether and Judays ibn Gether. They were an Arab people speaking the Muḍarī language. The Arabs called these nations the 'original Arabs' because Arabic was their original language, but they called the descendants of Ishmael ibn Abraham the 'arabicised Arabs' because they spoke the language of these people after they had settled among them. The ᶜĀd, Thamūd, Amalekites, Umaym, Jāsim, Judays, and the Ṭasm are the original Arabs.

Ibn Kathīr gives a slightly different list of the 'original Arabs' that includes the Midianites, which would categorise the prophet Shuᶜayb as belonging with Hūd and Ṣāliḥ:[134]

> The Arabs who were before Ishmael were called the 'original Arabs'. They were many tribes, among them ᶜĀd, Thamūd, Jurhum, Ṭasm, Umaym, Midian, Amalekites, ᶜUbayl, Jāsim, Qaḥṭān, the Banū Yaqṭān and others.

The Arabic language of Ishmael and his descendents (*al-ᶜarabiyya al-fuṣḥā*), from whom descends the Prophet Muḥammad, was learned from the 'original Arabs' with whom Ishmael lived in Mecca, including the Jurhum, the Amalekites, the people of Yemen, and the other Arab peoples who preceded Abraham.[135] But Ishmael and his descendents, including the Arab tribes, such as Kedar from which the Prophet Muḥammad is said to have descended, are to be distinguished sharply from the older Arab tribes to whom Hūd and Ṣāliḥ were sent.

The Biblical image of these ancient Arab tribal groups is negative, in that many of the 'original Arabs' are portrayed as the enemies of the Israelites. According to al-Ṭabarī, Lud ibn Shem ibn Noah begat Ṭasm and Amalek, and Amalek begat all the peoples of Syria, the Canaanites, the Egyptians, the Jāsim, the Umaym, and the Judays.[136] In Jewish exegesis, Amalek is likewise the forefather of the enemies of the Israelites and the Jews. Haman's persecution of the Israelites in the Esther story is said to be due to the fact that he is a descendant of Amalek,[137] and Muslim exegesis recognises the presence of Haman alongside Pharoah in building the tower of Babel in Q. 28:36–42 and Q. 40:36–7. Amalek is also linked with Edom, with the pharoah

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of Egypt, and with the Philistines. Ibn al-Jawzī and others explain that the giants inhabiting the Holy Land in the time of Moses were the Amalekites, and the giant Goliath whom David defeated in Q. 2:251 was from the Amalekites who had conquered Gaza and Ashkelon.[138] In his history of Mecca, Muḥammad ibn ᶜAbd Allāh al-Azraqī (d. 222/837) narrates how the Jurhum and the Amalekites, to whom Ishmael was sent as a prophet and rejected, were expelled from Mecca by Quṣayy and ᶜAbd al-Muṭṭalib, the grandfather of the Prophet Muḥammad, who recovered the well of Zamzam.[139] This coincides with God's statement in Deuteronomy 9:5 that he is commanding the Israelites to enter the Holy Land, not as a reward for them, but so that he might use them as the instrument to punish the wickedness of the people occupying the land.

Muslim exegesis associates the famous ruins of the Arabian Peninsula and elsewhere with the original Arabs as a means to underline the failure of these peoples to obey the prophets sent to them. According to al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Kathīr, Ṣāliḥ moved to Mecca after the destruction of the Thamūd and the restriction of access to the place where Thamūd had lived.[140] Others report an incident when the Prophet Muḥammad went on a campaign to Tabūk, stopped at Madāᵓin Ṣāliḥ, and discovered the grave of Abū Righāl.[141] Ibn Jurayj reports that the Prophet Muḥammad prohibited his followers from entering the area of or taking water from Madāᵓin Ṣāliḥ, also called al-Ḥijr.[142] This parallels the association of other ancient ruins with locations where God destroyed people who rejected prophets such as the ruins of Baᶜalbek and Elijah. The peoples identified as the 'original Arabs' are the peoples identified in the Bible as being destroyed by God, such as in the narratives of the Israelite conquest of the Holy Land.

## Conclusions

Muslim historians and exegetes mention other prophets who were considered to be Arab prophets, such as Khālid ibn Sinān ibn ᶜAyth al-ᶜAbsī who lived between Jesus and Muḥammad.[143] The prophets Saṭīḥ and Shiqq prophesy to a South Arabian king about the future mission of the Prophet Muḥammad, and other prophecies of Saṭīḥ are cited.[144] The list also includes local Arab prophets such as the prophet Raḍwā in al-Jabal al-Akhḍar in Oman, the prophet ᶜUmrān in Ṣalāla, and the prophets Ayla and Zurayq in Lebanon.[145]

The Muslim attempt to demonstrate that the prophethood of Muḥammad is a continuation and culmination of the history of ancient prophecy is directly linked to the asserted authority of the revelation contained in the text of the Qur'an. Muslim exegetes make reference to passages in the Bible and other pre-Islamic literature to show the antiquity of the model of prophethood represented by Muḥammad and the Qur'an. In addition, Muslim exegetes draw upon the well-documented tradition of cultic activity attested in the Arabian Peninsula and throughout the ancient Near

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East. In effect, the Muslim exegetes construct a sort of Muslim 'Bible Theology' not unlike Christian 'Old Testament Theology' which appropriates the Jewish Bible to the New Testament model of Jesus.

This strategy of using scripture shared by another, older religious tradition to establish the precedent and authority of a newer religious identity is familiar from the history of religions. The scripture of many religions is claimed to be a missing part or completion of an already known text. The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints maintains that the Book of Mormon is part of the history of the Israelites lost from the extant Old Testament.[146] Certain Buddhist sutras are regarded as lost portions of the Buddhist canon hidden from public knowledge until the appointed time of their discovery. 4 Ezra 14:37–48 refers to the 94 books produced by the prophet Ezra, only 24 of which were made public while 70 were to be kept hidden. The Odes of Solomon (23:5–10) refers to the 'heavenly letter' unable to be obtained and the Life of Adam and Eve narrates how Seth hid tablets containing secret revelations which are found by Enoch and on the basis of which he is able to predict the coming of Jesus (50:1–3). Similar accounts are found in Philo, Josephus, 2 Enoch 33:8–12, Genesis Rabbah 26, and Abot de Rabbi Nathan 31.[147]

Some of these and other scriptures are regarded as replacing the earlier, already known canon of scripture. The Book of Jubilees, for example, refers to the 'first book of law' which is to be understood in light of the 'second book' of the law disclosed in Jubilees (6:22; 30:12, 21; 50:6). Parallel to the rabbinic notion of the oral Torah, the Pseudo-Clementines explains that whole of the Torah was not written down by Moses and false parts of the written Torah were interpolated by later scribes:[148]

> Moses delivered the law of God orally to seventy wise men that it might be handed down and administered in continuous sequence. After the death of Moses, however, it was written down not by Moses himself, but by an unknown person … But how, after his death, could Moses write: 'And Moses died …'? And as in the time after Moses – about five hundred or more years later – it was found in the temple that had lately been built, and a further five hundred years it was carried away, and in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar it was consumed by fire. And since it was written in the time after Moses and was repeatedly destroyed, the wisdom of Moses is shown in this; for he did not commit it to writing, foreseeing its disappearance. But those who wrote the law, since they did not foresee its destruction, are convicted of ignorance and were not prophets.

The Damascus Rule (5) refers to the 'sealed book of the Law' which was hidden in the Ark and not opened until the coming of the priest Zadoq. The Temple Scroll

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(6:11–7:6) also mentions the 'second Torah' found in a sealed ark. The Epic of Gilgamesh refers to a lapis lazuli tablet sealed in a special chest,[149] and a story found in the *Alf layla wa-layla* and in the *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* of al-Thaᶜlabī tells of how Bulūqiyā, the son of the Israelite king Josiah, found writings in a box that told of the coming of the Prophet Muḥammad.[150]

Muslim exegetical identification of the Arab prophets in the Bible provides an example of how Islam used a scriptural concept and content shared with Jews and Christians to establish its own distinct identity and authority. Despite the widespread idea that Muslims do not accept the Bible as authoritative and dismiss its content as unreliable, it is evident that Muslim exegetes did use the Bible to demonstrate the authority of the Prophet Muḥammad and the Qur'an. In these examples, Muslim scholars do not appear to be making the claim that the text of the Bible is not sound or that the content has been changed. It would be a misleading simplification to characterise the Muslim approach to discrepancies between the Bible and Qur'an as all being due to Jewish and Christian alteration (*taḥrīf*) of the revealed text.[151] Muslim scholars do refer to the conscious alteration of the contents of the text of the Bible by the Jews in the time of the Prophet Muḥammad, reportedly done in an attempt to hide Biblical passages that would confirm the authority of the Prophet Muḥammad. ᶜAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥazm (d. 456/1064), using the narrative of the Bible itself, as does the Pseudo-Clementines, explains that the integrity of the text of the Bible was reportedly lost a number of times in Israelite history, including during the time of the divided kingdoms and in the aftermath of the Babylonian exile.[152] In his exegesis of Q. 7:154, Ibn Kathīr relates that Moses threw and broke the tablets of revelation he received from God, and that the pieces were collected later and eventually stored in the treasury of the Israelite kings until the coming of Islam.[153] Although rabbinic sources state that God replaced the tablets Moses broke,[154] Ibn ᶜAbbās is reported to have said that when the Torah was revealed to Moses, God withdrew (*rafaᶜa*) six of the seven parts that were sent down originally.[155]

In other cases, Muslim sources draw upon and employ Biblical motifs from a variety of contexts to describe the Prophet Muḥammad in terms familiar to Jewish and Christian exegesis of the Bible. Thus the depiction of the Prophet Muḥammad in Q. 7:157:

> *Those who follow the apostle, the gentile prophet (al-nabī al-ummī) whom they find written with them in the Torah and the Gospel. He commands the good and forbids the wrong. He allows them the good things and forbids them what is bad. He releases them of their heavy burdens and the yokes that are upon them. Those who believe in him, honor him, help him, and follow the light which is sent down with him, they are the ones who will prosper.*

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According to Naṣr ibn Muḥammad al-Samarqandī (d. 375/985), the heavy weight of the burdens and yokes upon people is due to the Jews.[156] ᶜAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ᶜAlī ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200) states, on the authority of Ibn ᶜAbbās, that this heavy burden was the testament that God made with the Israelites when he revealed the Torah to them, which included keeping the Sabbath and certain food prohibitions.[157] This understanding of the Torah as a punishment imposed upon the Israelites for their disobedience to God in the wilderness of wandering is echoed in the Gospel of Matthew 11:28–30 and by the New Testament concept of the Torah as a curse, found in Galatians 3, drawing upon Deuteronomy 27:26 and 21:23.[158]

Perhaps more common than the allegation of the purposeful or accidental alteration of the text of the Bible is the claim that Jews and Christians 'altered' the Bible by misinterpreting the revelation contained within the text. Al-Shahrastānī maintains that there are two types of alteration of the Bible: alteration of the text (*taḥrīf al-naṣṣ*) and alteration of the meaning (*taḥrīf al-maᶜanī*) of the text.[159] As in the debates between the Jews of Medina and the Prophet Muḥammad reported in later Muslim exegesis, the dispute is not about the content of the Bible but about the refusal of the Jews to acknowledge the application of the content to the Prophet Muḥammad. What appears to be at issue in the discrepancy over the mention of the Prophet Muḥammad, and the other Arab prophets in the Bible, is not missing content but a question of interpretation.

NOTES

1 Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Taᵓrīkh al-rusul wa'l-mulūk* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, n.d.), vol. 1, p. 139.

2 For further discussion of these verses in relation to the Jews of Medina in the time of the Prophet Muḥammad, see Brannon Wheeler, 'The "New Torah": Some Early Islamic Views of the Quran and Other Revealed Books', *Graeco-Arabica* 7–8 (1999–2000), pp. 371–604; Brannon Wheeler, 'Israel and the Torah of Muhammad' in John Reeves (ed.), *Quran and Bible* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2003), pp. 61–86.

On the genre of 'tests of the Jews' (*miḥan al-Yahūd*), see Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī ᶜulūm al-Qurᵓān*, ed. Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Bughā (Damascus: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1416 AH), *B.* 9; Badr al-Dīn al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān fī ᶜulūm al-Qurᵓān*, ed. Yusūf ᶜAbd al-Raḥmān al-Marᶜashlī et al. (Beirut: Dār al-Maᶜarifa, 1415 AH), ch. 1; Samauᵓal al-Maghribī, *Ifḥām al-Yahūd*, ed. and tr. M. Permlann in *Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research* 32 (1964), pp. 24–7, pp. 42–4.

3 See Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī'l-taᵓrīkh*, ed. C.J. Tornberg as *Ibn-el-Athiri, chronicon quod perfectissmum inscribitur* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1867; reprinted Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, n.d.), vol. 1, p. 93.

4 Taken from ᶜAlī ibn Balaban al-Farsī, *Iḥsān bi-tartīb Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1996), vol. 1, pp. 207–8, ḥadīth 363.

5 See Geo Widengren, *The Ascension of the Apostle and the Heavenly Book*, Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift 1950:7 (Uppsala: A.B. Lundequistksa Bokhandeln, 1950), pp. 77–8. Also see the examples and discussion in Julius Ruska, *Tabula Smaragdina: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der hermetischen Literatur* (Heidelbert: Carl Winter's Universitätsbbuchhandlung,

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1926), pp. 112–14, p. 135 and passim; Geo Widengren, *Muḥammad, the Apostle of God, and his Ascension*, Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift 1955:1 (Uppsala: A.B. Lundequistska Bokhandeln, 1955), esp. p. 24, pp. 141–4.

6 See Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Thaᶜlabī, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2000), pp. 262–3; William Brinner (tr.), *ᶜArāʾis al-majālis fī qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ or "Lives of the Prophets" as Recounted by Abū Isḥāq Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Ibrāhīm al-Thaᶜlabī* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2002), p. 434.

7 See al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, *K.* 1, *B.* 139. Al-Suyūṭī relates the opinion to Q. 26:193–4 and later cites al-Juwaynī as the authority for this opinion.

8 See al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, *K.* 1, *B.* 143; al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, '*K. Badʾ al-waḥī*', '*B. Kayfa kāna badʾ al-waḥī*', ḥadīth 2; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, (Beirut: n.p., 1994), '*K. Faḍāʾil al-saḥāba*', '*B. Ṭiyb ᶜaraq al-nabī fī'l-bard*', ḥadīth 2333; Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad* (Cairo: n.p., 1895; reprinted 1969), vol. 2, p. 222.

9 Cited in al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, *K.* 1, *B.* 143.

10 On the report, given on the authority of Ibn Abī Ḥātim from Sufyān al-Thawrī, that all revelations were sent down in Arabic, see al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, *K.* 1, *B.* 144. On the meaning of the phrase 'Arabic Qur'an', see Widengren, *Muḥammad, the Apostle of God*, p. 117.

11 See Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabāʾī, *al-Mizān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* (Beirut: al-Muʾassasa al-ᶜIlmī li'l-Maṭbūᶜāt, 1997), on Q. 14:4.

12 See Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, 1990), on Q. 14:4.

13 Ismāᶜīl ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ᶜaẓīm* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, n.d.), on Q. 14:4. For the ḥadīth report, see Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vol. 5, p. 158.

14 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, on Q. 16:84.

15 See Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Abū'l-Suᶜūd, *Irshād al-ᶜaql al-salīm ilā mazāyā al-kitāb al-karīm*, ed. ᶜAbd al-Laṭīf ᶜAbd al-Raḥmān (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, 1999), on Q. 4:41.

16 See ᶜAbd al-Ḥaqq ibn ᶜAṭiyya, *al-Muḥrar al-wajīz fī tafsīr al-kitāb al-ᶜaẓīz*, ed. Muḥammad ᶜAbd al-Salām ᶜAbd al-Shāfī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, 2001), on Q. 32:3.

17 See Ibn ᶜAṭiyya, *al-Muḥrar al-wajīz*, on Q. 32:3.

18 See Maḥmūd ibn ᶜUmar al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf ᶜan ḥaqāʾiq ghawāmiḍ al-tanzīl wa-ᶜuyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-taʾwīl*, ed. Muḥammad ᶜAbd al-Salām Thāhīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, 1995), on Q. 28:46.

19 See Muḥammad ibn Saᶜd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, ed. Muḥammad ᶜAbd al-Qādir ᶜAṭāʾ (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, 1990), 1:44. The number of apostles (*rusul*), given as 315, is cited from the same ḥadīth report with Abū Dharr as found in Ibn Ḥibbān, but with a different number, in 1:45.

20 See ᶜAbd Allāh ibn ᶜUmar al-Bayḍāwī, *al-Anwār al-tanzīl wa'l-asrār al-taʾwīl* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, 1988), on Q. 22:52. Also see the brief discussion in A.H. Mathias Zahniser, art. 'Messenger' in Jane Dammen McAuliffe (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān* (5 vols, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2003), vol. 3, pp. 380–2.

21 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, on Q. 54:23 where the 'warners' rejected by Thamūd is identified with Ṣāliḥ.

22 See R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (New York: Mᶜ Graw-Hill, 1961), esp. pp. 465–7; Merrill F. Unger, *New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, ed. R.K. Harrison (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), pp. 908–9.

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23 See Stephen Goranson, art. 'Nazarenes' in David Noel Freedman (ed.), *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (6 vols, New York: Doubleday, 1992), vol. 4, pp. 1049–50.

24 See Stuart Chepey, *Nazirites in Late Second Temple Judaism: A Survey of Ancient Jewish Writings, the New Testament, Archaeological Evidence, and Other Writings from Late Antiquity* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2005).

25 Cited in Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī, *Kitāb al-athār al-bāqiyya*, tr. E. Sachau as *Chronology of the Ancient Nations*, (London: W.H. Allen, 1879), p. 190.

26 See M216c in F.C. Andreas and W. Henning, *Mitteliranische Manichaica aus Chinesisch-Turkestan*, Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften II (Berlin, 1932), pp. 301–2, cited in Jes P. Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature: Representative Texts Chiefly from Middle Persian and Parthian Writing*s (Delmar: Scholars Facsimiles and Reprints, 1975), pp. 20–1.

27 See M2 (Middle Persian) in Andreas and Henning, *Mitteliranische Manichaica II*, pp. 301–6, cited in Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature*, pp. 21–3. Also M5815 (Parthian), in Andreas and Henning, *Mitteliranische Manichaica aus Chinesisch-Turkestan*, Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften III (Berlin, 1934), pp. 857–60, cited in Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature*, pp. 23–4.

28 Cited from Han J.W. Drijvers, 'The Acts of Thomas' in Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Shneemelcher (eds), *New Testament Apocrypha* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), pp. 322–411, esp. p. 339. For lists of the twelve disciples, see Matthew 10:2–4; Mark 3:16–19; Luke 6:14–16; Acts 1:13.

29 See D. Nagel, 'Die apokryphen Apostelakten des 2. und 3. Jahrhunderts in der manichäischen Literatur. Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach den christlichen Elementen im Manichäismusm' in K.W. Troger (ed.), *Gnosis und Neues Testament: Studien aus Religionswissenschaft and Theologie* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1973), pp. 149–82, esp. p. 152; J.D. Kaestli, 'L'utilisation des actes apocryphes des apotres dans le manichéisme', in M. Krause (ed.), *Gnosis and Gnosticism*, Nag Hammadi Studies VIII (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1977), pp. 107–16.

30 See Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica*, bk 3, ch. 1, tr. G.A. Williamson as *The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine* (New York: Penguin, 1965; reprinted 1984).

31 See Hennecke and Shneemelcher (eds), *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 2, p. 19.

32 On Ephrem and the *kārōzē*, see Ephrem, *Opera Syri* (Paris: P. Mellier, 1842), vol. 2, p. 487; Widengren, *Muhammad, the Apostle of God*, pp. 61–2. On al-Bīrūnī's comments on the 'Gospel of the Seventy', see Sachau, *The Chronology of Ancient Nations*, p. 27. For a possible fragment of this text, preserved in Uighur and recovered at Bulayīq near Turfan, see A. von le Coq, *Ein christliches und ein manichäisches Manuskriptfragment in türkischer Sprache aus Turfan (Chinesisch-Turkistan)*, Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Berlin, 1909), pp. 1205–8; Hennecke and Shneemelcher (eds), *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 1, pp. 380–1.

33 On the Acts of John, see François Halkin (ed.), *Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca*, 3rd edn (3 vols and supplements, Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1957), vol. 2, pp. 916–7; Hennecke and Shneemelcher (eds), *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 2, p. 430. On Addai, see George Phillips, *The Doctrine of Addai, the Apostle* (London: Trübner and Co., 1876), p. 5.

34 For an examination of some of the traditions related to the 70 nations and the angels which presided over them, see Jarl E. Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord: Samaritan and Jewish Concepts of Intermediation and the Origin of Gnosticism*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 36 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1985), esp. pp. 192–218.

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35 On these traditions, see Uri Rubin, *Between Bible and Qurʾān: The Children of Israel and the Islamic Self-Image*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam 17 (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1999), pp. 40–4.

36 For the Acts of Matthew, see Hennecke and Shneemelcher (eds), *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 1, pp. 360–461. For the Armenian 'Historia Iacobi apostoli', see Paul Peeters (ed.), *Bibliotheca hagiographica orientalis*, Subsidia Hagiographica 10 (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1910) p. 419; Kh. Tsherakhian, *Thesaurus litterarum armeniarum III* (Venetiis: n.p., 1904), pp. 174–89, tr. L. Leloir as *Corpus Christianorum*, Series Apocryphorum 3.1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1986), pp. 270–88.

37 For ḥadīth report references to *khātam al-anbiyīn*, see al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *K.* 61, *B.* 18, *B.* 65 on Q. 17:5; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *K.* 1, *B.* 327; Abū Dāʾūd, *Sunan* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, n.d.), *K.* 34, *B.*1; al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmiᶜ al-ṣaḥīḥ* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, n.d.), *K.* 35, B. 10; al-Dārimī, *Sunan* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, 1407), *Muqaddima*, p. 8; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vol. 1, p. 296; vol. 2, p. 398, p. 436; vol. 4, pp. 127–8; vol. 5, p. 278.

38 See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, on Q. 33:40. Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vol. 5, p. 137; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *K.* 15, *B.* 507; al-Nasāʾī, *Sunan* (Beirut: n.p., n.d.), *K.* 8, *B.* 7, Ibn Mājah, *Sunan* (Cairo: ᶜIsā al-Bābī al-Halabī, 1972), *K.* 36, *B.* 33.

39 See Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *K.* 33, *B.* 44; *K.* 44, *B.* 30–1; Abū Dāʾūd, *Sunan*, *K.* 34, *B.* 1; al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmiᶜ al-ṣaḥīḥ*, *K.* 31, *B.* 43; *K.* 46, *B.* 20; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, *Muqaddima* p. 11; *K.* 6, *B.* 27; *K.* 36, *B.* 33; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vol. 2, p. 172, p. 212, p. 297; vol. 3, p. 32, p. 267; vol. 5, p. 278; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, on Q. 33:40.

40 See Muḥammad ibn ᶜAbd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *Kitāb al-milal wa'l-niḥal*, ed. W. Cureton as *Book of Religious and Philosophical Sects* (2 vols, London: For the Society for the Publication of Oriental Texts, 1846), vol. 1, p. 192; Gedaliahu G. Stroumsa, '"Seal of the Prophets" the Nature of a Manicahaean Metaphor', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 7 (1986), pp. 61–74, esp. pp. 62–3.

41 See, for example, Ibn Abī Shaybah, *al-Muṣannaf fi'l-aḥādīth wa'l-āthār*, ed. ᶜAbd al-Khāliq al-Afghānī (Bombay: n.p., 1979–83), *K.* 14, ḥadīth 18404; Joseph Schacht, art. 'Aḥmad' in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, vol. 1, p. 267; W. Montgomery Watt, 'His name is Aḥmad', *Muslim World* 43 (1953), pp. 110–17; A. Guthrie and E.F.F. Bishop, 'The Paraclete, Almunhamanna and Aḥmad', *Muslim World* 41 (1951), pp. 251–6.

42 See Ephrem, *Op. Syr.*, vol. 2, p. 496; Ephrem, *Historia Sancti Ephraemi*, ed. T.J. Lamy as *Sancti Ephraemi Syri hymni et sermones* (4 vols, Mechliniae: H. Dessain, Summi Pontificis, S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide et Archiepiscopatus Mechliniensis Typographus, 1886), vol. 2, cols 3–89.

43 Cited in Polotsky, *Manichäische Handschriften der Sammlung A. Chester Beatty* I. *Manichäische Homilien* (Stuttgart, 1934), vol. 11, pp. 23–7.

44 See Sachau, *The Chronology of Ancient Nations*, p. 190.

45 See Kephalaia 1:12, 11.9–14, 30, cited from Iaian Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher: The Edited Coptic Manichaean Texts in Translation with Commentary*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995); Samuel N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China: A Historical Survey* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), p. 33. Also see Widengren, *The Great Vohu Manah and the Apostle of God: Studies in Iranian and Manichaean Religion*. Uppsala Universitet Årsskrift 1945:5 (Uppsala: A.B. Lundequistska, 1945), pp. 10–41.

46 See Mark Lidzbarski, *Ginza: Der Schat, oder, Das grosse Buch der Mandaer* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1925), 243:23; 109:15–17; 286:13–15; J.H. Petermann,

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*Thesaurus S. Liber Magnus Vulgo 'Liber Adami' appelatus Opeus Mandaeorum Summi ponderis* (Leipzig: P.O. Weigel, 1867), 189:9–11.

47 See Willis Barnstone (ed.), *The Other Bible* (San Fransisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1984) p. 135.

48 See I. Goldziher, 'Neuplatonische und Gnostische Elemente im Ḥadit', *Zeitschrift für Assyrologie* 22 (1909), pp. 317–39; Uri Rubin, 'Pre-existence and Light: Aspects of the Concept of Nūr Muḥammad', *Israel Oriental Studies* 5 (1975), pp. 62–119, esp. pp. 108–9.

49 For Mani as the Buddha of Light, see the Mo-ni kunag-fo chiao-fa i-lueh hymnscroll; Tsui Chi (tr.), 'Mo-ni chiao hsia-pu tsan, the lower (second?) section of the Manichaean hymns', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 11 (1943), pp. 174–219. For Mani as the 'divine Mani Buddha' in a Uighur text, see *Abhandlungen der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 2 (1922), p. 15; Jes. P. Asmussen, *Manichaean Literature: Representative Texts, Chiefly from Middle Persian and Parthian Writings* (Delmar: Scholars Facsimiles and Reprints, 1975), p. 51. Also see the comparative study of H.J. Klimkeit, 'Der Buddha Henoch: Qumran und Turfan', *Zeitschrift für Religions-und Geistesgeschichte* 32 (1980), pp. 367–76.

For Mani as an avatar of Lao-tzu, see E. Chavannes and P. Pelliot, 'Un traité manichéen retrouvé en Chine', *Journal Asiatique* series 10e, vol. 18 (1911), pp. 499–617 and series 11, vol. 1 (1913), pp. 99–199; pp. 261–392.

50 See Abū ᶜAbd Allāh Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muᶜjam al-buldān* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāᵓ al-Turāth al-ᶜArab, 1979), vol. 1, pp. 254–5.

51 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiᶜ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurᵓān* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, 1992), on Q. 6:92.

52 For some of the traditions linking Adam and the pre-existent Prophet Muḥammad, see Ibn Saᶜd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, ed. Iḥṣān ᶜAbbās (Beirut: Dār Ṣadir, 1960), 1:149. This ḥadīth report is discussed in Jane Dammen McAuliffe, 'The Prediction and Prefiguration of Muḥammad', in John C. Reeves (ed.), *Bible and Qurᵓān: Essays in Scriptural Intertextuality* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), pp. 107–31, esp. pp. 114–15. Also see the commentaries on the primordial covenant made with the descendants of Adam in Q. 7:172 and in Rubin, 'Pre-existence and Light', pp. 67–83.

53 See, for example, al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, *K.* 2, *B.* 1070.

54 See the groundbreaking work of Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds: Medieval Islam and Bible Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), esp. pp. 75–110. For a list of the Biblical verses used in Muslim polemics, see E. Ashtor, *Memorial Volume for the Vienna Rabbinical Seminar* (Jerusalem: n.p., 1946); W.M Watt, 'The Early Development of the Muslim Attitude toward the Bible', *Transactions, Glasgow University Oriental Society* 16 (1955–6), pp. 50–62; R.G. Khoury, 'Quelques réflexions sur les citations de la Bible dans les premieres générations islamiques', *Bulletin des Etudes Orientales* 29 (1977), pp. 269ff; I. Goldziher, 'Über muhammadanische Polemik gegen Ahl al-kitāb', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 32 (1878), pp. 341–87 (=*Gesammelte Schriften* (Hildesheim, 1968), vol. 2, pp. 1–47).

55 See Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, pp. 77; M.J. de Goeje, 'Quotations from the Bible in the Qoran and the Tradition' in G.A. Kohut (ed.), *Semitic Studies in Memory of A. Kohut* (Berlin: Calvary, 1897), pp. 179–85; A. Baumstark, 'Arabische Übersetzungen eines altsyrischen Evengelientextes und die Sure 21, 105 zitierte Psalmenübersetzung', *Oriens Christianus*, series 3d, vol. 9 (1934), pp. 165–88.

56 See al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, on Q. 21:105. Note that, according to al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl*, on Q. 21:105, it is the '*zubūr*' which is considered to be a generic term for the books revealed.

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57 See Ibn ᶜAṭiyya, *al-Muḥrar al-wajīz*, on Q. 21:105.

58 Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmiᶜ li'l-aḥkām al-Qurʾān* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ᶜArab, 1985), on Q. 21:105.

59 See al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiᶜ al-bayān*, on Q. 21:105.

60 See Schacht, art. 'Aḥmad', p. 267; Montgomery Watt, 'His name is Aḥmad'; Guthrie and Bishop, 'The Paraclete, Almunhamanna and Aḥmad'.

61 Ibn Isḥāq, *al-Sīra al-nabawiyya*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld as *Das Leben Muhammeds nach Muhammed Ibn Ishak* (2 vols, Göttingen: Dieterichsche Universitats – Buchhandlung, 1858–60), vol. 1, pp. 150–4; A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ibn Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955; reprinted Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 104–7. The same point is made in Schacht, art. 'Aḥmad', p. 267. The passage may be found in *The Palestinian Syriac Lectionary of the Gospels: re-edited from two Sinai mss and from P. de Lagarde's edition of the 'evangeliarium Hieroslymitanum'*, ed. Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Trübner, 1899), pp. 23–4. John 14:16 (51) and 16:7 (54–5) which have mention of the '*paraklētos*' in the Greek text are also translated as '*menaḥḥemana*' or '*menaḥḥeman*' in the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary.

62 See Wüstenfeld, *Das Leben Muhammeds*, p. 150; Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, p. 104. Note that it is not necessary to assume that the Arabic passage was taken from a written copy of the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary, but only that a Syriac version of this verse, which coincides with the three extant manuscripts of the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary, was known by Ibn Isḥāq or his sources. The three manuscripts, designated as codices A, B, and C are usually dated to the early eleventh and early twelfth centuries BC. For a discussion of the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary, esp. on its relation to the Greek lectionary, see Bruce Metzger, 'A Comparison of the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary and the Greek Gospel Lectionary' in E. Earle Ellis and Max Wilcox (ed.), *Neotestamentica et Semitica: Studies in honour of Matthew Black* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1969), pp. 209–20.

63 On the Jewish and Christian exegesis of the 'servant' passages in Isaiah, see Christopher North, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah: An Historical and Critical Study*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), esp. pp. 6–22.

64 See the use of this passage in the testimony of Kaᶜb al-Aḥbār in al-Bayhaqī, *Dalāʾil al-nubūwa: maᶜarifa aḥwāl ṣāḥib al-sharīᶜa* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, 1405 AH), vol. 1, pp. 276–377; Ibn Bukayr, *Kitāb al-siyar wa'l-maghāzī li-Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār (Damascus: n.p., 1978), pp. 141–2; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa'l-nihāya*, vol. 6, p. 61. Also see the discussion in Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder: The Life of Muḥammad as Viewed by the Early Muslims: A Textual Analysis* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995), pp. 30–1 and Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, p. 25.

65 See ᶜAlī ibn Rabban, *Kitāb al-dīn wa'l-dawla*, ed. and tr. A. Mingana as *The Book of Religion and Empire by ᶜAlī Ṭabarī* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1922), p. 85; tr. pp. 99–100; Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, p. 84. On Ibn Rabban, see D.S. Martoliouth, 'On the "Book of Religion and Empire" by ᶜAlī ibn Rabban al-Ṭabarī', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 16 (1930) pp. 165–82; F. Taeschner, 'Die Alttestamentlischen Bibelzitate vor allem aus dem Pentateuch im Al-Ṭabarī's "Kitāb ad-Dīn wad-Dawla", und ihre Bedeutung guer die Frage nach der Echtheit dieser Schrift', *Oriens Christianus*, 3rd series, 9 (1934) pp. 23–39; ᶜA.M. Sharfī, *al-Fikr al-Islāmī fī'l-radd ᶜalā'l-Naṣārā* (Tunis: n.p., 1986), esp. pp. 128–35; J.M. Gaudeul, *Riposte aux Chrétiens par ᶜAli Al-Ṭabari* (Rome: PISAI, 1995).

66 See Muḥammad ibn Ẓafar, *Khayr al-bishar bi-khayr al-bashar* (Cairo: n.p., 1863), pp. 16–20; Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, pp. 84–6.

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89 Al-Thaᶜlabī, *ᶜArāᵓis al-majālis*, p. 167.

90 Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāᵓ*, p. 221.

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124 See al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, *K.* 2, *B.* 1066; Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ*, p. 108.

125 See, for example, the observations of Theodore Bent, *Southern Arabia* (London: Smith Elder & Co., 1900; reprinted Reading: Garnett Publishing, 1994), pp. 131–2. Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, s.v. Ṣanʿāʾ records that the city of Ṣanʿāʾ was named after Ṣanʿāʾ ibn Azāl ibn Yaqṭan ibn Eber (ʿĀbir) ibn Shelah (Shāliḥ).

126 See ʿAlī Aḥmad al-Shaḥrī, *Lughat ʿĀd* (Salalah: n.p., 2000), pp. 192–9.

127 Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 1, pp. 215–16; Brinner, *Lives of the Prophets*, p. 14.

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128 According to Gen 25:1–7, the sons of Abraham and Keturah include Yoqshān who has two sons (MT): Sheba (LXX: Saba) and Dedan (LXX: Daidan) and LXX adds a third: Taima. On this issue, see J.A. Montgomery, *Arabia and the Bible* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1934).

129 On this insight, see Hess, art. 'Shelah'. Note that al-Ṭabarī mentions the omission of Canaan, the father of Shelah and son of Arpachshad, from the list in Genesis, as it appears in the Lukan genealogy. See al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 1, pp. 216–17; Brinner, *Lives of the Prophets*, p. 15.

130 See al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, *K.* 2, *B.* 1066; Brinner, *Lives of the Prophets*, p. 105, p. 114.

131 See E. Knauf, art. 'Uz' in David Noel Freedman (ed.), *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (6 vols, New York: Doubleday, 1992). Jewish and Christian tradition locates this with the abode of Job, mentioned in Job 1:1, at Shaykh Saᶜd in southern Syria. See G. Schmitt, 'Die Heimat Hiobs', ZDPV 101 (1985), pp. 56–63; E. Knauf, 'Suppementa Ismaelitica 4. Ijobs Heimat. BN 22 (1983), pp. 25–9.

132 See al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 1, pp. 216–17; Brinner, *Lives of the Prophets*, p. 15. See also ᶜUbayd ibn Sharya, *Akhbār al-Yaman*, ed. F. Krenkow in appendix of his edition of Ibn Hishām, *Kitāb al-tijān* (Hyderabad: Matbaᶜat Majlis Dāʾirat al-Maᶜārif al-ᶜUthmāniyya, 1928), pp. 311–492; Aḥmad ibn ᶜAbd al-Wahab, *Nihāyat al-ᶜArab fi funūn al-adab* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, 1923) vol. 15, pp. 339–44; W.P. Heinrichs, art. 'Ṭasm' in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 10, pp. 385–6.

133 This passage is quoted from al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 1, pp. 214–15. Also see F. Wüstenfeld, *Genealogische Tabellen der arabischen Stämme und Familien* (2 vols, Göttingen: n.p., 1852–3).

134 Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ*, p. 109.

135 See Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ*, p. 109.

136 See al- Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 1, pp. 213–22; Brinner, *Lives of the Prophets*, pp. 12–20.

137 Ginzberg 6:464: Genealogy of Haman 1:338; 4:396, 410, 418–22, 430, 446–7; 6:68, 461, 462, 463. See descent from Amalek the son of Eliphaz by his concubine: Targum Esther 5:1; Targum 2, 3:1; Aggadat Esther 26–7; Soferim 13:23. Most of the names in his genealogy are recognisable enemies of Jews in the Roman period including Pilate, Herod and Nero (see esp. Ginzberg 6:46–3). See some of the references in Barry Dov Walfish, *Esther in Medieval Garb: Jewish Interpretation of the Book of Esther in the Middle Ages* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), p. 56, p. 92.

138 See al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 1, p. 548; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam fī tawārīkh al-mulūk wa'l-umam* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, n.d.), pp. 257–64; Ibn Hishām, *Kitāb al-tijān* (Hyderabad: n.p., 1928), pp. 29–30; Th. Nöldeke, *Über die Amalekiter und einige andere nachbarvölker der Israeliten* (Göttingen, 1864). For a different Biblical context for conflict between the Israelites and the Amalekites (1 Sam. 15), see D. Edelman, 'Saul's Battle against Amaleq (1 Sam. 15)', *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 35 (1986), pp. 71–84.

139 See Wüstenfeld, *Die Chroniken der Stadt Mecca*, pp. 44–56.

140 See al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 1, p. 548; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, on Q. 26:141–59.

141 On this incident, see Jaroslav Stetkevych, *Muḥammad and the Golden Bough: Reconstructing Arabian Myth* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996).

142 On al-Ḥijr and ancient Hegra, see Healey, *Nabataean Tomb Inscriptions*, p. 37; Jan Retsö, *The Arabs in Antiquity*, p. 376; H. Hildesheimer, *Beiträge zur Geographie Palästinas* (Berlin: Rosenstein & Hildesheimer, 1886), pp. 51–5, pp. 66–72; al-Ansari, A.H. Ghazel and G. King, *Mawāqiᶜ athariyya wa-ṣuwar min ḥaḍārat al-ᶜArab* (Riyadh: n.p., 1984) and M.A. Mirdād, *Madāʾin Ṣāliḥ: tilka al-uᶜjūba* (Riyadh: n.p., 1979).

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143 See ᶜAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Masᶜūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab wa-maᶜādin al-jawhar*, ed. Charles Pellat, Publications de l'Université Libanaise, Section des études historiques 11 (7 vols, Beirut: Universite Libanaise, 1966–79), vol. 1, p. 296; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba fī tamyīz al-ṣaḥāba*, ed. ᶜĀdil Aḥmad ᶜAbd al-Mawjūd et al. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, 1995), vol. 2, pp. 309–13 (2360); Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-ghābah* (Beirut: Dār al-Maᶜarifa, 1997), 2:99; al-Haythamī, *al-Zawāʾid*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜIlmiyya, 2001), 8:217; ᶜAlī ibn ᶜAbd al-Malik al-Muttaqī, *Kanz al-ᶜummāl fi sunan al-aqwāl wa'l-afᶜāl* (Aleppo: Maktabat al-Turāth al-Islāmī, 1969–77) (34429); Ch. Pellat, art. 'Khālid ibn Sinan' in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, vol. 4, p. 928.

144 See Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-nabawiyya*, ed. Jamāl Thābit et al. (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1996), vol. 1, pp. 30–3; Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, pp. 4–6. For a discussion of this incident and other pre- and early Islamic Arab prophets, see Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, 'Arabian Prophecy' in Martti Nissinen (ed.), *Prophecy in its Ancient Near Eastern Context: Mesopotamian, Biblical, and Arabian Perspectives* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, n.d.), pp. 115–46, esp. pp. 122–3. Also see Ibn al-Munādī, *al-Malāḥim*, ed. ᶜAbd al-Karīm al-ᶜUqaylī (Qumm: Dār al-Sīra, 1998), pp. 48–58; al-Masᶜūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, 1522.

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157 See ᶜAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ᶜAlī ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-masīr fī ᶜilm al-tafsīr* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ᶜArabī, 2001), on Q. 7:157.

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