

Muhammad (pbAh) *Foretold in the Bible by Name*

AND SOME OTHER PROPHECIES

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To

Prophet Moses (pb. Ah)

Who foretold about the Prophet of Islām
in so many ways;

Prophet Solomon (pb. Ah)

Who lovingly foretold about the Prophet of Islām
in his 'Song of Songs';

Prophet Muḥammad (pb. Ah)

Who came testifying to the prophethood and prophecies
of the previous prophets.

Gratitude

First of all, all praise and gratitude be to Almighty Allah, Who guided and made it convenient for His humble bondman, as the writer is, to undertake and accomplish such an important assignment. Whosoever helped the writer in this material world, was with the grace of Allah Almighty. It is really He Who implanted and infused in their minds the love and affection for the writer and his assignment. The writer owes a debt of gratitude to all of such benefactors:

- ☐ Lt. Col. (Rtd) ‘Ābid Ḥusayn ‘Ābid;
- ☐ Khawaja Muhammad Aslam;
- ☐ Mr. Nadhīr Aḥmad Ghāzī Advocate;
- ☐ Mr. Na`īm Durrānī, Chief Executive, Noor Durrani & Associates;
- ☐ Mr. Nawāb Nayyar Iqbāl;

☐ I feel it my duty to extend my gratitude to:

- ☐ Mr Azeem Ayyūb,
- ☐ Mr. Sājid Ḥameed,

for their cooperation in compiling the book; and making it presentable.

My Personal Gratitude

Although I had been working on this project for about more than two decades, yet, I am sure, it could not have seen the light of day, had Mr. Jāved Aḥmad Ghāmiḍī not provided me necessary set up and facilities for the task, so that I might work whole-heartedly and devotedly for it. Almighty Allah's Grace made me approach this man. May Allah Almighty bless him with health, happiness, and His guidance to work for the cause of Islām. I assert it on the basis of my first hand information that he is not only a mountain of religious knowledge and its related sciences, but also an exemplar of Godliness (piety), God-cautiousness (taqwā), beauty of deeds (iḥsān), kind-heartedness, conscientiousness, and incarnation of good manners and excellent moral values. He is endowed with the love of the Holy Prophet (pbAh), patronization of the men of letters, and devotion for the cause of Islām. This humble service of this writer being accepted before Almighty Lord, I pray that Ghāmiḍī Ṣāhib be made equal partner of the heavenly reward which Almighty Allah bestows upon His humble servant, as the writer prays to be. Amen!

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COMMON ABBREVIATIONS

AD/CE	<i>anno domini</i> (Latin), in the year of the Lord, Common/ Christian Era.
Ar	Arab, Arabia, Arabian, Arabic.
B	Bible.
BC	Before Christ; Bible Commentary; Biblical Commentary.
BCE	Before Christian/Common Era.
BD	Bible Dictionary.
c/ca	About, approximately (Latin <i>circa</i>)
CB	Commentary of the Bible.
CE	Common Era: secular form of AD.
Cf	confer: compare.
Ch	Chapter.
DB	Dictionary of the Bible.
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls.
E	East.
E	Elohist tradition of some books of the OT of the Bible.
Ed	Editor, edited by, edition.
Edn	Edition.
e.g./eg	for example (Latin <i>exempli gratia</i>).
Enc	Encyclopedia/Encyclopaedia/Encyclopedic.
Esp	especially.
Hm	Headmaster.
Heb	Hebrew.
i.e.	that is, that means, namely.
J	Jehovist or Yahwist tradition of some books of the OT of the Bible.
JE	Text of the OT based on the combination of the E & J Traditions Of the Bible.
L	Latin.
LLX	Septuagint (70): Greek Tr. of the OT claimed to be accomplished by 70 scholars in Alexandria between 250 –150 BC.
MS/MSS	Manuscript/Manuscripts.
MT/Mt	Massoretic /Masoretic Text of the OT; Matthew; Mount.
N	North.

NT	New Testament of the Bible Contains 27 books: first of them 4 Gospels, then Acts, then Epistles (letters), and lastly Revelations. It was originally written in Greek, whereas Jesus Christ delivered his message in the Aramaic language.
op.cit.	in the work already quoted (Latin <i>opere citato</i>).
OT	Old Testament of the Bible Consists of 39 books: The first five are collectively called the Pentateuch or Torah. It was originally written in Heb.
p/pp	Page/pages.
P	Priestly tradition of the OT of the Bible.
Pbl/pbg	Publisher(s) Publication(s) /Publishing/.
Q	<i>Quelle</i> (a German word), i.e. source. A hypothetical source of the passages shared by the gospels of Matthew and Luke.
Rvd	Revised.
S	South, southern.
Sic.	[L] thus, so: used within brackets, [sic], to show that a quoted passage, esp. one containing some error or s.th. questionable, is precisely reproduced.
s.o.	Some one.
s.th.	Some thing.
St	Saint.
s.v.	Under the word or heading.
Tr.	Translator, translation, translated by.
Uni./Univ.	University.
v/vv	Verse/verses of the Bible.
V	Version (Tr.) of the Bible.
Vol.	Volume.
Vulg.	Vulgate, the Latin Tr. Of the Bible accomplished by St Jerome in late 4 th century AD.
W	West, western.
Y	Yahwist (Jehovist) tradition of the Bible.
(...)	It indicates that some word, words, sentence, sentences, line, or lines have been left over from the original quotation.
(....)	It shows that a sizeable text has been omitted from the original quotation.
[]	Square brackets are used to insert something by the Tr./Ed., which did not originally exist in the quotation.

FOREWORD

By

Dr. Maḥmūd Aḥmad Ghāzī

In his forwarding letter to this 'Foreword' Dr. Ghāzī writes:

Please accept my heartfelt congratulation on the production of such a beautiful book which I have read during these days. Kindly find attached herewith the Foreword:

The debate between Islām and Christianity is as old as Islām itself. During the past fourteen hundred years, the encounter between Islām and Christianity has been passing through various ups and downs. It is an irony of fate that, from the very beginning, Islām wanted to make this long encounter graduate into a lasting cooperation and understanding. From the earliest Makkan period of his mission, Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) tried to establish and maintain cordial relations with the Christians around him. In fact, the first encounter of Islām with Christian theology took place immediately after Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) received the first revelation. Within hours of his maiden experience with divine revelation, the Prophet (pbAh) met Waraqah ibn Nawfal, a cousin of his wife Khadījah and perhaps the only savant in his hometown having knowledge of Christianity. Waraqah not only acknowledged the divine origin of the new message but also explained to his young visitor other dimensions of the coming career. What the old Christian divine hastened to recognize and acknowledge is exactly what was expected from the followers of other divine faiths. The Qur'ān repeated this call in very clear and unequivocal terms in a Medīnan revelation when it invited

the People of the Book to join hands with the Muslims to serve the common cause of the divine religions, which form an unbreakable chain of divine blessings for humanity.

According to the Qur'ān, it is necessary to constitute a Muslim to have faith in all Prophets and Messengers sent by the Almighty. A Muslim has to believe in the prophethood of Abraham (pbAh), Moses (pbAh), Jesus (pbAh) and all other biblical prophets to remain within the fold of Islām. This belief is necessary to emphasise the continuity of this chain of prophethood which is unbreakably linked. It was to emphasise this link further, that the coming of the last Messenger and the revelation of the final and the perfect message had been foretold by earlier prophets and divine messages. The Qur'ān goes to the extent of declaring that the Jews and the Christians, at least of the days of the Prophet (pbAh), recognized the prophethood of Muḥammad (pbAh) as easily and quickly as they would recognize their own children. According to a well known Qur'ānic verse, Jesus Christ (pbAh) had told his followers that one of the purposes of his coming was to give the glad tidings about the advent of a Messenger, named Aḥmad (pbAh), to come after him.

On the basis of such Qur'ānic statements, Muslim scholars have been engaged in the study of earlier religious scriptures to find out verses containing predictions about the advent of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). Not only the statements of the Qur'ān, but also reports attributed to a number of companions who had entered the fold of Islām from the Jewish or Christian backgrounds had encouraged research in earlier scriptures. They came out with findings supporting the Qur'ānic and other Islāmic pronouncements. On the other hand, the majority of the Jewish and Christian scholars have not only been denying the existence of any such predictions in their scriptures, but have been refuting Muslim point of view, either through modifying the

translations of the relevant words or verses or giving them different interpretations.

A major difficulty in coming to an agreement lies in the loss of the original text of most of the scriptures, which are now available only through indirect and secondary translations by unknown translators. Muslim writers on the subject have held that the relevant words and passages in the biblical literature have been interpolated during the various turmoils faced by them [Jews] in their long history [Most of the Biblical scholars do not deny the fact; they rather testify to it.]. This observation becomes weighty when one notices that some terms have been variously translated by various translators. Muslim scholars have addressed themselves to this question in different ages of Muslim intellectual history. Those who undertook this exercise include celebrities like Ṭabarī, Ibn Ḥazm, Shahrastānī, Qurṭubī and Rāzī, among earlier authorities, and Raḥmatullah Kayrānwī, Daryābādī and Mawdūdī among the recent authors. They tried to identify words and verses in the biblical literature which contained predictions about the advent of the last Prophet (pbAh).

Christian authors interpret the relevant verses and words in a metaphorical sense. However there has been almost unanimity among the Muslim writers on biblical studies about the connotations and interpretations of the disputed words and passages. The ‘Song of Songs’ included in the Old Testament of the Bible is one such passage. Mr ‘Abdus Sattār Ghawrī has undertaken an in-depth study of this passage and tried, quite successfully, to establish that it refers to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). He analyses the [fairly] long passage thoroughly and marshals impressive arguments to substantiate his thesis.

The present volume is the result of years, rather decades, of long studies and research. He has been a keen student of biblical literature for quite some time. Previously he has published a number of papers and publications on

questions of common interest for Muslim, Christian and Jewish theologians. He has developed a deep insight into the Bible and other related literature. His knowledge of Hebrew facilitated his access to material not available in English translations.

The present volume is a landmark in his scholarly career. Based on long study and profound research, it presents its point of view with solid arguments and in an objective manner. He has compared his findings with those of non-Muslim writers and has tried to show the latter's weaknesses. He has almost exclusively relied on western sources for all his biblical interpretations. Authentic Muslim sources have been cited only to refer to aspects of Prophet Muḥammad's (pbAh) life.

I hope that this book will be of interest not only to Muslim readers but also to Christians, Jews and followers of other religious dispensations. The book has appeared at a very opportune moment. Today, the relations between Islām and Christianity seem to be at the lowest ebb. In the midst of growing tension between the Muslim world and the west and the resultant conflict and commotion there is need to bring the followers of major divine religions to an understanding. Indeed, such an effort is a great service to humanity. I am confident that Mr. Ghawrī's book contributes to this objective. All lovers of humanity in general and followers of divine religions in particular should welcome this publication.

PREFACE

The Bible is a collection of so many books (39 of the OT and 27 of the NT, i.e. 66, in the Protestant Bible; and some 9 books of Apocrypha more in the Catholic Bible) claimed to be divinely revealed to some prophets. Although it is believed that these books were not committed to writing during the lifetime of the prophets to whom they were ascribed, yet it is claimed that they were written by some inspired persons. Its first part is called OT (Old Testament) which relates to the prophets before the advent of Jesus Christ (pbAh) and the second part is called NT (New Testament) which is attributed to Jesus Christ (pbAh) and his disciples. It is to be noted that at a number of places some future events or the advent of some future prophets have been foretold in it. The Qur'ān asserts that the advent of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) has been foretold by the prophets of the Bible in so unequivocal terms that the people of book can recognize it as they can recognize their own children.

In the present work a study has been undertaken to thrash out one of such prophecies in which the King and Prophet Solomon (pbAh) has foretold the advent of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) by name.

There is a gap of almost one and a half millennia between the utterance of this prophecy by Prophet Solomon (pbAh) and its fulfillment through the advent of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). This prophecy had been committed to writing, and existed in tact, about a millennium before the coming of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). Obviously Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) himself or any of his followers could not have inserted it in the Bible. If it be established that Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) has really been foretold in it, on the one hand it is a proof of the veracity of the Bible itself, and on the other hand it is the proof of the Prophethood of Muḥammad (pbAh). A detailed study of this prophecy has been undertaken in the coming pages.

Ours is the age of enlightenment and objective thinking. An objective study of the book might help the readers to reach a proper conclusion provided that they read it without any presuppositions and prejudices.

It has been tried not to make any assertion or set forth an explanation to some word or theme without affording a referential authority. It has also been tried to provide sufficient evidence to establish the themes so that it may not be blamed to be based on scanty or one-sided evidence. It has further been tried to present the evidence faithfully and without any manipulations. It is hoped that its objective study would be useful.

In the footnotes (and elsewhere in the book) the names of the books have been *italicized* and the publisher's addresses and the years of publication have been placed in parentheses. Page number has been recorded at the end, but, in most of the cases, 'p' for 'page No.' has not been written before it. When a few words or some small amount of text has been deleted from some quotation or elsewhere, three dots have been inserted there in parentheses (circular brackets). In case the deleted amount of text is considerably large, four dots have been inserted therein. It is more suitable to preserve the actual punctuation of the original text. Generally speaking, although the *Chicago Manual for Writers* has been followed; yet sometimes it was considered useful to devise some style friendly to the user.

'*A brief account of the History of Jerusalem*' (related to Ch XIV), written by my son, Dr. Iḥsānūr Raḥmān Ghauri, has been appended to the book. He has also compiled the '*Index to the Footnote Entries*' which has increased the usefulness of the book. The author is thankful to him for his cooperation.

'(pbAh)' has been inserted after the names of the Prophets, which means: 'peace and blessings of Allah upon him'

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Transliteration Table

Chapter-I

THE TEXT OF THE PROPHECY AND ITS AUTHENTICITY

There are so many predictions in the Bible regarding Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) that refer to him in unequivocal terms. But it is not a common practice to predict about some future prophet by name. It is almost a rare phenomenon that some coming prophet be foretold in the Bible by name. The prediction regarding Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) in King Solomon's 'Song of Songs' in the Bible is an example of such rare phenomenon. It is being reproduced below:

(10) My beloved *is* white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.

(11) His head *is as* the most fine gold, his locks *are* bushy, *and* black as a raven.

(12) His eyes are as *the eyes* of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, *and* fitly set.

(13) His cheeks *are* as a bed of spices, *as* sweet flowers: his lips *like* lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

(14) His hands *are as* gold rings set with the beryl: his belly *is as* bright ivory overlaid *with* sapphires.

(15) His legs *are as* pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance *is* as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

(16) His mouth *is* most sweet: yea, he *is* altogether lovely. This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters of

Jerusalem.¹

A Compact Picture of the Passage

By

The Expositor's Bible

He is both fair and ruddy, the chiefest among 10,000. For this is what he is like: a head splendid as finest gold; massive, curling, raven locks; eyes like doves by water brooks, and looking as though they had been washed in milk— an elaborate image in which the soft iris and the sparking light on the pupils suggest the picture of the gentle birds brooding on the bank of a flashing stream, and the pure healthy eyeballs a thought of the whiteness of milk; cheeks fragrant as spices; lips red as lilies (The blood red anemones²); A body like ivory, with blue veins as of sapphire; legs like marble columns on golden basis. The aspect of him is like great Lebanon, splendid as the far-famed cedars; and when he opens his lips his voice is ravishingly³ sweet. Yes, he is altogether lover. Such is her beloved, her dearest one.⁴

¹ Song of Solomon 5:10-16 AV/ (Authorized Version) of The Bible. This Version is also called (King James Version).

² 'Anemones' are small star-shaped wood-land flowers.

³ 'Ravishingly' means: enchantingly, seizingly, filled with delight

⁴ Walter F. Adeney, the commentary on the 'Song of Solomon' in *The Expositor's Bible*, (London: A.C. Armstrong and son, 1903), 30.

A Compact Picture of the Passage

by

Ronald A. Knox

My sweetheart? Among ten thousand you shall know him; so white is the colour of his fashioning, and so red. His head dazzles like the purest gold; the hair on it lies close as the high palm-branches, raven hair. His eyes are gentle as doves by the brook-side, only these are bathed in milk, eyes full of repose⁵. Cheeks trim as a spice-bed of the perfumer's own tending; drench lilies in the finest myrrh, and you shall know the fragrance of his lips. Hands well rounded; gold set with jacinth is not workmanship so delicate; body of ivory and veins of sapphire blue; legs straight as marble columns, that stand in sockets of gold. Erect his stature as Lebanon itself, noble as Lebanon cedar. Oh, that sweet utterance! Nothing of him but awakes desire. Such is my true love, maidens of Jerusalem; such is the companion I have lost.⁶

⁵ Knox explains it in his footnote as:

‘Eyes full of repose’; we can only make guesses at the meaning of the Hebrew phrase, ‘reposing upon fullness’, which the Latin version renders ‘residing by the floods’. (p. 970)

⁶ Ronald A. Knox, *The Old Testament: Job-Machabees* (London: Burns Oats and Washbourne Ltd, 1949), 2:970.

AUTHORSHIP OF THE SONG

As to the authorship of this lyric idyll⁷, there are different opinions. However, some authorities categorically ascribe it to King Solomon (pbAh). Here are some points based on the objective study of the works of the Biblical scholars. (The authorities on whose basis these conclusions have been deducted are also being afforded thereafter, but they are only for those readers who want to tally these points with the original data):

1. It is generally acknowledged that basically the author of the 'Song of Songs' is King and Prophet Solomon (pbAh).
2. However, the entire work cannot be ascribed to him.
3. Solomon (pbAh) composed the 'Songs' in the middle of the tenth century BC, but its final redaction was accomplished in the post-exilic period, probably during the 3rd-4th centuries BC.
4. Obscene and profane material has freely been interpolated into it by some redactors.
5. Due to its obscene and indecent material it was felt desirable by some authorities that its study should be banned for young people.
6. There is no structural unity in it, and it can be treated as a 'string of independent lyrics'.

Hereunder are given some excerpts from which the above points have been deduced, and, which assert that actually Solomon (pbAh) was the author of a number of these songs:

The Nelson Study Bible asserts:

The author of the Song of Solomon is Solomon, the son of David and the third king of Israel. He is named as the author and his name appears seven times in the book (i:1,5; iii:7,9,

⁷ 'lyric idyll': a short pictorial poem, chiefly on pastoral subjects; a story, episode, or scene of happy innocence or rusticity; a work of art of like character (*Chambers Eng Dic.*, 1989, p. 708).

11; viii:11,12). Even so, some have argued that the references to Solomon may be only a stylistic device and the author may have been from a later period. The arguments for this are inconclusive. But the fact that Solomon was known for his wisdom and poetry (see I Kin. iv:29-34) partially substantiates his authorship of this book. (...). Ironically because of its explicit language, ancient and modern Jewish sages forbade men to read the book before they were thirty (and presumably kept women from reading it at all).⁸

Similar views have been expressed by Kenneth D. BOA. Ph.D. in the 'Introduction to the Song' in *the Open Bible*:

Solomonic authorship is rejected by critics who claim it is a later collection of songs. Many take 1:1 to mean "which is about or concerning Solomon." But the internal evidence of the book strongly favors the traditional position that Solomon is its author. Solomon is specifically mentioned seven times (...), and he is identified as the groom. There is evidence of royal luxury and rich imported goods (e.g. 3:6-11). The king by this time also had sixty queens and eighty concubines (6:8). Solomon's harem at its fullest extent reached seven hundred queens and three hundred concubines (1Kin. 11:3).

1Kings 4:32,33 says that Solomon spoke three thousand proverbs and composed 1,005 songs and had intimate knowledge of the plant and animal world. This greatest of his songs alludes to twenty-one species of plants and fifteen species of animals. It cites geographical locations in the north and in the south, indicating that they were still one kingdom. For example, 6:4 mentions both Tirzah⁹ and Jerusalem, the northern and southern capitals. (...), but Solomon was its author, probably early in his reign, about

⁸ *The Nelson Study Bible*, ed. Earl D. Radmacher (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1997), 1097.

⁹ 'Tirzah' is a beautiful city about 10 miles east of Samaria. It remained the capital of the Northern Kingdom of Israel till 871 BC, when King Omri shifted the Capital to Samaria.

965 B.C. There is a problem regarding how a man with a harem of 140 women (6:8) could extol the love of the Shulamite as though she were his only bride. (...). This book was also written before Solomon plunged into gross immorality and idolatry. 'For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God' (1Kin. 11:4).¹⁰

The New Jerusalem Bible has treated the theme in the following manner:

That Solomon was a writer of songs, Hebrew tradition was aware, 1K 5:12; for this reason 'the greatest of all songs' was attributed to him (hence the title, Sg 1:1); (...). People have found it surprising that a book that makes no mention of God and whose vocabulary is so passionate should figure in sacred canon. The doubts in Jewish circles of the first century AD were, however, settled by an appeal to tradition. On these same grounds the Christian Church has always accepted the Song as part of holy scripture. (...). The inspired and canonical status of the Song leads these commentators to suppose that it must be celebrating something other than profane love. (...). The Song proclaims the lawfulness and exalts the value of human love; and the subject is not merely profane, (...). We have no right to set a limit to God's inspiration. (...), the dating of the book becomes more difficult to establish. Some scholars assign it to a date as early as the reign of Solomon, but the Aramaic features of the language, and the borrowing of one word from Persian, 4:13, and of another from Greek, 3:9, indicate a date after the Exile¹¹, in the fifth or fourth centuries BC. The place of

¹⁰ *The Open Bible Expanded Edn.*, ed. Kenneth D. BOA. Ph.D. (Nashville, NY: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985), 667,68.

¹¹ This is not a sufficient reason for assigning a later date to the book. There may have been other possibilities as well, for example:

It may have been due to some later interpolation of some 'Song' or some verses into the 'Song'.

These words may have become the part of the Jewish language as a

composition was certainly Palestine.¹²

The NIV Study Bible has also addressed the theme briefly in its introduction to the ‘Song of Songs’. It asserts:

To date the Song in the tenth century B.C. during Solomon’s reign is not impossible. In fact, mention of Tirzah and Jerusalem in one breath (6:4) has been used to prove a date prior to King Omri (885-874 BC¹³; see 1Ki 16:23-24), though the reason for Tirzah’s mention is not clear. On the other hand, many have appealed to the language of the Song as proof of a much later date, but on present evidence the linguistic data are ambiguous.¹⁴

Smith’s *Dic. of the Bible* asserts:

It was probably written by Solomon about B.C. 1012.¹⁵

John T. Bunn has tried to explain the theme in a more scholarly manner. He writes:

The muteness of the book on matters of Israelite religious tradition is quite striking. (....). Internal references to Solomon (1:1,5; 3:7-9,11; 8:11-12), together with the statement in 1Kings 4:32, were deemed authoritative enough to ascribe the work to him. A question did arise, however, as to when Solomon

result of the interaction of these peoples during the ‘United Monarchy’.

The words may have been included into Hebrew as a result of trade, diplomatic, cultural, and constructional missions and activities even before the reign of Solomon.

The book had its final redaction, though not its original composition, in a later period (*The New Bible Com: Revised*, 579).

¹² *New Jerusalem Bible*, ed. Henry Wansbrough (Bombay: Saint Paul Society, 23rd Road, T.P.S. III, Bandra, 400 050, 1993), 1027-29.

¹³ Most of the other authorities assert it as 876-869 BC.

¹⁴ *The NIV Study Bible*, Gen. ed. Kenneth Barker (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1995), 997.

¹⁵ William Smith, *A Dic. of Bible* (Michigan: Regency Reference Library, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1984), 105.

composed the book. (...). Thus the date of writing would have been shortly before 961 B.C. (...). Although many of the poetic fragments predated by hundreds of years the time of editing, the presence within the book of Aramaic, Persian, and Greek language influence indicates a late date for its finalized form. Generally a date within the span of the third century B.C. is assigned to the composition as it now stands.¹⁶

Walter F. Adeney sees no structural unity in it:

There are indications that it is a continuous poem; and yet it is characterized by startling kaleidoscopic changes that seem to break it up into incongruous fragments. If it is a single work the various sections of it succeed one another in the most abrupt manner, without any connecting links or explanatory clauses. The simplest way out of the difficulty presented by the many curious turns and changes of the poem is to deny it any structural unity, and treat it as a string of independent lyrics.¹⁷

Sierd Woudstra, Th.D. pastor, Calvin Christian Reformed Church, Ottawa, Canada has asserted in '*The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*' that Solomon was its author. He says:

Although the first verse of chapter 1 can also be read: 'The Song of Songs which is *about* or *concerning* Solomon,' the traditional view has been to regard Solomon as the author of the Song. Since the contents of the book is [sic] fully in harmony with the great gifts of wisdom which we know Solomon possessed (1Kgs 4:32,33), there is no sufficient ground to deviate from this historic position.¹⁸

W. J. Cameron Prof. of NT Language and Literature, Free

¹⁶ *The Broadman Bible Com.*, ed. Clifton J. Allen, et al. (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), 5:128-30.

¹⁷ Walter F. Adeney, Prof. NT Exegesis and Church History, New College, London, 'The Song of Solomon' in *The Expositor's Bible* (NY: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1903), 3.

¹⁸ *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, ed. Charles F. Pfeiffer (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 595.

Church College, Edinburgh asserts:

The title may mean either that the Song is composed by Solomon or that it is about him. Tradition uniformly favours the former interpretation. Some modern scholars, however, have maintained that the large number of foreign words used in the poem would not occur in the literature of Israel before the post-exilic period. Others think, with Driver, that the widespread contacts of Israel with foreign nations during the reign of Solomon would sufficiently account for the presence of these words in the book. If this view be accepted, and if it is assumed that there are only two principal characters in the Song, there does not appear to be any substantial reason for setting aside the traditional view of the authorship.¹⁹

John A Balchin, Minister of First Presbyterian Church, Papakura, New Zealand has adopted a balanced approach. He observes:

The presence of some later words indicates either a date after Solomon's time or that the book had its final redaction, though not its original composition, in a later period.²⁰

M. Timothea Elliot, R.M.S., U.S.A. writes:

(...), it is esteemed as one of the most unusual and beautiful books of the Bible. (...). Rabbi Akiba, for example, toward the end of the first century remarked, 'All the world is not worth the day that the Song of Songs was given to Israel. All the writings are holy, but the Song of Songs is the holy of holies'. Another rabbi of this period exaggeratingly commented, 'If God had not given the Torah to Israel, the Song of Song would be sufficient to govern the universe.'²¹

¹⁹ *The New Bible Commentary*, ed. Rev. F. Davidson (Michigan: WM. B. Eerdmans Publg. Co., Grand Rapids, 1953), 547.

²⁰ *The New Bible Commentary: Revised*, ed. Dr. D. Guthrie, London Bible College (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1972), 579.

²¹ *The International Bible Com., An Ecumenical Commentary* for the 21st Century, ed. William R. Farmer (Bangalore: TPI, 2004), 954. Such

The Annotated Paragraph Bible has justified its having been written by Solomon. Here are a few excerpts:

The title also *agrees with all ancient writers on the subject in ascribing this poem to Solomon* [stress added]; and this too is corroborated by internal evidence. (...). All this is just what might naturally be expected if Solomon were the author.²²

From the above excerpts it is clear that the ‘Song of Songs’ was originally written in the tenth century BC by King Solomon (pbAh), who was admittedly a poet, a writer, and a wise and intelligent scholar. Its final edition was prepared in about fourth century BC. During this process some interpolations, corruptions, and obscene material entered into it. Due to this obscenity it was advised that woman and young people should not be allowed to read it. Obviously, this obscene material could not have been written by the King and Prophet Solomon (pbAh).

irresponsible exaggeration shows the careless way of some scholars of the Bible to express their personal views dogmatically.

²² *Annotated Paragraph Bible*, no editors mentioned (London: Religious Tract Society, 1866), 713.

Chapter-II

APPLICATION OF THIS PROPHECY TO JESUS CHRIST (PB AH)

Song's Application to Jesus Christ (pbAh)

It is to be noted at the outset that some of the Christian commentators of the Bible attach this Song to Jesus Christ (pbAh) as a prophecy in his favour. They assume that the attributes described here denote Jesus Christ (pbAh) which shows that they consider it to be a prophecy regarding him. Here are a few excerpts from some authorities to elaborate the point:

The Pulpit Commentary asserts:

Ancient writers have applied the description to our Lord.²³

Wycliffe BC attaches this poem to Christ (pbAh) and his Church:

The Christian Church saw in it reflected love between Christ and the Church. (...) in the Song there is portrayed the great love between Christ and the Church, King Solomon being regarded as a type of Christ, and the bride as representing the Church.²⁴

²³ *The Pulpit Commentary*, ed. (i) the Rev. Spence, Dean of Gloucester and (ii) the Rev. Joseph Exell [sic], S M A; Exposition (on the 'Song of Sol.') by the Rev. R. A., Redford, MA, LLB (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co Ltd, 1897), 128.

²⁴ *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, 595.

New Jerome Biblical Commentary holds similar views:

Remarkably, synagogue and church agree on a religious interpretation: Cant refers to the love of the Lord for his people or, for Christians, to the love of Christ for the church.²⁵

Matthew Henry has also endorsed this interpretation:

But more frequently is Christ represented as the bridegroom of his church, and the church as bride. Pursuant to this metaphor Christ and the church in general, Christ and particular believers, are here discoursing with abundance of mutual esteem and endearment. The best key to this book is the 45th Psalm, which we find applied to Christ in the NT²⁶, and therefore this ought to be so too.²⁷

The New Oxford Annotated Bible states:

Christian tradition also developed a symbolic or allegorical interpretation, reading the Song as an account of Christ's love for the Church.²⁸

M. Timothea Elliot, R.M.S., U.S.A. writes:

The Bridegroom was Christ; the Church became the Bride. This was a natural development in light of key NT passages. (Matt 9:15; 25:1-13; John 3:29; 2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:22-33; Rev 19:6-8; 21:9-11; 22:17). Origen developed the Christ/Church allegory in an influential commentary.²⁹

The 7th Day Adventist Bible Com. writes:

²⁵ Roland E. Murphy, in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. Raymond E. Brown etc (Bangalore: T. P. I., 1994), 463.

²⁶ Heb. 1:8-9.

²⁷ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O & N T* (NY: Robert Carter & Brothers, 530, Broadway, nd), 820.

²⁸ F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp (on the) 'Song of Solomon' in *New Oxford Annotated Bible* (NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 2001), 959.

²⁹ *The International Bible Com, An Ecumenical Com. For The 21st Century*, ed. William R. Farmer (Bangalore: TPI, 2004), 958.

This type of relationship would make this story of Solomon's marriage a more appropriate illustration of the relationship between Christ and the church.³⁰ (...). That the love between Solomon and the Shulamite is intended to illustrate the love between Christ and his people has already been observed.³¹

It has recorded the caption of Chapter 5 of the Song as:

1.Christ awaketh the church with his calling. 2. The church having a taste of Christ's love is sick of love. 9. A description of Christ by his grace.³²

It has throughout interpreted the 'Song' in terms of Christ (pbAh) and church. Some comments on chapter 5 are given below:

The chiefest among ten thousand: A fitting title of Christ. (...) . This description is frequently coupled with the title 'chiefest among ten thousand,' when referring to Christ.³³

Jack S. Deere has noted that some church leaders also held the opinion. He writes:

Church leaders, including Hyppolytus, Origen, Jerome, Athanasius, Augustine, and Bernard of Clairvaux, have viewed the book as an allegory of Christ's love for His bride, the church. (...), and some have suggested that 5:1 refers to the Lord's Supper. (...) . Some scholars view the book as an extended type, with Solomon typifying Christ and the beloved being a type of the church.³⁴

The Reader's Digest Bible asserts:

Its inclusion in the Jewish and Christian canon is due to its acceptance as an allegory of God's love for Israel, or

³⁰ *The 7th Day Adventist BC*, 1977; in 'Introduction to Songs', 3:1110.

³¹ *The 7th Day Adventist Bible Com.*, 1977, 3:1111.

³² *The 7th Day Adventist Bible Com*, 1977, 3:1119.

³³ *The 7th Day Adventist Bible Com*, 1977, 3:1120.

³⁴ *Bible Knowledge Com., OT*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Illinois: S. P. Publications, Inc., Wheaton, 1986), 1009.

Christ's love for the Church.³⁵

The Learning Bible has noted similar views in its 'Introduction' to the 'Song':

Many Christian interpreters came to a similar conclusion, saying that the book symbolizes the kind of relationship that Jesus Christ (the bridegroom) has with the church (his bride). These interpretations helped the book gain acceptance as part of Scripture.³⁶

The Annotated Paragraph Bible has asserted in its 'Introduction' to the Song of Solomon (pbAh):

Thus Jehovah was David's shepherd (Psa xxiii); Jesus is ours (John x:11,14). And thus also Christ is the bridegroom, and the church his bride (2 Cor. xi:2; Eph. v:23-27; Rev. xxi:2). Accordingly, *Christian commentators in every age have regarded this poem as aptly expressing the mutual love of the Saviour and his church* [stress added], and as fitly representing the closeness and perpetuity of the union which subsists between them.³⁷

A study was undertaken in the previous chapter that originally King Solomon (pbAh) is the author of the 'Song of Songs'. Now, in this chapter, it has been discussed that a number of Christian scholars hold that it is an allegorical narration and the bridegroom or the lover represents Christ (pbAh). To ascertain the real significance of the prediction, one is to trace the exact Hebrew words uttered by King Solomon (pbAh) and to explore their meanings. This study has been undertaken in the coming chapters.

³⁵ *Reader's Digest Bible, Illustrated edn.*, Bruce M. Metzger *et al.* (London: Reader's Digest Association Ltd., 1985), 448.

³⁶ *The Learning Bible*, ed. Howard Clark Kee, *et al.* (NY: American Bible Society), 1212.

³⁷ *Annotated Paragraph Bible*, no editors mentioned (London: Religious Tract Society, 1866), 713.

Chapter-III

MY BELOVED

The first clause of the excerpt of the ‘Song of Solomon’ is:

³⁸דודי צה ואדום

My beloved is white and ruddy

The first phrase of the clause is ‘דודי’ (dodee), i.e. ‘My beloved’, which is very important. This ‘דודי’ (dodee), i.e. ‘My beloved’ refers to the Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh):

It is noteworthy that the very first word of the prophecy ‘My beloved’ settles the intention of the predictor. The actual Hebrew word used by the King and Prophet Solomon (pbAh) is ‘דוד’ (dod). Its meanings are given below from *Strong’s Dic*:

Lover, friend, beloved, esp. an uncle, father’s brother.³⁹

This first word rules out the arbitrary interpretation of some commentators of the Bible that this prediction relates to Jesus Christ (pbAh). The Hebrew word for this ‘beloved’ is ‘דוד’ (dod) and it signifies, as indicated above, a person who is loved by someone, and who is an uncle of someone, and this uncle is from paternal side (father’s brother) and

³⁸ *The Holy Scriptures: Hebrew and English* (Middlesex: The Society for Distributing Heb. Scriptures, 1 Rectory Lane, Edgeware, HA8 7LF U. K.), 1535; and *The Jerusalem Bible* (Jerusalem: Koren Publishers, 2000), 859.

³⁹ James Strong, *A Concise Dic. of the Words in the Hebrew Bible*, appended to the *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, Compact Edn.* (Michigan: Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1984), p. 30, entry 1730.

not from the maternal side. It is only one's father's brother that can be called one's 'דוד' (dod), who, in the present case, refers to Solomon's uncle, i.e. a brother of Solomon's ancestor or forefather. It can by no means be applied to Jesus Christ (pbAh). Jesus (pbAh) was of the virgin birth from 'Mary', which means that he had no relationship with any human being from the paternal side. If someone traces Jesus' genealogy from maternal side, even then he cannot be assigned to the lineage of some brother of King David (pbAh) (King Solomon's uncle's lineage), because Jesus' mother Mary was from David's direct lineage (who was King Solomon's father), and not from the lineage of some brother of King David's. Even if any so-called genealogy of Jesus Christ (pbAh) mentioned in the New Testament of the Bible be taken into account, he has no progenitorial relationship with any brother of King David (pbAh).⁴⁰

⁴⁰ The NT of the Bible has afforded two Genealogies of Jesus. According to the first genealogy (Matthew I:1-16) Jesus called Messiah was born of Mary. Mary was the wife of Joseph whose father was Jacob, s/o Matthan, s/o Eleazer, s/o Eliud, s/o Achim, s/o Zadok (according to KJV: Sadoc), s/o Azor, s/o Eliakim, s/o Abiud, s/o Zerrubbabel (KJV: Zorobabel), s/o Shealtiel (KJV: Salathiel), s/o Jechoniah (Jechonias) (at the time of Babylonian Exile), s/o Josiah (Josias), s/o Amos (Amon), s/o Manasseh (Manasses), s/o Hezekiah (Ezekias), s/o Ahaz (Achaz), s/o Jothan (Joatham), s/o Uzziah (Ozias), s/o Joram, s/o Jehoshafat (Josaphat), s/o Asaph (Asa), s/o Abijah (Abiah), s/o Rehoboam (Roboam), s/o Solomon, s/o David (from Bath Sheba who was formerly the wife of Uriah Hittite), s/o Jesse, s/o Obed (...). [Adopted from NAB, p. 1062]. It means that Jesus was the son of Mary. Mary's husband was Joseph. Joseph's progenitor was David himself. Solomon's beloved was his uncle as well, i.e. his father's [David's] brother and not David himself. As such this Solomon's beloved should have been outside the fold of David (and his progenitors), whereas Jesus was from the fold of David himself, because his mother, Mary, was of the tribe of David [*'She was, like Joseph, of the tribe of Judah and of the lineage of David.'* (Smith's Bible Dic., Michigan: Zondervan Publishing. House, 1967, p. 386)].

According to the second Genealogy (Luke iii:23-32) when Jesus began

‘THE HEBREW AND ARAMAIC LEXICON OF THE OT’ also explains the word ‘דוד’ (dod) in a similar way. It describes the meanings of the word as follows:

MHb. [Middle Heb.] uncle; MdD [Drower-M-Dictionary] 98a dada father’s brother; OSArb.⁴¹ [Old South Arabian including Minaean etc] dd father’s brother, Arb. dād foster-father, (Jerome *dodach*), beloved, lover (son of father’s brother as customary husband, Jaussen *Naplouse* 1927:62) father’s brother in contrast with mother’s brother Arb. hāl [Khāl], (...); (בן־דוד) [the pronunciation of this Hebrew word is bindod, i.e. the son of uncle] cousin. [All the meanings have been underlined here to distinguish them from other details.]⁴²

This explanation further illustrates the same theme in more

his ministry he was about thirty years of age. He was the son, as was thought, of Joseph, the s/o Heli, the s/o Matthat, the s/o Levi, the s/o Melchi, the s/o Jannai, the s/o Joseph, the s/o Mattathias, the s/o Amos, the s/o Nahum, the s/o Elsi, the s/o Naggai, the s/o Maath, the s/o Mattathias, the s/o Semein, the s/o Joseph, the s/o Joda, the s/o Joanan, the s/o Rhesa, the s/o Zerubbabel, the s/o Shealtiel, the s/o Neri, the s/o Melchi, the s/o Addi, the s/o Cosam, the s/o Elmadam, the s/o Er, the s/o Joshua, the s/o Eliezer, the s/o Jorim, the s/o Matthat, the s/o Levi, the s/o Simeon, the s/o Judah, the s/o Joseph, the s/o Jonam, the s/o Eliakim, the s/o Melea, the s/o Menna, the s/o Mattatha, the s/o Nathan, the s/o David, the s/o Jesse, the s/o Obed. So, according to Luke as well, Jesus belongs to the offspring of Solomon’s brother Nathan through Joseph, husband of Mary. Here again Jesus is of the tribe of Judah and of the lineage of David (pbAh) and not from the lineage of any brother of David (pbAh).

⁴¹ It may be noted here that the writer of this *Hebrew Lexicon* asserts:

A number of cognate languages and their idioms may be compared with Hebrew: Arabic, Aramaic, Ethiopic, Akkadian, Ugaritic, and—from a considerable distance but esp. significantly for loan-words—Egyptian.

⁴² *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT*, tr. and ed. M. E. J. Richardson (Leiden: Boston, Brill, 2001), I:215.

explicit way. It can be presented as follows:

The Heb. word ‘דוד’ (dod) originally means ‘uncle from father’s side, i.e. father’s brother’.

If ‘bin’ (son) be prefixed to it, it would mean ‘the son of uncle, i.e. a cousin’.

The word is used exclusively for father’s brother as compared to the Arabic word *ḥāl*, (Khāl) which means ‘mother’s brother’. As such ‘דוד’ (dod) can, by no stretch of sense, be applied to a ‘mother’s brother’.

Obviously, Jesus can by no means be considered to be the ‘dod’ of this verse.

Isaac (pbAh) is King Solomon’s forefather in his right lineage. Ishmā‘el (pbAh) is the brother of his forefather Isaac (pbAh). As such Ishmā‘el (pbAh) is the ‘uncle’ of the King and Prophet Solomon (pbAh).

Muḥammad (pbAh) is from the offspring of Ishmā‘el (pbAh).

As such Muḥammad (pbAh) is the ‘דוד’ (dod), of the King and the Prophet Solomon (pbAh) in true sense of the word.

As to the reason of Solomon’s calling Muḥammad (pbAh), who was from the lineage of his paternal uncle (Ishmā‘el pbAh), his ‘beloved’: it was due to the fact that Muḥammad (pbAh) was a prophet like him and was to exonerate him from the accusations of polytheism and magic etc, levelled against him by the Jews, as is to be explained later in this work.

It thus becomes clear that the Hebrew word ‘דוד’ (dod) can rightly and fitly be applied to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), by all means. He was from the progeny of Ishmā‘el (pbAh), who was the real brother of Solomon’s ancestor Isaac (pbAh), and, such, was in true sense of the word, the ‘דוד’ (dod) of Prophet Solomon (pbAh); whereas Jesus Christ (pbAh) can, by no stretch of meaning, be called the ‘brother of Solomon’s father’. Even the mother of Jesus Christ (pbAh), Virgin Mary, was from the progeny of Solomon’s father, David (pbAh), and not from the progeny of any brother of David (pbAh).

Chapter-IV

WHITE AND RUDDY

After indicating that the person mentioned in this passage belonged to the progeny of Isaac's brother, who was none other than Ishmā'el (pbAh), Solomon (pbAh) describes the conspicuous features and qualities of his beloved. First of all he describes his complexion and says that he is:

טַחַח וְאָדוֹם⁴³ (tsakh w adom)

white and ruddy

The Hebrew word for the English word 'white' is 'טַחַח' (tsach). According to *Strong's Dic.*, the meanings of this Hebrew word used for the English word 'white' (or 'radiant', as some other English translations have used for it) are:

Dazzling, i.e. sunny; bright, clear, white.⁴⁴

The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT explains the word as follows:

⁴³ *The Holy Scriptures: Heb. and Eng.*, 1535; and *The Jerusalem Bible*, 859.

⁴⁴ *Strong's A Concise Dic. of the Words in the Hebrew Bible*, p. 99, entry 6703. It may be noted at the outset that this is not a general Dictionary of the Hebrew language. It is rather a Dictionary of the Hebrew words of the Bible. It takes the English word from the English Bible (King James Version), also known as the 'Authorized Version', in the form of a 'Concordance'. It gives a serial number, which is to be traced in the Dictionary appended to this 'Concordance'. In the Dictionary, first of all, the Sr. No. is recorded; then there are: (a) the original Heb. word ; (b) Its pronunciation in English; and (c) the meanings of the Heb. word in English. It is thus quite relevant and authentic source for the purpose.

MHeb. bright, clarity; Syr. *ṣāḥḥīḥā* warm, gleaming;
OSArb. vb. *ṣḥḥ* to renew, adj. Healthy, intact.⁴⁵

The Pulpit Commentary explains it as:

The word *tsach*, from the root *tsāchach* (cf. Lam. Iv, 7), means a bright, shining clearness; it is not the same as *Lavan*, which would mean ‘dead white.’⁴⁶

It can thus be appreciated that the actual Hebrew word for ‘white’ does not signify some spiritless, morbid, or deadly whitish colour. It rather stands here for brightness, brilliance, wholesomeness, handsomeness, and attractiveness of the countenance and sound health.

The next word is ‘ruddy’, for which the Heb. word is ‘אָדוֹם’ (adom/awdome). It complements the theme of the preceding word ‘white’. *Strong’s Dic.* explains it as ‘Rosy, red’.⁴⁷ The root of the word is ’ādam which means:

to show blood (in the face), i.e. flush or turn rosy:- be red.⁴⁸

It signifies a red and rosy colour, shining with a flush. Combined together, the words ‘white and ruddy’, depict a comely figure of healthiness, strength, brightness, and beauty, as the *Pulpit Commentary* has rightly explained:

The mingling of colours in the countenance is a peculiar excellence. (...), no doubt as betokening⁴⁹ health and vigour.⁵⁰

Matthew Henry explained the phrase in his *commentary* as:

⁴⁵ *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT*, I:1018.

⁴⁶ R.A. Redford, Exposition to the ‘Song of Solomon’ in the *Pulpit Com.*, 122.

⁴⁷ Strong’s, *A Concise Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, p. 8, entry 122.

⁴⁸ Strong’s, *A Concise Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, p. 8, entry 119.

⁴⁹ ‘Betoken’ means: ‘be a sign of (sth); indicate’.

⁵⁰ *The Pulpit Commentary*, 122.

His complexion is a very happy composition.⁵¹

The combination of both these words (white & ruddy) represents a complete picture of health, vigour, and beauty. It reflects the exact features of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). One of the Prophet's companions, Jābir bin Samurah, states:

رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي لَيْلَةٍ أَضْحِيَانٍ⁵² وَعَلَيْهِ حُلَّةٌ حَمْرَاءُ فَجَعَلْتُ أَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِ وَإِلَى الْقَمَرِ فَلَهُوَ عِنْدِي أَحْسَنُ مِنَ الْقَمَرِ⁵³

Once it was a moonlit night in which there were no clouds [i.e. the moon was in its full bloom and the sky was clear]. The Apostle of Allah (pbAh) was dressed in reddish clothes. At times I looked at his countenance and at times at the moon. For certain, the Apostle's face seemed to me comelier than the moon.

Rubayyi' bint Mu'awiz describes:

يَا بُنَيَّ لَوْ رَأَيْتَهُ رَأَيْتَ الشَّمْسَ طَالِعَةً⁵⁴

My son, if you looked at him [the Prophet of Islām (pbAh), it would seem as if] you had seen the rising sun.

Obviously the sun at the time of rising is white and ruddy.

Umm Ma'bad has given a detailed account of the Prophet's person and personality. With regard to the present theme

⁵¹ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT, A New edn.*, carefully revised and corrected, in 9 volumes (NY: Robert Carter & Brothers, 530, Broadway, nd., but the condition of the paper shows that it may be of the end of the 19th or the beginning of the 20th century), 4:851.

⁵² لَيْلَةُ أَضْحِيَانٍ means:

According to Tāj al-‘Arūs: a bright night; according to Siḥāh, Qāmūs, and Tāj al-‘Arūs: in which are no clouds. (E. W. Lane, ‘*Arabic English Lexicon*’, Cambridge: The Islamic Text Society, 1984, p. 1774.)

⁵³ *Shamā’il Tirmidhī* (Lāhore: Ḍiyā al-Qurān Publications, 1987), 23.

⁵⁴ *Sunan al-Dārimī*, Kitāb al-Muqaddimah, Bāb (chapter) Ḥusn al-Nabī, Tradition No. 60.

her description is as below:

ظاهر الوضاعة⁵⁵ ابلج⁵⁶ الوجه (....) اجمل الناس و اهما⁵⁷ هم من بعيد و احسنه و احلاه من قريب⁵⁸

Conspicuous in purity and cleanliness, of fair and bright complexion (...) the most beautiful of the people and very splendid and bright [if seen] from afar; and comely and sweet [when seen] from proximity.

Anas bin Mālik reports:

أَزْهَرَ اللَّوْنِ لَيْسَ بِأَبْيَضَ أَمْهَقَ⁵⁹ وَلَا آدَمَ⁶⁰

⁵⁵ الظاهرة (Zāhir) means ‘manifest, evident, conspicuous, seemingly’; الوضاعة (wadā’ah) means ‘purity, cleanness, brightness’. So the phrase ظاهر الوضاعة (Zāhir al-wadā’ah) would mean ‘whose purity, cleanness, and brightness is quite evident and conspicuous’.

⁵⁶ The verb ‘balaja yablaju’ means ‘to shine, to dawn (morning aurora)’ and its superlative adjective ابلج (ablaj) means ‘bright, clear, beautiful, nice, fair’ [J. Milton Cowan, *Dic. of Modern Written Arabic* (NY: Spoken Language Services, 1976), 71]. Thus ابلج الوجه (ablaj al-wajh) would mean ‘whose countenance is bright and beautiful’.

⁵⁷ The word اهما (abhā) is a commonly used word in Arabic having a vast scope of meanings. According to J. Milton Cowan it means ‘*More splendid, more brilliant*’. How close in sense it is to the Hebrew word!

⁵⁸ Al-Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrik ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, (al-Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah, al-Marḥalah al-Ūla, al-Isdār al-Thānī, 2001), 3: 9,10, Tradition No. 4274.

⁵⁹ أَمْهَقَ (Amhaq) means:

White with thorough whiteness; in which there is no trace of redness; which is not bright, but is rather [dull] like gypsum or plaster of Paris, void of all shine or brightness’ [Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ* (Beirut: Maktabah Lubnān Nāshirūn, 1993), 867].

It means that his colour was not dull and dead white, void of brilliance and brightness.

⁶⁰ *Al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Bāb Ṣifat al-Nabī, Tradition No. 3283. It may be noted that the ‘*Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*’ of *al-Bukhārī* is one of those compilations of the traditions of the Prophet of Islām that are

He was of brilliant and rosy colour. Neither dull and dead white [void of all brilliance and brightness: as explained by *the Pulpt Commentary* (p.122) in the words of ‘it is not the same as *Lavan*, which would mean dead white’ on the first page of this chapter] nor earth-coloured (darkish brown).⁶¹

Barā bin ‘Āzib says:

حَدَّثَنَا (٠٠٠) إِبْرَاهِيمُ بْنُ يُوسُفَ (٠٠٠) قَالَ سَمِعْتُ الْبَرَاءَ يَقُولُ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَحْسَنَ النَّاسِ وَجْهًا (٠٠٠)^{٦٢}

The face of the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) was comeliest among the people.

Ka‘b bin Mālīk reports:

وَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا سُرَّ اسْتَبَارَ وَجْهُهُ حَتَّى كَأَنَّهُ قِطْعَةُ قَمَرٍ^{٦٣}

When the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) was happy, his countenance brightened as if it be a piece of the moon.

Abū Hurayrah states:

مَا رَأَيْتُ شَيْئًا أَحْسَنَ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَأَنَّ الشَّمْسَ تَجْرِي فِي وَجْهِهِ^{٦٤}

I never saw anything more beautiful than the Apostle of Allah (pbAh). It seemed as if the sun was running in his face.

At the time of some extraordinary feelings his face turned beautifully and brilliantly red like a red pomegranate of Qandahār. Abū Hurayrah depicts it as follows:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ خَرَجَ عَلَيْنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَنَحْنُ نَتَنَازَعُ فِي الْقَدْرِ فَعَضِبَ حَتَّى

considered likely to contain the most authentic texts of his sayings, as it was compiled with the utmost humanly possible care and diligence.

⁶¹ *Al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Bāb Şifat al-Nabī, Tradition No. 3547.

⁶² *Al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Bāb Şifat al-Nabī, Tradition No. 3285.

⁶³ *Al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Bāb Şifat al-Nabī, Tradition No. 3556.

⁶⁴ *Al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib ‘an Rasūl Allah, Bāb Şifat al-Nabī, Tradition No. 3581.

أَحْمَرٌ وَجْهُهُ حَتَّى كَأَنَّهَا فُقِئَتْ فِي وَجْهِهِ الرُّمَّانُ⁶⁵

Appeared before us the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) while we were involved in a dispute about fate. He was so displeased at it that his face turned red as if a pomegranate had been dashed against his cheeks.

As a whole there was a beautiful and healthy combination of white and red in the Prophet's complexion. *Shamā'il Tirmidhī* reports:

كَانَ عَلَيَّ إِذَا وَصَفَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ (...) فِي وَجْهِهِ تَدْوِيرٌ. أَبْيَضٌ مُشْتَرَبٌ (...) قَالَ أَبُو مُوسَى سَمِعْتُ أَبَا جَعْفَرٍ مُحَمَّدَ بْنَ الْحُسَيْنِ يَقُولُ سَمِعْتُ الْأَصْمَعِيَّ فِي تَفْسِيرِ صِفَةِ نَبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ (...) وَالْمُشْتَرَبُ الَّذِي فِي بَيَاضِهِ حُمْرَةٌ.⁶⁶

When Aī portrayed the Apostle of Allah (pbAh), he said: (...). 'There was roundness in his face. It was white "tinged over [or intermixed] with redness" (...).' Abū Mūsā said: I heard Abā Ja'far Muḥammad bin al-Husayn saying that he heard al-Aṣma'ī [saying] in his description of the traits of the Prophet (pbAh) (...) and 'al-mushrab' (المُشْتَرَبُ) is that in whose whiteness there is redness.

The word مُشْتَرَب (mushrab) in this tradition is a very important and decisive word. It conveys exact and complete sense of 'white and ruddy'. *Lane's Lexicon* has recorded its meanings as:

A man whose complexion is tinged over [or intermixed] with redness (T. A., i.e. *Tāj-el-'Aroos*).⁶⁷

The above traditions regarding the complexion of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), and especially this last one, decide it once for ever that the words 'white and ruddy' apply perfectly to his complexion without any shadow of doubt.

⁶⁵ *Al-Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Qadar 'an Rasūl Allah, Bāb Mā Jā'a fī al-Tashdīd fī al-Khawḍi fī al-Qadar, Tradition No. 2059.

⁶⁶ *Al-Tirmidhī*, tr. Mawlānā Zakariyya, *Shamā'il Tirmidhī* (Karachī: Mīr Muḥammad Kutub Khāna Markaz 'Ilm-o-Adab, Ārām Bāgh), 13.

⁶⁷ E. W. Lane, *Arabic Eng. Lexicon*, The Islamic Text Society, Cambridge, 1984, 2:1529; s.v. شَرَبَ.

All the features and attributes of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) have reliably been recorded in authenticated written form. There are many other traditions of the same theme but the above material is sufficient to establish that the first sentence of the prophecy obviously and unequivocally relates to none other than Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) and it has literally been fulfilled in the person of this sole Prophet of the lineage of Ishmā‘el (pbAh). On the other hand the events of the life story of Jesus Christ were very scantily recorded.⁶⁸ However, whatsoever is available in this regard, makes it quite clear that he had nothing to do with the attributes mentioned in this opening sentence of the prophecy.

Matthew Henry explains:

My beloved is white and ruddy, the colours that make up a complete beauty. This points not to any extraordinary beauty of his body, when he should be incarnate (it was never said of the child Jesus, as of the child Moses, when he was born, that he was *exceedingly fair* [Acts vii.20⁶⁹]; nay, *he had no*

⁶⁸ John L. McKenzie asserts in his *Dic .of the Bible*, p. 432f:

(...); after numerous shifts of opinion, the consensus of scholars is that the life of Jesus cannot be written. The reason is that the data for a historical biography do not exist. (...). Even the personality of Jesus, it seems, was not the primary object of interest [of the writers of the gospels]. (...); neither the Synoptics nor John intended to compose a historical biography, (...).

⁶⁹ In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair (KJV). Exodus ii:2 states:

And the woman [Moses' mother] conceived, and bare a son [Moses]; and when she saw him that he was a goodly *child*, she hid him three months (KJV).

NKJV has rendered it as:

At this time Moses was born. He was a fine child, and pleasing to God.

form nor comeliness, Isa. liii.2⁷⁰); but his divine glory, (...). In him we may behold the *beauty of the Lord*; he was the *holy child Jesus*; that was his fairness. (...). He is *white* in his spotless innocence of his life, *ruddy* in the bloody sufferings he went through at his death,—*white* in his glory, as God (when he was transfigured *his raiment was white as the light*), *ruddy* in his assuming the nature of man, *Adam—red earth*, —*white* in his tenderness towards his people, *ruddy* in his terrible appearances against his and their enemies.⁷¹ His complexion is a very happy composition.⁷²

Matthew Henry has a masterly adroitness of beautifully and

⁷⁰ Thomas Nelson Publishers' KJV (p. 615) has given it the heading '*The Messiah's Atonement*'. It writes:

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him.

The Nelson Study Bible explains it in its footnotes:

A root out of dry ground suggests Christ's rejection by Israel. No form or comeliness indicates that the Servant did not have a majestic manner. (*Nelson Study Bible*, p. 1198)

It clearly indicates that the words of this sentence of the prediction can by no means be applied to Jesus Christ.

⁷¹ Keeping in view the meanings of the Hebrew words for 'white' and 'ruddy' how can a discerning reader endorse this arbitrary exposition of the commentator. The writer of this book would like to submit the following observations on this piece of arbitrary exposition:

What a masterly piece of intentional and subjective manner of twisting, misinterpreting, and confusing a simple statement! In this way a layman can be presented and projected as a great scholar, and quite an ugly and morbid person as the most beautiful and healthy one; provided that he be lucky enough to win the favour of a literary advocate of the calibre of this commentator. Every sentence of this quotation is so self-contradictory and fantastic that the reader may easily discern its vagueness, absurdity, and irrelevancy.

⁷² Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT*, 4:851.

effectively explaining the words of the Bible and affording them the shades of meanings according to his own taste and requirements. He has got a deep insight into the Bible and its language. But he has closed upon him the doors of impartial, analytical, and critical study of the theme due to his credulous preconceptions; otherwise he could have easily discovered the contradictions in his above passage. The above passage requires a thorough study once again. Probably the commentator fully understands that the application of this prediction to Jesus Christ (pbAh) is not justifiable. It is only due to this double mindedness that he has indulged himself in such a farfetched, ridiculous, self-contradictory verbosity and mental exercise.

Rev R. A. Redford has explained it as follows:

He was white in his spotless purity; his sacred body was reddened with the precious blood.⁷³

The dexterity of interpretation exercised by the worthy commentator in freely applying the words of ‘white and ruddy’ of this prophecy to the person of Jesus is worth seeing:

His life exhibited a picture of holiness such as the world has never seen, such as none of its greatest sages has ever imagined. It stands alone in its pure beauty, unique, unapproachable. We know that no human intellect could have imagined such a life; no merely human pen could have described it [what a masterpiece of subjective credulousness!].⁷⁴

The Christian scholars know it of certain and categorically admit that the words of Solomon’s this prophecy cannot be literally applied to the physical characteristics of Jesus (pbAh). But on the other hand they do not like to lose this beautiful prophecy lest someone else may use it in favour

⁷³ R. A. Redford, *The Pulpit Com., Exposition on The ‘Song of Solomon’* (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co Ltd, 1897), 128.

⁷⁴ The Pulpit Commentary, 129.

of its true object, Muḥammad (pbAh). They try to create confusion by means of far-fetched interpretations for this simple statement of physical features of the particular person. Had some non-Christian scholar attempted to prove some proposition through such far-fetched interpretations, they would have bluntly thrown it away as rubbish.

The exposition of these words is afforded hereunder from a comparatively new commentary:

The term radiant means dazzling, glowing, or clear. It is used as descriptive of heat (Isa 18:4) and of wind (Jer 4:11). Certainly this does not apply to a physical characteristic. It rather implies an exceedingly striking, literary, radiant personality. Some assistance may be gained from Lamentations 4:7⁷⁵, which uses similar imagery. In both instances the reference may be to character [is ‘character’ described in terms of attributes of ‘white and ruddy’? Does it have some colours? Are there no appropriate attributes for the description of character in the human language?].⁷⁶

It becomes quite clear from the above study that the words of Solomon’s this prophecy can by no means be applied to Jesus Christ (pbAh); whereas they are absolutely relevant to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh).

To sum up the above study of the phrase ‘white and ruddy’ it can be presented as follows:

The word ‘white/radiant’ does not signify some spiritless, morbid, or deadly whitish colour. It rather stands here for

⁷⁵ Let’s see in the light of this assistance as well:

Her Nazarites [nobles] were purer than snow, they were white than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing was of sapphire: their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets; their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered; it is become like a stick (KJV).

It is unconceivable how it assists in understanding the above theme.

⁷⁶ *The Broadman Bible Com*, ed Clifton J. Allen, etc. (Tennessee, USA: Broadman Press, Nashville, 1971), 5:143.

brightness, brilliance, and beauty of the countenance and sound health.

The word ‘ruddy’ means to *show blood* (in the face), i.e. *flush* or turn rosy:- be red.

The combination of both these words, i.e. ‘white and ruddy’ depicts a comely figure of healthiness, strength, beauty and brightness. It reflects the exact features of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh).

They cannot be physically applied to Jesus Christ (pbAh) by any stretch of sense. He was literally neither ‘radiant’ nor ‘ruddy’. But, on the contrary, the Bible notes that ‘he had no form nor comeliness’.

They apply to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) in true sense of the word. It is a historical fact that he was perfectly ‘radiant and ruddy’.

The Christian scholars have vainly attempted to relate these words to Jesus Christ (pbAh).

The next sentence of the prophecy is:

דגול מרבבה

The chiefest/choicest among ten thousand

Which is to be elaborated in the next chapter.

Chapter-V

THE CHIEFEST AMONG TEN THOUSAND

⁷⁷דגול מרבבה (dajol ma rabowbah)

The original word in the Hebrew Bible for ‘the chiefest, choicest’ is ‘דגל’ (dagal). *Strong’s Dic.* explains:

A prim root; to *flaunt*, i.e. *raise a flag*; fig. to *be conspicuous*:- (set up with) banners, chiefest.⁷⁸

The next important phrase is ‘ten thousand’, for which the Hebrew word is ‘רבבה’ (rebawbah/rebobah). It signifies:

Myriad, ten thousand.⁷⁹

Matthew Henry has explained it in his commentary:

That he has that loveliness in him (...): He is the chiefest among ten thousand, a nonsuch⁸⁰ for beauty, (...) fairest of ten thousands in himself and the fittest of twenty thousands⁸¹

⁷⁷ *The Holy Scriptures: Heb. and Eng.*, 1535; and *The Jerusalem Bible*, 859.

⁷⁸ *Strong’s Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, s.v. ‘דגל’ (dagal), entry 1713, p. 29.

⁷⁹ *Strong’s Dic. of the Heb. B.*, s.v. ‘רבבה’ (rebobah), entry 7233, p. 106.

⁸⁰ Or nonesuch: (old use) better than all the others of the same kind. (*Longman Dic. of Contemporary Eng.*, 1995, p. 962)

⁸¹ The words ‘ten thousands’ and ‘twenty thousands’ here obviously mean ‘ten thousand’ and ‘twenty thousand’. There is no possibility of taking them to mean ‘many ten thousand/tens of thousands’ and ‘many twenty thousand/twenties of thousands’. It can thus be appreciated that in the Shakespearian (Shakespeare: 1564-1616) English there was no difference in ‘ten thousand’ and ‘ten thousands’. In both the cases the

for us.⁸²

According to the worthy commentator this person is superior to all the sovereigns of the world. He asserts:

And has obtained a more excellent name than any of the principalities and the powers of upper or lower world⁸³, Phil ii:9; Heb I:4.⁸⁴

He further asserts:

He is a standard bearer among ten thousand (so the word is), the tallest and comeliest of the company.⁸⁵

It is an historical fact that these words cannot be applied to any man on earth except the Leader of the 'Conquest of Makkah', Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh).

It is advisable that the exact wording of the commentator be perused to ascertain the real object of the phrase:

meanings were one and the same, i.e. '10,000'. It is to be noted that the worthy commentator has used both forms for the figure 10,000, i.e. 'ten thousand (as written only eighteen lines earlier in this very passage of the commentary, which can be seen in the second line of this excerpt in the text above)' without last 's' of plurality; and 'ten thousands' with last 's' of plurality. It is further to be highlighted that this commentary was initially published in 1704, which might have obviously been written some years prior to it. The King James Version had been accomplished in 1611. It means that the time-gap between the writing of both these books is only less than a century. It further shows that the style of writing 'thousands' with ten for the amount of '10,000' still prevailed during the time of Matthew Henry.

⁸² Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT*, 4: 851.

⁸³ It is a known fact that the 'Shahadah' (witness) of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) is declared five times a day through the 'Call for Prayer' in every nook and corner of the world where there be some Muslim population, whereas there is no such phenomenon regarding Jesus Christ or any other principality of the world.

⁸⁴ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT*, 4:851.

⁸⁵ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT*, 4:851.

He is *the chief among ten thousand*, a nonsuch for beauty, *fairer than the children of men*, than any of them, than all of them; there is none like him, nor any to be compared with him; everything else is to be accounted *loss and dung in comparison of him*, Phil. iii:8. *He is higher than the kings of the earth* (Ps lxxxix:27) and has *obtained a more excellent name* than any of the principalities and the powers of upper or lower world⁸⁶,

⁸⁶ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT*, 4:851. It would be interesting here to note that Michael H. Hart has recorded similar remarks about Prophet Muḥammad in his book ‘*The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*’ (NY City: Hart Publishing Co., Inc.), 33ff. He observes:

My choice of Muhammad [pbAh] to lead the list of the world’s most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels.

Of humble origins [It may be noted here that his origin was by no means a humble one. He was from one of the noblest of Arab tribes, Quraysh], Muhammad [pbAh] founded and promulgated one of the world’s great religions, and became an immensely effective political leader. Today, thirteen centuries after his death, his influence is still powerful and pervasive.

The majority of the persons in this book had the advantage of being born and raised in centers of civilization, highly cultured or politically pivotal nations. Muhammad [pbAh], however, was born in year 570, in the city of Mecca, in southern Arabia, at that time a backward area of the world, far from the centers of trade, art, and learning. Orphaned at age six [actually he was born orphan, because his father had already died before his birth. It was his mother who died when he was six.], he was reared in modest surroundings. Islamic tradition tells us that he was illiterate. (...) These small Arab armies now embarked upon one of the most astonishing series of conquests in human history. (...). Nevertheless in a scant century of fighting, these Bedouin tribesmen, inspired by the word of the Prophet, had carved out an

The observations of the worthy commentator continue:

empire stretching from the borders of India to the Atlantic Ocean—the largest empire that the world had yet seen. (...). First, Muhammad [pbAh] played a far more important role in the development of Islam than Jesus did in the development of Christianity. Although Jesus was responsible for the main ethical and moral precepts of Christianity (insofar as they differed from Judaism), Saint Paul was the main developer of Christian theology, its principal proselytizer, and the author of [pbAh] a large portion of the New Testament.

Muhammad [pbAh], however, was responsible for both the theology of Islam and its main ethical and moral principles. In addition he played the key role in proselytizing the new faith, and in establishing the religious practices of Islam. (...). It is probable that the relative influence of Muhammad [pbAh] on Islam has been larger than the combined influence of Jesus Christ [pbAh] and Saint Paul on Christianity. On purely religious level, then, it seems likely that Muhammad [PbAh] has been as influential in human history as Jesus [pbAh].

Furthermore, Muhammad [pbAh] (unlike Jesus [pbAh]) was a secular as well as a religious leader. In fact, as the driving force behind the Arab conquests, he may well rank as the most influential political leader of all time.

(...). Nothing similar had occurred before Muhammad [pbAh], and there is no reason to believe that the conquest would have been achieved without him. The only comparable conquests in human history are those of the Mongols in the thirteenth century, which were primarily due to the influence of Genghiz Khan. These conquests, however, though more extensive than those of the Arabs, did not prove permanent, and today the only areas occupied by the Mongols are those that they held prior to the time of Genghiz Khan. (...).

We see, then, that the Arab conquests of the seventh century have continued to play an important role in human history, down to the present day. It is this unparalleled combination of secular and religious influence which I feel entitles Muhammad [pbAh] to be considered the most influential single figure in human history.

Phil ii:9; Heb i:4. He is a *standard bearer among ten thousand* (so the word is), the tallest and comeliest of the company. He is himself *lifted up as ensign* (Isa. xi:10), to whom we must be gathered and must always have an eye. And there is all the reason in the world why he should have the innermost and uppermost place in our souls who is the *fairest of ten thousands* in himself and the fittest of twenty thousands for us.⁸⁷ -- [Quotation 1]

The commentator has previously stated that Christ (pbAh) was not exceedingly beautiful or attractive: -- [Quotation 2]

It was never said of the child Jesus, as of the child Moses, when he was born, that he was *exceedingly fair* [Acts vii.20]; nay, *he had no form nor comeliness*, Isa. liii.2);⁸⁸

It can thus be appreciated that the person mentioned in the former of the above mentioned two quotations cannot be the same as that mentioned in the latter one. As such the application of the former quotation to the person of Jesus Christ (pbAh) is obviously wrong in the light of the latter quotation. In the first of these two self-contradictory quotations it has been asserted that Jesus was the 'fairest of ten thousands in himself...' whereas in the second quotation it has been stated that '*he had no form nor comeliness.*' It is an historical fact that neither beauty and comeliness, excellence and fame nor the leadership of the army of ten thousand and kingdom of earth, can be applied to Jesus Christ (pbAh). The reader is, therefore, bound to trace the qualities mentioned by the worthy commentator in someone else.

Let us explore the sentence 'He is himself lifted up as ensign.' Whether the words are truly and exactly applicable to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) or Jesus Christ (pbAh), one is required to delve in the lives of both these persons.

What is the record of the annals of history regarding

⁸⁷ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT*, 4:851.

⁸⁸ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT*, 4: 851.

Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh)? It is the day of the ‘Conquest of Makkah’. He is sitting on a camel. His head is bent before his Lord in His thanksgiving. Under his command is an army of literally and exactly ten thousand holy ones. This being the holy month of Ramaḍān, most of them are fasting. All of them are loyal and faithful to him from the core of their hearts. He is the chiefest of them commanding their full allegiance. They are heartily prepared to comply with all his orders.

On the other hand there is Jesus Christ (pbAh). He had never been the chief commander of any group of ten thousand persons. What the Bible tells us about him is that he has been convicted and sentenced to death. He is being taken to the place of crucifixion. A crown of thorns has been put on his head. God forbid, people are spitting on his face. He is being ridiculed and insulted. His disciples have betrayed and forsaken him. God forbid, they have assigned him a death of curse to pave the way for their salvation.⁸⁹ Only a person void of all literary taste can attribute him with the words ‘He is himself lifted up as ensign.’ How a man who has written ‘It was never said of child Jesus (pbAh), (...), that he was exceedingly fair’ can claim about him as ‘Who is fairest of ten thousand in himself.’?

The Pulpit Commentary has also taken up the theme. It explains it in the following terms:

Therefore he is our standard-bearer (as the word rendered ‘chiefest’ seems to mean), our bannered One. He is the captain of our salvation. He goeth before us, bearing the banner of the cross. The thousands of his disciples follow. And he is the chiefest among ten thousand, marked out and distinguished (as the word may perhaps mean) from all others by his unapproachable holiness, by the infinite power and majesty of self-sacrificing love.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ All these statements have been taken from the Biblical literature. The Muslims do not believe in these insulting statements.

⁹⁰ *The Pulpit Commentary*, 129.

As to the observation of the commentator ‘He goeth before us, bearing the banner of the cross. The thousands of his disciples follow’; the history is void of any such event in which Jesus had ever led any such campaign. On the contrary, the Christian authorities report that when he was taken to the place of crucifixion, even the twelve disciples did not dare to accompany him. They were rather trying to hide themselves to conceal their identity lest they should be identified as his supporters. As such the words ‘Infinite power and majesty’ can by no stretch of sense be applied to Jesus Christ. On the contrary they clearly indicate the sole person of the whole human history to which the words can unequivocally be applied, Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh).

On the one hand the Christian scholars relate this prophecy to Jesus Christ (pbAh) with full force; but on the other hand their lack of confidence shows the weakness of their standpoint. Here is an excerpt from the *Pulpit Commentary*:

The description, which is complete in itself, is best regarded in its unbroken perfection. We must not expect to find a meaning for each separate part of it. (...) . Some of the details of description are differently rendered by different commentators.⁹¹

Matthew Henry asserts the same theme in a different manner:

Every thing in Christ is amiable. Ten instances she here gives of his beauty, which we not be nice⁹² in the application of, (...). The design, in general, is to show that he is every way qualified for his undertaking, and has all that in him which may recommend him to our esteem, love, and confidence.⁹³

The essence of the above excerpt is that it is useless to trace

⁹¹ *The Pulpit Commentary*, 129.

⁹² ‘Nice’ means: needing care and exactness; sensitive; subtle’ (*The Advanced Learners Oxf. Dic.*, 568).

⁹³ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT*, 4:851.

all the relevant qualities in the above-mentioned person in exact form. He is, however, such a person that it would not be inappropriate if we accept him of our own the object of our love, reverence, and confidence. A comparatively new commentary has also exercised similar practice to evade the literal application of the prophecy. It asserts:

Certainly this does not apply to a physical characteristic. It rather implies an exceedingly striking, literally radiant personality.⁹⁴

It is again obvious from the above excerpts that:

- (i) These Christian commentators of the Bible take these lines as a prophecy.
- (ii) They apply it to Jesus Christ (pbAh).
- (iii) They do not stick to its literal, natural, and obviously direct meanings. They rather interpret it in accordance with their predetermined and desired aims quite freely and arbitrarily.
- (iv) 'The chiefest among ten thousand' can by no means be applied to Jesus Christ (pbAh).
- (v) 'The chiefest among ten thousand' can only be applied to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) by all means and with the annals of the history of all the times.

⁹⁴ *The Broadman Bible Commentary*, 143.

HIS HEAD AND HAIR

Verse 11 is:

ראשו כחם פז קוצותיו תלתלים שחרות כעורב⁹⁵

(Ra'shu katam faz qawswahiv taltalis shahrut ka'arab)

His head *is as* the most fine gold, his locks *are* bushy, *and* black as a raven.

The study of the clause 'His head *is like*⁹⁶ the finest gold. (NKJV)' of the verse is being undertaken in the next lines.

NIV has rendered it as 'His head is purest gold.'

Matthew Henry has explained it as follows:

Christ's head bespeaks [indicates; shows; as a sign of] his sovereign dominion over all and his vital influence upon his church and all its members. (...). Christ's sovereignty is both beautiful and powerful. Nebuchadnezzar's monarchy is compared to a *head of gold* (Dan.ii.38⁹⁷).⁹⁸

⁹⁵ *The Holy Scriptures* (Jerusalem : Koren Publishers), 2000, p.859.

⁹⁶ Italicizing of 'is like' means that these words are not there in the original Hebrew and have been added by the translators.

⁹⁷ *Book of Daniel*'s exact wording is:

You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heavens has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; And wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you are this *head of gold* [stress added]. (NKJV)

⁹⁸ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT*, 4:851.

The word 'head' stands for the Hebrew word 'ראש' (rô'sh/ra'sh). According to *Strong's Dict.* it means:

The head, captain, chief, excellent, forefront, principal, ruler, top.⁹⁹

It is the same word which, in Arabic, is 'ra's'. The second important word in this sentence is 'gold'. It stands for the original Hebrew word 'פז' (paz), which means:

Pure (gold); hence gold itself (as refined): fine pure gold.¹⁰⁰

Keeping in view the above meanings of the original Hebrew words of the Bible, the sentence would mean:

His excellent rule and authority [according to Matt. Henry 'sovereignty'] is flawless, pure and refined' [according to Matt. Henry: 'both beautiful and powerful'].

The worthy commentator has explained that these words denote 'beautiful and powerful sovereignty' as the monarchy of Nebuchadnezzar has been analogized with the head of gold in the book of Daniel. The remarks of the commentator, i.e. 'Christ's head bespeaks his sovereign dominion over all (...). Christ's sovereignty is both beautiful and powerful' need no comments. Everyone who has studied the biography of Jesus Christ (pbAh), knows it of certain that he never achieved any sovereignty anywhere. The Jews had managed to obtain the death sentence against him and according to the gospels he was humiliatingly taken to the place of crucifixion. On the other hand this sentence presents a literal fulfillment in the person of the 'Conqueror of Makkah.'

Jesus Christ (pbAh) never achieved power and authority (sovereignty) in his life whereas Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) enjoyed full power and authority of the state of Maḍinah and consequently the whole of the Arabian Peninsula (and full respect and love of the believers) and his decisions and

⁹⁹ *Strong's Dic. of the Heb. B.* s.v. 'ra'sh', entry 7218, p. 106.

¹⁰⁰ *Strong's Dic. of the Heb. B.* s.v. 'paz', entry 6337, p. 94.

commands in that position had always been pure and flawless. Now it is unto the reader to decide in whose person the words of the Bible find their exact and literal fulfillment.

According to KJV the next sentence of the verse is:

His locks are bushy, and black as a raven.

His 'locks' have been described as 'wavy' or 'bushy' in the translations of the Bible. The original Hebrew word for this 'wavy' is 'תלתל' (taltal), which, according to the *Strong's Dic.*, means:

A trailing bough (as pendulous¹⁰¹); bushy.¹⁰²

It means that his hair was like a drooping (hanging or bending down) bough of a tree.

The second clause of the sentence is 'and black as a raven.' The original Hebrew for its first main word 'black' is 'שחר' (sahar), and according to the scheme of the *Strong's* transliteration 'shachar'. It is the same Arabic word which means 'before daybreak, dawn'. The *Strong's Dic.* explains:

7835, a primary root; [rather identical with 7836 through the idea of the *duskiness* of early dawn]; to be *dim* or dark (in color):- be black.

7836, to *dawn*, i.e. (figuratively) *be* (up) *early* at any task (with the implication of earnestness); seek (diligently) early, in the morning.¹⁰³

The second main word of this clause is 'raven'. The word used for it in the Hebrew Bible is 'ערב' ('arab/'areb etc). The *Strong's Dic.* explains it as follows:

¹⁰¹ 'Pendulous' means: hanging down loosely and swinging freely.

¹⁰² *Strong's Dic. of Heb. Bible*, s.v. 'taltal', entry 8534, p. 124.

¹⁰³ *Strong's Dic. of Heb. B.*, s.v. 'shachar', entry 7835, 36; p. 114.

A raven (from its dusky hue).¹⁰⁴

It may be noted here that ‘raven’ is not the literal meaning of the Hebrew word ‘עֶרֶב’. It is its figurative meaning in view of its ‘dusky hue’. It may also be noted here that Arabic and Hebrew are similar and sister languages of Semitic family of languages and have a lot of common points. Their basic alphabet consists of 22 letters (א, ב, ג, ד, ה, ו, ז, ח, ט, י, כ, ל, מ, נ, ס, ע, פ, צ, ק, ר, ש, ת; i.e. Aleph, Bayth or b, Geemel or j, dawleth or th as in then, hay or h, vawv or v, zayin or z, Hayth or h, tayth or t, yowd or y, kaaf or k, laamed or l, meem or m, noon or n, sawmek or s, ‘Ayin or ‘, fay or f, tsawday or s, qowf or q, raysh or r, sheen or sh, tawv or t). In addition to these 22 letters the Arabs framed six more letters (th, kh, dh, d, z, gh) to accommodate their additional sounds, which do not exist in the Hebrew alphabet. The Arabic letter ‘ghayn’ (gh) is one of those six letters, which do not exist in the Hebrew language. Now, there are two words ‘orab/arab and ghurab in Arabic; the former for an Arabian person and the latter for a raven or crow. The Hebrew alphabet, having no letter for ‘gh’ sound, has only one word for both: ‘Arabian’ and ‘crow’. It has no separate and independent word for a ‘raven’ and uses the same word for an Arabian and for a raven or crow. As such it is difficult to ascertain for which sense the Hebrew word ‘orab/arab’ stands here. The translators of the Bible take it in the sense of a raven in view of dark colour of the hair, whereas actually it stands for an Arabian. Here is a study of some more meanings of this word/root. According to entry No. 6150 the word ‘עֶרֶב’ (‘arab) means:

A primary root [rather identical with 6148 through the idea of *covering* with a texture]; to *grow dusky* at sun down:- be darkened, (toward) evening.¹⁰⁵

The same word, ‘עֶרֶב’ (‘arab), has been explained under

¹⁰⁴ Strong’s Dic. of Heb. Bible, s.v. ‘arab’, entry 6158, p. 91.

¹⁰⁵ Strong’s Dic. of Heb. Bible, s.v. ‘arab’, entry 6150; p. 91.

entry No. 6152 as follows:

In the figurative sense of *sterility*; *Arab* (i.e. *Arabia*), a country E. of Palestine.¹⁰⁶

It can also be 'ערבי' ('arabi'), which, according to entry No. 6163 of the same *Strong's Dic.*, means:

An *Arabian* or inhabitant of Arab (i.e. *Arabia*).¹⁰⁷

As to the word 'as' (in Hebrew 'כ' or 'k') in the phrase 'black as a raven', it is the result of some visual error. The Hebrew letters 'כ' (k=kaph) and 'ו' (waw=w) resemble each other and may be mistakenly interchanged due to some visual misperception, especially when some scribe may not have observed proper care and vigilance while writing. Thus the phrase 'His locks are (...) black as a raven' would actually mean 'His locks are (...) black and he is an Arab'.

It can thus be appreciated that there remains no doubt in the fact that this verse is perfectly applicable to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh).

A fairly detailed lexical study of the sentence 'His locks are bushy, and black as a raven' has been undertaken in the above lines. The results of the study and some further relevant information is being presented hereunder:

- 1 Basically, in the verbal form, the word 'ערב' ('arab), which has been translated here as 'raven', means: 'to grow dusky at sun down:- be darkened, (toward) evening.'
- 2 It also bears the sense of 'sterility'. 'Arabia' was given this name because of being basically a barren, sterile, and inarable land. It also implies 'an *Arabian* or inhabitant of Arabia'.
- 3 Being void of the Arabic sound 'gh', the Hebrew language has only one word for both 'a raven' and 'an Arab'.

¹⁰⁶ *Strong's Dic. of Heb. Bible*, s.v. 'arab', entry 6152; p. 91.

¹⁰⁷ *Strong's Dic. of Heb. Bible*, s.v. 'arabi', entry 6163; p. 91.

4. As to the word ‘bushy’ or ‘wavy’ the original Hebrew word is ‘תלתל’ (taltal), which, according to *Strong’s Dic.*, means: ‘a trailing bough (as pendulous)’. Bushy or wavy is not its proper translation. ‘A trailing bough’ is not bushy or wavy. It rather has a curl only at its end.

It means that the hair of the Solomon’s ‘Praised One’ was not bushy or wavy; it was rather long which had a natural curl at its end. Sayyed Abū’l A’lā Mawdūdī has drawn a beautiful picture of the hair of Prophet Muḥammad from some authorities. He writes:

The hair of his head and beard was thick: neither intertwestingly curly like those of Negroes nor quite straight. It had rather a light touch of curl. Even in his last years hardly twenty hairs had grown white, and they too were visible only when he had not anointed (applied oil to) them. Sometimes the locks of his hair went to the middle of his ears, sometimes to their end and at times even longer.¹⁰⁸

These details have not been given by Sayyid Mawdūdī of himself. He has noted them from authentic sources:

Umm Ma‘bad reports:

از ج اقرن شديد سواد الشعاع¹⁰⁹

Long and black eyelashes, thin and intermixed eyebrows, bright black hair.

Alī was the first cousin of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) as well as his son-in-law (and, as such, a competent and reliable observer of the qualities of his hair). His

¹⁰⁸ Sayyed Abū’l A’lā Mawdūdī, *Sīrat-e-Sarwar-e-‘Ālam* (Lahore: Idārah Tarjumān al-Qurān, 1983), 2:126.

¹⁰⁹ Al-Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrik ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, (al-Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabīyyah, al-Marḥalah al-Ūla, al-Iṣdār al-Thānī, 2001), III:9,10, Tradition No.4274. The writer is grateful to Mr. ‘Ammār Nāṣir, s/o Mawlānā Zāhid al-Rāshidī, for tracing the reference of this tradition. The writer had, originally, noted it from Qāḍī Sulaymān Manṣūrpuṛī’s magnum opus, Raḥmatullil-‘Ālamīn, but no source was given there.

description is as follows:

كَانَ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ اللَّهُ عَزَّ إِذَا وَصَفَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ (...) وَلَمْ يَكُنْ بِالْجَعْدِ¹¹⁰ الْقَطَطُ وَلَا
بِالسَّبِطِ¹¹¹ كَانَ جَعْدًا رَجُلًا¹¹² (...) قَالَ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ سَمِعْتُ الْأَصْبَغِيَّ
يَقُولُ فِي تَفْسِيرِهِ صِفَةَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ (...) وَأَمَّا الْقَطَطُ فَالشَّدِيدُ الْجُعْدَةُ وَالرَّجُلُ الَّذِي
فِي شَعْرِهِ حُجُونَةٌ أَيْ يَنْحَنِي قَلِيلًا¹¹³

His hair was neither immensely curly (having much curl), nor quite straight and stiff. There was a slight curl in his hair and his hair was between curly and hanging down straight. It was only slightly curly.

Abū Hurayrah says that there was a slight bend in his hair.¹¹⁴

Qatādah reports that his hair was neither straight and stiff, nor interlocked:

حَدَّثَنَا قَتَادَةُ قَالَ قُلْتُ لَأَنْسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ كَيْفَ كَانَ شَعْرُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ كَانَ
شَعْرًا رَجُلًا لَيْسَ بِالْجَعْدِ وَلَا السَّبِطِ¹¹⁵

Anas says:

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ (يَصِفُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ) كَانَ (...) لَيْسَ (...) بِالْجَعْدِ الْقَطَطُ وَلَا

¹¹⁰ الجَعْدُ 'al-Ja'd' (Inf. Ju'ūdah) means 'to become curly; to be wavy, wrinkled' (Hans Wehr, *A Dic. of Modern Written Ar.*, ed. J. M. Cowan, NY: Spoken Language Services, Inc. 1976, III Edition), 127.

¹¹¹ السَّبِطُ 'Sabit' means lank hair (*A Dic. of Mod. Written Arabic*, 394); and 'lank' means 'straight and limp [soft, not stiff]', (*Oxf. Adv. Learners Enc. Dic.*, Oxf. Univ. Press, 1994, p. 506).

¹¹² رَجُلٌ 'Rajil': (hair) between curly and hanging down straight (*Al-Munjid*, Beirut: Dar el Machreq SARL Publishers, 1998, 251, s.v. 'Rajil').

¹¹³ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Kit. al-Manāqib, al-Bāb Ṣifat al-Nabī, Tradition No. 3547; *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, al-Kitāb al-Manāqib 'an Rasūl Allah, al-Bāb. fi Ṣifat al-Nabī, Tradition No. 3638.

¹¹⁴ Na'im Šiddīqī, *Muḥsin-e-Insāniyyat* (Lahore: Islāmic Publications, 1989), 86.

¹¹⁵ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, al-Kitāb al-faḍā'il, al-bāb Ṣifatu Sha'ri al-Nabī, Tradition No. 2338.

Both of the above traditions signify the following sense:

His hair was neither immensely curly (having much curl), nor quite straight and stiff. It means that: 'His hair was between curly and hanging down straight and there was a slight bend in the Prophet's hair'.

Barā' bin 'Āzib says:

عَنْ الْبَرَاءِ بْنِ عَازِبٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَهُ شَعْرٌ يُبْلَغُ شَحْمَةً أُذُنَهُ
(...) قَالَ يُوسُفُ بْنُ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ إِلَى مَنْكِبَيْهِ¹¹⁷
سَمِعْتُ الْبَرَاءَ يَقُولُ إِنَّ جُمَّتَهُ لَتَضْرِبُ قَرِيئًا مِنْ مَنْكِبَيْهِ (...) قَالَ شُعْبَةُ شَعْرُهُ يُبْلَغُ شَحْمَةً
أُذُنَيْهِ¹¹⁸

Both the above traditions mean, 'His hair reached sometimes to the end of his ears and sometimes to the shoulders.'

5. The hair of Solomon's 'Praised One' was extremely black and remained as such till the end of his life. In the hair of both his head and beard there were not more than totally twenty hairs white, as can be appreciated from the following tradition of Anas bin Mālik:

عَنْ (...) أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ يَصِفُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ كَانَ (...) وَفُيْضَ وَلَيْسَ فِي رَأْسِهِ
وَلَحْيَتِهِ عَشْرُونَ شَعْرَةً بَيْضَاءَ¹¹⁹

And he died and there were not even twenty hairs white in (both) his head and his beard.

Even those were visible only when he had not anointed (applied oil to) them, as is evident from the following tradition of Jābir bin Samurah:

عَنْ (...) جَابِرِ بْنِ سَمُرَةَ سَمِعَ عَنْ شَيْبِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ كَانَ إِذَا دَهَنَ رَأْسَهُ لَمْ يُرَ

¹¹⁶ *Shamā'il Tirmidhī*, Bāb Mā Jā'a Fī Khuluqī Rasūlillāhi, Tradn. 1.

¹¹⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, K. al-Manāqib, al-Bāb Ṣifat al-Nabī, Trad. 3551.

¹¹⁸ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Libās, Bāb al-Ja'ad, Trad. No.5901.

¹¹⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, K. al-Manāqib, al-Bāb Ṣifat al-Nabī, Tr. 3547.

مِنْهُ شَيْءٌ وَإِذَا لَمْ يَدْنُ رُئِيَ مِنْهُ^{١٢٠}

When the Holy Prophet had anointed his head, nothing of these (white hair) could be seen in it; but when he did not apply oil to them, they were visible.

The Prophet of Islām used to keep his hair almost always anointed. He hardly ever let his hair remain dry, without oil as reported by Anas bin Mālīk:

عن أنس ابن مالك قال كان رسولُ الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يُكثِرُ دَهْنَ رَأْسِهِ وَتَسْرِجَ لِحْيَتِهِ وَيَكثُرُ الْقِنَاعُ حَتَّى كَانَ نُوبُهُ ثَوْبُ زَيَّاتٍ¹²¹

The Prophet of Allah (pbAh) often kept his hair anointed and his beard properly combed. He often kept a handkerchief under his turban [which absorbed the oil whereby the turban remained safe from it] so much so that it seemed as if it was a cloth of an oilman.

On the other hand the head and hairs of Jesus were extremely white, as can be appreciated from the following excerpt of the Bible:

His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow.¹²²

It can thus be appreciated that this part of the prophecy cannot be applied to Jesus whereas it exactly applies to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh).

6. ‘Black as a raven’ is not correct rendering of the Hebrew phrase. The Hebrew word used for raven is ‘Arab’, which means ‘an Arab, an Arabian, or an inhabitant of Arabia’, which has already been explained above. Therefore the proper translation of קוצותיו תלתלים שחרות כערב (Qawswahiv taltalis shahrut ka‘arab) is:

There is a slight bend or curl in his locks and they are extremely black. He is an inhabitant of Arabia.

¹²⁰ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-faḍā’il, Bāb fī Shaybiḥī, H. No.23

¹²¹ *Shamā’il Tirmidhī*, Bāb mā jā’a fī Tarajjuli Rasūl Allah (pbAh).

¹²² Rev.1:14 KJV.

Keeping in view the above data, it is not difficult to ascertain whom do these words indicate: Prophet Muḥammad of Arabia (pbAh) or Jesus Christ (pbAh)? But it is surprising to note how the Christian scholars interpret or, rather, manipulate this statement in favour of Jesus Christ (pbAh). Matthew Henry asserts:

(...) black as raven, whose blackness is his beauty. Sometimes Christ's hair is represented as white (Rev. i:14), denoting his eternity, that he is the ancient of days; but here as black and bushy, denoting that he is ever young and that there is in him no decay, nothing that waxes. Everything that belongs to Christ is amiable in the eyes of a believer, even his hair is so; (...).¹²³

The reader can easily appreciate the trickery of translation and interpretation in the above passage. How adroitly the 'white' has been proved to be 'black'! Objective study is considered basic precondition for a just and impartial research. It demands that some theme should be presented faithfully in its actual form and it should be interpreted according to the requirement of the context and the intent of the writer without twisting or manipulating it to one's own intent and purpose. But in the above passage the skill of interpreting a theme quite contrary to its actual sense has been exhibited freely and unhesitatingly. It is by no means a faithful interpretation. It is obviously an example of misinterpretation and corruption.

¹²³ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT*, 4:851.

HIS EYES

Verse 12 is:

¹²⁴ עֵינָיו כִּיּוֹנִים עַל־אֲפִיק מַיִם רַחְצוֹת בַּחֵלֶב יִשְׁבוֹת עַל־מִלָּאֵת

His eyes are as *the eyes* of doves by the rivers of waters,
washed with milk, *and* fitly set.

Jesus Christ's detailed features are available neither in the Bible nor in any other book. There may be some casual glimpses of some of his features, which are irrelevant to the qualities stated in this stanza. The Christian scholars attach the qualities, which Solomon is describing about his 'Praised One', to Jesus Christ (pbAh) without any proof or relevance.¹²⁵ Hereunder are some of its examples:

The Pulpit Commentary has explained the verse as follows:

The eyes are not only pure and clear, but with a glancing moistness in them which expresses feeling and devotion. (...). The pureness of the white of the eye is represented in the bathing or washing in milk. They are full and large, 'fine in their setting,' referring no doubt to the steady strong look of fine eyes.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ *The Holy Scriptures* (Jerusalem : Koren Publishers), 2000, p.859.

¹²⁵ If the Christian scholars and commentators find it useful to their purpose to attach some prediction to Jesus Christ (pbAh), they do it without any hesitation. If they find some difficulty in affording some proof or detail in favour of their claim, they arbitrarily create these qualities in Jesus Christ. If they do not find the requisite qualities in the New Testament of the Bible, they fill up this lacuna by snatching such quality, features, event, or beautiful details from some verse or verses of the Old Testament of the Bible, and then attach it to Christ.

¹²⁶ *The Pulpit Commentary*, 123.

Of course the verse can be interpreted in these terms, but how can one apply it to Jesus Christ when there is no record in this regard.

Matthew Henry explains this verse in the following words:

His eyes are as the eyes of doves, fair and clear, and chaste and kind, (...). They are washed, to make them clean, *washed with milk*, to make them white, *and fitly set*, neither starting out nor sunk in. Christ is *of purer eyes than to behold iniquity*, for they are doves' eyes.¹²⁷

No doubt this paragraph, except the last sentence 'Christ (...) eyes', depicts proper picture of the above verse, but its application to Jesus Christ is quite arbitrary. It would be quite pertinent to undertake a fairly detailed analytical study of the verse. The first clause is 'His eyes are as *the eyes of doves*'. The lexical details of the word 'doves' are being explored here. *Strong's Dic.* explains it as under:

Probably from the same as 3196; a dove.¹²⁸

The Hebrew word under entry. 3196 is 'יין' (yayin). It has been explained in this *Dic.* as:

From an unused root meaning to *effervesce* (to be gay and excited); *wine* (as fermented); by implication *intoxication* [it is a common phenomenon that the eyes turn red in this condition].¹²⁹

The *Heb. Lexicon of the OT* gives one of its meanings as: 'wine=drunkenness'¹³⁰.

As to the simile 'His eyes are as *the eyes of doves*', it looks to be absurd. There is nothing conspicuous in the eyes of 'doves' that they be compared with the eyes of the 'beloved' one. In view of the lexical exploration of the

¹²⁷ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT*, 4: 851f.

¹²⁸ *Strong's Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 3123; p. 48.

¹²⁹ *Strong's Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 3196; p. 49.

¹³⁰ *The Heb. & Aramaic Lexicon of the OT*, (Leiden: Brill, 2001), p.409.

word 'doves' the sensible meanings of the clause would be 'His eyes are as the eyes of a drunken one, i.e. red to some extent.'

Sayyed Abū'l A'lā Mawdūdī has described the eyes of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) in the following words:

His eyes were intensely black. Eyelashes were long. (...).
The pupils of the eyes were extremely black. Eyeballs were extremely white [washed with milk].¹³¹

The same author has recorded some of the features of his eyes at another place as follows:

His eyes were large and very beautiful. Even without antimony it seemed as if he had applied antimony to his eyes. There were light red threads in his eyes. Eyelashes were thick and long.¹³²

Hereunder are some traditions describing the qualities of the eyes of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) from which the above statement has been derived:

Umm Ma'bad describes the features of his eyes as follows:

في عينيه دمع¹³³ احور¹³⁴ اكحل¹³⁵ ازج¹³⁶ اقرن¹³⁷

¹³¹ Sayyed Abū'l A'lā Mawdūdī, *Sīrat-e-Sarwar-e-Ālam* (Lahore: Idarah Tarjumān al-Qurān, 1983), 2:733.

¹³² Mawdūdī, *Sīrat-e-Sarwar-e-Ālam*, 2:126.

¹³³ دمع (da'j) means:

(Qāmūs) Blackness; or intense blackness; (Qāmūs, Ṣiḥāḥ:) or intense blackness in the eye, with intense whiteness thereof (E. W. Lane, *Arabic Eng. Lexicon*, The Islamic Text Society, Cambridge, 1984, p. 881).

¹³⁴ احور (aḥvar) means:

having eyes with a marked contrast of white and black, (also, said of the eye:) intensely white and deep-black (*A Dic. of Modern Written Arabic*, 212).

¹³⁵ اكحل (akḥal) means: 'black-eyed' (Elias A. Elias, *al-Qamūs al-ʿAṣrī*, Bierut: Dār al-Jīl, 1972, Ninth Edn., 583).

His eyes are deep black and large; there is a marked contrast of white and black in them; even without applying any antimony, it seemed as if antimony has been applied to them; they have beautifully arched eyebrows; it looks as if the eyebrows were grown together.

As to the blackness of his eyes, Jābir reports:

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ سَمُرَةَ قَالَ وَكُنْتُ إِذَا نَظَرْتُ إِلَيْهِ قُلْتُ أَكْحَلُ الْعَيْنَيْنِ وَلَيْسَ بِأَكْحَلٍ¹³⁸

When I looked at him I would say he has applied antimony to his eyes, whereas he had not applied antimony.

‘Alī, the first cousin of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) reports:

كَانَ عَلِيٌّ إِذَا وَصَفَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ (...) وَكَانَ (...) أَدْعَجَ الْعَيْنَيْنِ (...) قَالَ أَبُو عِيسَى سَمِعْتُ أَبَا جَعْفَرٍ مُحَمَّدَ بْنَ الْحُسَيْنِ يَقُولُ سَمِعْتُ الْأَصْعَمِيَّ يَقُولُ فِي تَفْسِيرِ صِفَتِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ (...) وَالْأَدْعَجُ¹³⁹ الشَّدِيدُ سَوَادَ الْعَيْنِ.¹⁴⁰

The Prophet (pbAh) was (...) Abū ‘Isā (Tirmidhī) says that he heard Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad bin Ḥusayn saying that he heard al-Aṣma‘ī explaining the qualities of the Prophet that الْأَدْعَجُ is the person whose black of eyes is extremely black.

As to the ‘light red threads in his eyes’ and their largeness, Jābir reports in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*:

عَنْ (...) جَابِرِ بْنِ سَمُرَةَ قَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ (...) أَشْكَلَ الْعَيْنِ¹⁴¹

¹³⁶ ازج (azaJJ) means: ‘having beautifully arched eyebrows’ (A *Dic. of Modern Written Arabic*, 373).

¹³⁷ Al-Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrik ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, (al-Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah, al-Marḥalah al-Ūla, al-Iṣdār al-Thānī, 2001), 3:9-10, Tradition No. 4274.

¹³⁸ *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, al-Kitāb. al-Manāqib ‘an Rasūl Allah, Bāb. fi Ṣifāh al-Nabī, Tradition. No. 3645.

¹³⁹ الْأَدْعَجُ (al-ad‘aj) means: ‘Black-eyed; having deep-black and large eyes’ (A *Dic. of Modern Written Arabic*, 282).

¹⁴⁰ *Shamā‘il Tirmidhī*, Bāb mā jā’a fi Khalqī Rasūl Allah (pbAh).

¹⁴¹ E. W. Lane has explained the words أَشْكَلُ الْعَيْنِ (ashkal al-‘ayn) in his ‘*Arabic English Lexicon*, p. 1588’ as follows:

The Apostle of Allah (pbAh) was large-eyed having light red threads in them.

The study of the eyes of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) conducted so far shows that there was a vivid contrast in their white and black parts (as if washed) and there were red threads in them.

As to the next phrase ‘by the rivers of waters, washed with milk’, *the Pulpit Com.* has explained it as: ‘with a glancing moistness in them which expresses feeling and devotion.’ The Hebrew Word for ‘river’ is אֶפֶק (Afeeq), which, according to *Strong’s Dic.*, means:

From 622: ‘(...) a bed or valley of a stream; (...)’¹⁴³

As such ‘by the rivers of waters, washed with milk,’ would actually mean that the eyes of the ‘beloved’ are ‘*with a glancing moistness in them which expresses feeling and devotion*’. They are full of mercy, love and compassion. It is an admitted fact that Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) was a very kind and compassionate person. Tears often came in his eyes at the distress and pathetic condition of people. Only one example is being quoted here to show his kindheartedness:

أَخْبَرَنَا الْوَلِيدُ بْنُ النَّضْرِ الرَّمْلِيُّ عَنْ مَسْرَةَ بْنِ مَعْبُدٍ مِنْ بَنِي الْحَارِثِ بْنِ أَبِي الْحَرَامِ مِنْ لَحْمٍ عَنْ

(Qāmūs) A man is said to be ‘أَشْكَلُ الْعَيْنِ’ meaning *Having a redness*, (‘Maghrib’ of El-Muṭarrizee,) *or the like of a redness*, (‘Obab’ of Eṣ-Ṣaghaneē,) *in the white of the eye* : (‘Maghrib’ of El-Muṭarrizee, ‘Obab’ of Eṣ-Ṣaghaneē:) the Prophet is said to have been أَشْكَلُ الْعَيْنِ; and it has been explained as meaning *long in the slit of the eye*: (Qāmūs:) but Ibn Seedeḥ, author of the ‘Moḥkam’ says that this is extra-ordinary; and Moḥammad Ibn-Eṭ-Ṭeiyib El-Fasee, author of ‘Annotations on the Qāmūs’, that the leading authorities on the traditions consentaneously assert it to be pure mistake, and inapplicable to the Prophet, even if lexicologically correct.

¹⁴² *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb. al-faḍā’il, Bāb .fī Ṣifāḥ Fam al-Nabī wa ‘Aynayhi, Hadīth. No. 2339.

¹⁴³ *Strong’s Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, Entry 650, p. 15.

الْوَصِينَ أَنَّ رَجُلًا أَتَى النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّا كُنَّا أَهْلَ جَاهِلِيَّةٍ وَعِبَادَةَ أَوْثَانٍ فَكُنَّا نَقْتُلُ الْأَوْلَادَ وَكَانَتْ عِنْدِي ابْنَةٌ لِي فَلَمَّا أَجَابَتْ وَكَانَتْ مَسْرُورَةً بِدُعَائِي إِذَا دَعَوْتُهَا فَدَعَوْتُهَا يَوْمًا فَاتَّبَعَتْنِي فَمَرَرْتُ حَتَّى أَتَيْتُ بَيْتًا مِنْ أَهْلِي غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَأَخَذْتُ يَدَهَا فَرَدَّيْتُ بِهَا فِي الْبَيْتِ وَكَانَ آخِرَ عَهْدِي بِهَا أَنْ تَقُولَ يَا أَبَتَاهُ يَا أَبَتَاهُ فَبَكَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى وَكَفَ دَمْعٌ مِنْ عَيْنَيْهِ فَقَالَ لَهُ رَجُلٌ مِنْ جُلَسَاءِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَحْزَنْتَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ لَهُ كَفْ فَإِنَّهُ يَسْأَلُ عَمَّا أَهَمَّهُ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ أَعَدَّ عَلَيَّ حَدِيثَكَ فَأَعَادَهُ فَبَكَى حَتَّى وَكَفَ الدَّمْعُ مِنْ عَيْنَيْهِ عَلَى لِحْيَتِهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ وَضَعَ عَنْ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ مَا عَمِلُوا فَاسْتَأْنَفَ عَمَلَكُمْ¹⁴⁴

Reported to us Walid bin al-Naḍr al-Ramliyy From Masarraḥ [or Sabrah] bin Ma'bad (who was from the tribe of Banī'l Hārith bin abī'l Ḥarām which is a branch of the tribe of Lakhm) from Waḍīn that a man came to the Prophet (pbAh) and said: 'O Apostle of Allah (pbAh), we were the people of ignorance and worshipped idols. We used to put the children to death. There was a daughter of mine. When [I called out to her], she responded. And it gave her much pleasure to respond to my call. One day I called out to her and she followed me. I went out so that I reached the well of my family, which was not very far off. I caught her by her hand and threw her down in the well. My last contact with her was that she cried and cried: 'O Dad! O Dad!' the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) wept [to hear it], so that tears fell in drops from both of his eyes. A man from the companions of the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) said to him, 'You have caused grief and worry to the Apostle of Allah (pbAh).' The Apostle of Allah (pbAh) said, 'Leave him, because he is enquiring of something that disturbs him.' Then he said to the man, 'Repeat to me your story.' He repeated it and the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) again started weeping, so that tears dripped from both of his eyes into his beard. Then he said to him, 'Surely Allah has dropped of whatever the people had done in the Age of Ignorance. Now start your deeds afresh.'

As quoted in this very chapter below, Umm Ma'bad has described one of the qualities of his eyes as: ¹⁴⁵احور, which

¹⁴⁴ *Sunan al-Dāramī*, ed. Al-Sayyid Abdullah Hāshim Yamanī al-Madanī, (Multan: Nashr al-Sunnah, 1966), 1:12.

¹⁴⁵ احور (aḥvar) means: 'having eyes with a marked contrast of white

means that there is a marked contrast of white and black in them. Bustānī notes in his *Dictionary*:

حار الثوب غسله وبيّضه¹⁴⁶

(حار الثوب means) washed the clothe and made it white.

Al-Fayyūmī explains:

و قيل لأصحاب عيسى عليه السلام (حواريون) لأنهم كانوا يحورون الثياب أي يبيضونها.¹⁴⁷

The companions of Jesus were called ‘Ḥawāriyyūn’, because they ‘yahūrūn’ (washed) the clothes, i.e. made them white.

It shows that the white of the eyes of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) was very bright and there was moistness in his eyes and they were conspicuously white as if washed with milk.

It proves the literal and exact application of the words of the Bible ‘*by the rivers of waters, washed with milk*’ to the eyes of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) whereas nothing is on the record regarding the eyes of Jesus Christ (pbAh).

The fairly detailed study of the part of the verse (His eyes are ... washed with milk) and the qualities of the eyes of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), undertaken so far, establish the fact that there is complete concordance in the qualities of the eyes of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) and the statement of the Prophet Solomon (pbAh).

Now the meanings of the word ‘fitly’ of this verse are to be explored. The original Hebrew word for it is ‘מלאה’ (millayth). *Strong’s Dic.* explains it as follows:

From 4390; *fulness*, i.e. (concretely) a *plump* [fat in a

and black, (also, said of the eye:) intensely white and deep-black’ (A *Dic. of Modern Written Arabic*, p.212).

¹⁴⁶ Bustānī, *Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ*, (Beirut: Maktabah Lubnān Nāshirūn, 1993), 203.

¹⁴⁷ Al-Fayyūmī, *Qāmūs al-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr*, (Beyrouth: Dār al-Fikr, 2005), 88.

pleasant looking way] socket (of the eye)= X¹⁴⁸ fitly.¹⁴⁹

The Heb. word under entry 4390 is 'מלא' (mala'). It means:

To fill or be full of; consecrate.¹⁵⁰

It has similar meanings in Arabic. As such, the words for the beloved's eyes, 'fitly set', would mean:

The eyes have been set in the face of the beloved of King Solomon in such a proportionate manner that they look to be beautiful, big, well-filled up, plump, risen up, and attractive.

Keeping in view various meanings and implications of the key words and commentaries on these words by Biblical scholars, the verse can be explained as follows:

The eyes have been set in the face and forehead of the beloved of King Solomon in such a proportionate manner that they look to be beautiful, big, well-filled up, plump, risen up, and attractive. His eyes exhibit the warmth of love and happiness. There are light red filaments in his eyes as if from intoxication. *'The eyes are not only pure and clear, but with a glancing moistness in them which expresses feeling and devotion. (...). The pureness of the white of the eye is represented in the bathing or washing in milk (...). They are full and large,'*¹⁵¹ *'His eyes are as the eyes of doves, fair and clear, and chaste and kind, (...). They are washed, to make them clean'*¹⁵², *washed with milk*, to make them white [it naturally means that the white of his eyes is quite distinct from the black of his eyes, which is extremely black], *and fitly set*, neither starting out nor sunk in.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁸ The 'X' is explained in this *Dic.* as: 'X (*multiplication*) denotes a rendering in the A. V. that results from an idiom peculiar to the Heb.'

¹⁴⁹ *The Strong's Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 4402; p. 66.

¹⁵⁰ *The Strong's Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 4390; p. 66.

¹⁵¹ *The Pulpit Commentary*, 123.

¹⁵² It may be noted here that Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) performed ablution before offering his prayer more than five times a day.

¹⁵³ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT*, 4: 851f.

The commentators of the Bible have arbitrarily attached these details and qualities to Jesus Christ (pbAh), but they do not afford the grounds of their claim. What has allegorically been stated, is only out of their wishful thinking and designed purpose. There is no substantial proof or objective relevance in favour of their assertion. As already stated, the details of the figures of Jesus Christ (pbAh) have nowhere been given in the Bible. On the other hand, the details of the figures and features of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) have so meticulously been recorded in authentic traditions that we feel as if he himself is present among us. The features of king Solomon's beloved related in his 'Song' in the Bible apply to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) so exactly and accurately that there remains no doubt in their relevance.

Now the features of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) have also been recorded above. There is so conspicuous concordance in the statement of the verse of the 'Song' and the features of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) that the reader would face no hardship in appreciating that King Solomon (pbAh) is describing here the features of none other than Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh).

In the light of the study of the complete verse of the Bible, its commentaries by the Biblical scholars, and the lexical explorations of the original Hebrew words of the verse, there are four key points with reference to the eyes of the 'beloved' one of Prophet Solomon (pbAh). They are:

- (1) doves;
- (2) rivers of waters;
- (3) washed with milk; and
- (4) fitly set'.

As to the first point, the 'dove' signifies 'red threads in the eyes as if by the intoxication of wine'. As to the second point, the 'rivers of waters' signifies 'brightness and moistness (due to being ever with ablution and tender-heartedness)'. As to the third point, the 'washed with milk'

signifies 'pureness and whiteness'. As to the last and fourth point, the 'fitly set' signifies 'large and beautifully set in the socket of the eye'.

The study of the qualities of the eyes of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) from the authentic biographical and the historical record confirms that there is perfect concordance between the words of the verse and the qualities of the eyes of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) even in the minutest details. As far as the qualities of the eyes of Jesus Christ (pbAh) are concerned no record is available about them at all, and the statements of the biblical scholars are based on mere arbitrary conjectures and speculations.

As such there remains no doubt that the verse is a complete and faithful description of the eyes of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), which have been foretold by Prophet Solomon (pbAh) almost fifteen centuries before the advent of Islām.

Chapter-VIII

HIS CHEEKS AND LIPS

Verse 13 of the 'Song' is:

לחיו כערוגה הבשם מגדלות מרקחים שפתותיו שושים נטפות מור
עבר¹⁵⁴

His cheeks *are* as a bed of spices, *as* sweet flowers: his lips *like* lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

For convenience sake the verse is being divided into two parts. Firstly, the study of its first clause, 'His cheeks *are* as a bed of spices, *as* sweet flowers', will be undertaken:

The first main word of the verse is 'cheeks'. The original Hebrew word for this 'cheek' is 'לחי' (lehiy). The *Strong's Dic.* has recorded its meanings as:

From an unusual root meaning to *be soft*; the *cheek* (from its *fleshiness*);¹⁵⁵

The Heb. and Aramaic Lexicon has given the meanings of this word as (1) chin, (2) jawbone, and (3) cheek. It has also recorded its meaning as 'beard' with reference to Arabic.¹⁵⁶

It shows that the original Hebrew word for 'cheeks' actually means 'soft and fleshy cheeks'; and it also implies 'beard'.

¹⁵⁴ *The Holy Scriptures* (Jerusalem : Koren Publishers), 2000, p.859.

¹⁵⁵ *Strong's Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 3895; p. 59.

¹⁵⁶ Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Heb. and Aramaic Lexicon* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 1:525.

The next main word of the verse is 'bed' for which the original Hebrew word is 'ערוגה' ('Aroojah). According to *Strong's Dic.* it means:

Something *piled up*, i.e. bed, furrow.¹⁵⁷

It implies that the original Hebrew word for this 'bed' means 'piled up'.

The third important word of the clause is 'spices' for which the original Hebrew word in the Bible is 'בשם' (besem). *Strong's Dic.* has recorded its meanings as:

Fragrance; by implication *spicery*¹⁵⁸; also the *balsam* plant:- smell, spice, sweet (odour).¹⁵⁹

The fourth main word of the clause is 'sweet'. The original Hebrew word for it is 'מרקה' (merqah). The *Strong's Dic.* has recorded its meanings as:

From 7543; a *spicy herb*:- X sweet.¹⁶⁰

And the meanings of entry No. 7543 are:

A primary root; to *perfume*; make [ointment].¹⁶¹

It can thus be appreciated that the original Hebrew word for this 'sweet' means 'made fragrant through applying perfume'.

The last main word of the clause is 'flowers'. The meanings of the original Hebrew word for it, i.e. 'מגדל' (mijdal), have been recorded in the *Strong's Dic.* as under:

From 1431; a *tower* (from its size or height); figuratively a (pyramidal) *bed* of flowers.¹⁶²

Keeping in view the above lexical explorations, the correct

¹⁵⁷ Strong's *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 6170; p. 91.

¹⁵⁸ 'Spicery' means spices in general; a storehouse of spices; spiciness.

¹⁵⁹ Strong's *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 1314; p. 24.

¹⁶⁰ Strong's *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 4840; p. 73.

¹⁶¹ Strong's *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 7543; p. 110.

¹⁶² Strong's *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 4026; p. 61.

translation of the original Heb. clause, which has been rendered into English as: ‘His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers’ will be as below:

His raised up fleshy and soft cheeks, and the thick beard thereupon, seem as if they are heaps of fragrances which have been made fragrant through applying sweet-smelling perfumes. They are like the beds of small fragrant herbs and the pyramids of sweet-smelling flowers.

If someone tries to trace these qualities in the person of Jesus Christ (pbAh), he is bound to face utter disappointment. On the other hand, if it be tried to trace these qualities in the person of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), the outcome will be as follows:

Anas was his servant and he remained with him for ten years. His report is:

عَنْ أَنَسٍ مَا شَمَمْتُ عَنَبْرًا قَطُّ وَلَا مَسْكًا وَلَا شَيْئًا أَطْيَبَ مِنْ رِيحِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
وَلَا مَسِسْتُ شَيْئًا قَطُّ دِيْبَاجًا وَلَا حَرِيرًا أَلْيَنَ مَسًّا مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ¹⁶³

I never found ambergris, musk or any other perfume smelling better than the sweet smell radiating from the body of the Prophet (pbAh). And I never touched anything, may it be silk brocade or any other silken fabric, which could be softer in touch than the body of the Apostle of Allah (pbAh).¹⁶⁴

Anas reports in another tradition:

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ قَالَ دَخَلَ عَلَيْنَا النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ¹⁶⁵ عِنْدَنَا فَعَرَقَ وَجَاءَتْ أُمِّي بِقَارُورَةٍ فَجَعَلَتْ تُسَلِّتُ الْعَرَقَ فِيهَا فَاسْتَيْقِظَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ يَا أُمَّ سُلَيْمٍ مَا هَذَا

¹⁶³ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-faḍā'il, Bāb Ṭīb Rā'iḥat al-Nabī, Ḥadīth (tradition) No.2330.

¹⁶⁴ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, tr. Abdul Ḥamīd Ṣiddīqī (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 7-Aibak Road, 1993), 4:1247.

¹⁶⁵ 'قَالَ' in this context means 'took a midday nap', as explained by A Dic. of Modern Written Arabic, 806.

الَّذِي تَصْنَعِينَ قَالَتْ هَذَا عَرَقُكَ نَجْعَلُهُ فِي طِبِينَا وَهُوَ مِنْ أَطْيَبِ الطِّيبِ¹⁶⁶

The Prophet (pbAh) came to our house and took a midday nap there. He perspired. My mother brought a bottle and began to pour the sweat in that. The Prophet (pbAh) got up. He said, ‘What is this that you are doing?’ She said, ‘This is your sweat. We mix it in our perfume. It becomes the most fragrant perfume.’¹⁶⁷

عَنْ أَنَسٍ قَالَ (...) كَانَ عَرَفَهُ اللَّوْلُو (...) وَلَا شَمِمْتُ مِسْكَةً وَلَا عَتَبَةً أَطْيَبَ مِنْ رَائِحَةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ¹⁶⁸

The sweat of the Prophet (pbAh) was like pearls. (...). I never found musk or ambergris smelling better than the fragrance of the Apostle of Allah (pbAh).

Jābir says:

عَنْ جَابِرٍ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَمْ يَسْلُكْ طَرِيقًا أَوْ لَا يَسْلُكْ طَرِيقًا فَيَتَّبِعُهُ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا عَرَفَ أَنَّهُ قَدْ سَلَكَهُ مِنْ طِيبِ عَرَفِهِ أَوْ قَالَ مِنْ رِيحِ عَرَفِهِ¹⁶⁹

If someone happened to walk along a way, which the Prophet (pbAh) had previously traversed, he could definitely be led to believe from the fragrance spread out of the body or sweat of the Prophet (pbAh) that he had passed by that way.

It had been noted above in chapter IV of this book that ‘he was of brilliant and rosy colour’. It presents a clear and faithful picture of the words ‘sweet flower’.

‘Utbah bin Farqad Sulamī reports:

حَدَّثَنِي أُمُّ عَاصِمٍ امْرَأَةُ عَتَبَةَ بْنِ فَرْقَدٍ السَّلْمِيِّ قَالَتْ كُنَّا عِنْدَ عَتَبَةَ أَرْبَعَ نِسَوَةٍ مَا مَنَا امْرَأَةٌ إِلَّا وَهِيَ تَجْتَهِدُ فِي الطِّيبِ لِتَكُونَ أَطْيَبَ مِنْ صَاحِبَتِهَا وَمَا يَمَسُّ عَتَبَةَ الطِّيبُ إِلَّا يَمَسُّ دَهْنًا يَمَسُّحُ بِهِ لِحْيَتَهُ وَهُوَ أَطْيَبُ رِيحًا مَنَا وَكَانَ إِذَا خَرَجَ إِلَى النَّاسِ قَالُوا مَا شَمِمْنَا رِيحًا أَطْيَبَ مِنْ رِيحِ عَتَبَةَ فَقُلْتُ لَهُ يَوْمًا إِنَّا لَنَجْتَهِدُ فِي الطِّيبِ وَلَأَنْتِ أَطْيَبُ مَنَا رِيحًا فَمِمَّا ذَاكَ فَقَالَ أَخَذَنِي الشَّرَاءُ عَلَى عَهْدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَتَيْتَهُ فَشَكَّوتُ ذَلِكَ إِلَيْهِ فَأَمَرَنِي أَنْ أَتَجَرَّدَ فَتَجَرَّدْتُ وَقَعَدْتُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَلْقَيْتُ ثَوْبِي

¹⁶⁶ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, K. al-faḍā'il, Bāb Ṭīb Rā'iḥat al-Nabī, Trad. 2331.

¹⁶⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, tr. Abdul Ḥamīd Ṣiddīqī, 4:1247.

¹⁶⁸ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, K. al-faḍā'il, Bāb Ṭīb Rā'iḥat al-Nabī, Tradn. 2330.

¹⁶⁹ *Ṣunan al-Dārimī*, Kitāb al-Muqaddimah, Bāb fī Ḥusn al-Nabī, Tradn. 66.

على فرجى فنفت في يده على ظهري و بطني فعقب بي هذا الطيب من يومئذ¹⁷⁰

The sense of the tradition has been recorded by ‘Abd al-Haq as follows:

Once during the lifetime of the Prophet (pbAh) I got a heat rash. I requested the Prophet (pbAh) for its treatment. He asked me to put off my shirt [from the affected place]. I put off my shirt and sat before him. The Prophet (pbAh) moved his hand gently over my body, hence this fragrance on my back and belly.¹⁷¹

Matthew Henry has applied this sentence of the ‘Song’ to Jesus Christ (pbAh) and has explained it as follows:

His cheeks (the risings of the face) are as bed of spices, raised in the gardens, which are the beauty and wealth of them, and as sweet flowers, or towers of sweetness. There is that in Christ’s countenance which is amiable in the eyes of all the saints, in the least glimpse of him, for the cheek is but the part of the face. The half discoveries Christ makes of himself to the soul are reviving and refreshing, fragrant above the richest flowers and perfumes.¹⁷²

After the study of the above passage it can be observed that the worthy commentator is the king of the world of letters and the master of rhetoric. But the words of King Solomon (pbAh) cannot be applied to Jesus Christ (pbAh) through verbosity, eloquence, and credulity. It requires objective study and authentic references. Although the writer was an erudite scholar, it was impossible for him to afford some credible evidence in favour of his assertion; and how could he present it when there is none on the record whatsoever. He has adroitly endeavoured to cover the unavailability of the evidential data through his eloquence, but how can the lack of evidence be made up with the verbosity in the realm

¹⁷⁰ Al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu’jam al-Ṣaghīr* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, n.d.) Tradition No. 89, p. 38-39.

¹⁷¹ Abdul Haq, *Madārij al-Nubuwwah*, 1: 47.

¹⁷² Matthew Henry, *An Exposition on the N&OT*, 4:852.

of historical presentations!

After the proper lexical study of the Hebrew words of the clause it would be appreciated that its sense could be as follows:

His raised up fleshy and soft cheeks, and the thick beard thereupon, seem as if they are heaps of fragrances which have been made fragrant through applying sweet-smelling perfumes. They are like the beds of small fragrant herbs and the pyramids of sweet-smelling flowers.

It can be summed up in two key words: 'softness and fragrance'. The above historical record establishes that it is the exact description of the features of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), whereas it has nothing to do with Jesus Christ (pbAh).

The second and the last clause of the verse is:

His lips *like* lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

The first important word in the clause is 'lips'. The original Hebrew word for it is 'שפה' (shaphah)¹⁷³, which means:

The *lip*; by implication *language*, speech, talk, words.¹⁷⁴

The next important word of this part of the verse is 'lilies'. The original word for it is 'שושן' (shoshan). It means:

From an equivalent of 7797, i.e. a prim. root; to be *bright*, i.e. *cheerful*:- be glad, X greatly, joy, make mirth, rejoice.¹⁷⁵

The next main word of this part of the verse is 'dropping'. The original word for it is 'נטף' (nataph)¹⁷⁶. It means:

a primary root; to *ooze*, i.e. *distill* gradually; by implication to *fall in drops*; figuratively to *speak* by

¹⁷³ It is the same in Arabic.

¹⁷⁴ Strong's Dic. of the Heb. Bible, entry 8193; p. 120.

¹⁷⁵ Strong's Dic. of the Heb. Bible, entry 7799; p. 114.

¹⁷⁶ The Arabic word 'Nutfah' is also from the same root having similar implications.

inspiration, prophesy.¹⁷⁷

The last word of the verse is ‘myrrh’. Its original Hebrew is ‘מר’ or ‘מור’ (murr or more). It means:

From 4843 [which is ‘to be or make bitter’]; *myrrh* (as *distilling* in drops, and also as *bitter*).¹⁷⁸

After getting explained the meanings of all the important original Hebrew words of this clause, its correct sense would be:

His lips are bright and beautiful like a lily flower. The rejoicing, greeting, and bright word that comes out of them, is altogether prophecy and inspiration. [The implied brightness of ‘lilies’ includes the brightness and light that radiated physically from the lips of Prophet *Strong’s Dic. of the Heb. Bible* (pbAh)].

Broadman Commentary on the Bible has made the following observations on it:

The comparison of lips to lilies refers not to colour but to the open lily blossom which dispenses its nectar to bees [i.e. its usefulness and benefits].¹⁷⁹

The Expositor’s Bible has explained the clause as:

Cheeks fragrant as spices; lips red as lilies.¹⁸⁰

The explanation of the *Pulpit Commentary* of this verse is also worth reading. It asserts:

‘The cheeks’ are compared to towers of plants; that is, there is a soft elevation in them. (...) the Targum says, ‘Like the rows of a garden of aromatic plants, which produce deep, penetrating essences, even as a (magnificent) garden

¹⁷⁷ *Strong’s Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 5197; p. 78.

¹⁷⁸ *Strong’s Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 4753; p. 72.

¹⁷⁹ John T. Bunn, *The Broadman Com. Of the Bible* (Tennessee: Broadman Press, Nashville, 1971), 5:143.

¹⁸⁰ *Expositor’s Bible*, ‘Song of Solomon’, 30.

aromatic plants’—perhaps referring to the ‘flos juventae,’ the hair on the face, the growth of the beard. ‘The lips’ are described as the organs of speech (...). They drop words like liquid fragrance.¹⁸¹

As to the attributes of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) the relevant record has been preserved in the Islāmic tradition. Umm Ma’bad describes the style of speech of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). It is interestingly pertinent to the present study:

إن صمت فعليه الوقار وإن تكلم سماه^{١٨٢} وعلاه البهاء^{١٨٣} (...) حلو المنطق فصلا^{١٨٤}, لا نَزْر^{١٨٥} ولا هذر^{١٨٦}, كأن منطقَه خرزات نظم يتحدرن (...) له رفقاء يحفون به إن قال سمعوا لقوله وإن أمر تبادروا إلى أمره (...) لا عابس ولا^{١٨٧} مُفْنِد^{١٨٨}

¹⁸¹ *The Pulpit Com. of the Bible on ‘The Song of Solomon’*, 123.

¹⁸² سَمَا (samā) means: ‘became high, lofty, raised, uplifted, exalted, or elevated;’ (Lane’s *Lexicon*, 1433).

¹⁸³ البهاء (al-bahā) means: ‘beauty, magnificence, splendor, brilliancy’ (A *Dic. of Modern Written Arabic*, 80.)

¹⁸⁴ ‘فصل’ (faṣal) has been explained by E. W. Lane in his *Lexicon* on page 2406 as follows:

(Miṣbah of El-Feiyoomee) distinct, or plain speech; which he, to whom it is addressed distinctly, or plainly, understands; which is not confused, or dubious, to him: (...) or such as decides, or distinguishes, between what is true and what is false, and what is sound and what is corrupt.

This is perfectly true of the speech of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh)

¹⁸⁵ نَزْر (nazr) means: ‘using a few words’ (A *Dic. of Modern Written Arabic*, 954.)

¹⁸⁶ هذر (hadhar) means: ‘Prattling, i.e. talking too much, esp. about unimportant things, garrulous’ (A *Dic. of Mod. Written Arab.*, 1024).

¹⁸⁷ مُفْنِد (mufnid) Means: ‘one whose intellect, or intelligence, is denied or disapproved; or who confounds [things] in his speech; weak in intellect or judgment.’ (Lane’s *Lexicon*, 2449).

¹⁸⁸ Al-Hākim, *al-Mustadrik ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (al-Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah, al-Marḥalah al-Ūla, al-Iṣdār al-Thānī, 2001), 3:9-10, trad. 4274.

When he was silent, there appeared a grace in him. When he uttered something, it seemed as if the sound of his words had prevailed over the surroundings. (...). His speech was sweet and lucid. He was neither talkative nor uncommunicative (hard to grasp), and tight-lipped. His discourse was as if a string of pearls was slipping softly and systematically (out of his mouth). (...). His companions kept surrounding him, listened to him attentively, and rushed to comply with his commands. He was neither rude-looking nor weak in intellect or judgment who confounded [things] in his speech.¹⁸⁹

Hind bin Abī Hālah was the step-son of the Prophet (pbAh). He was an expert reporter of his features. He describes:

His mouth was like a briefcase full of rubies.¹⁹⁰

The mother and aunt of Abū Qurṣānah say;

We have observed a kind of light emitting out of his mouth.¹⁹¹

Ibn ‘Abbās reports:

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَفْلَحَ النَّبِيِّينَ إِذَا تَكَلَّمَ رُمِيَ كَالثُّورِ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَيْنِ ثَنَائِيهِ¹⁹²

The incisors (front teeth) of the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) were split apart. When he uttered something, a sort of light seemed to radiate from among his teeth.

Anas states:

As he spoke, a kind of brightness would emit from his

¹⁸⁹ Sayyid Abū’l A ‘lā Mawdūdī, *Sīrat-e-Sarwar-e-‘Ālam*, 733f.

¹⁹⁰ Dr. M. Ḥamīdullah, *Muḥammad Rasūlullah*, in the Journal ‘Nuqūsh’, Lahore, Rasūl Number, 1982, 2:524.

¹⁹¹ *Mawāhib Ladunniyah*, 1: 255: as quoted by Na’īm Ṣiddīqī, *Muḥsin-e-Insāniyyat* (Lahore: Islāmic Publications, 1989), 84.

¹⁹² *Sunan al-Dārimī*, Kitāb al-Muqaddimah, al-Bāb Fī Ḥusn al-Nabī, Tradn. No. 58.

teeth.¹⁹³

‘Ā’ishah says:

مَا كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَسْرُدُ¹⁹⁴ سَرْدَكُمْ هَذَا وَلَكِنَّهُ كَانَ يَتَكَلَّمُ بِكَلَامٍ بَيْنَ فَصْلٍ.
يَحْفَظُهُ مَنْ جَلَسَ إِلَيْهِ.¹⁹⁵

The Apostle of Allah did not speak speedily like you. He rather uttered the words so lucidly and separately that someone sitting by him would learn it by heart.

In the light of the lexical study of the Hebrew Words of the clause it can safely and faithfully be translated as follows:

His lips are bright and beautiful like a lily flower. The rejoicing, greeting, and bright word that comes out of them, is altogether prophecy and inspiration. The implied brightness of ‘lilies’ includes the brightness and light that radiated physically from the lips of the Prophet (pbAh).

After going through the above data regarding Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) it would be appreciated that it depicts the exact picture of his attributes and features.

The qualities of the lips (and, by implication ‘speech’) of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) have been reproduced from lucid traditions. Their concordance to the attributes described by King Solomon (pbAh) does not depend on some allegory, symbolism, or figurativeness. But there is clearly a literal application in them. On the other hand, they can by no means be applied to Jesus Christ (pbAh) through any stretch of sense.

¹⁹³ Naʿīm Siddīqī, *Muḥsin-e-Insāniyyat*, 84.

¹⁹⁴ يَسْرُدُ (yasrudu) means: to carry on, continue (of a conversation) (Maan Z. Madina, *Arabic Eng. Dic.*, NY: Pocket Books, 1973, 311).

¹⁹⁵ *Shamāʿil Tirmidhī*, with Urdu Commentary Khaṣāʾil-e-Nabavī by Muḥammad Zakariyya (Karachi: Mīr Muhammad, Kutub Khāna Markaz-e-ʿIlm-o-Adab, Arām Bāgh, n.d.), 165.

HIS HANDS AND BELLY

Verse 14 is:

ידיו גלילי זהב ממלאים בתרשיש מעיו עשת שן מעלפת ספירים¹⁹⁶

His hands *are as* gold rings set with the beryl: his belly *is as* bright ivory overlaid *with* sapphires.

New Jerusalem Bible has translated it as:

His hands are golden, rounded, set with jewels of Tarshish. His belly is a block of ivory covered with sapphires.¹⁹⁷

There are two clauses in this verse. The first clause is:

His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl:

The original Hebrew word for 'hand' is 'יד' (yad). It means:

A *hand* (the open one) [indicating *power, means*, i.e. resources and money etc.], in distinction from 3709 ('כף', i.e. 'kaph'), the *closed* one; used in a great variety of applications, both literally and figuratively, both proximate and remote, dominion, force.¹⁹⁸

As such, it indicates open and stretched hands which are the symbol of power, authority, and generosity. The next main word of this part of the verse is 'gold', which in Hebrew is 'פז' (paz). It means:

¹⁹⁶ *The Holy Scriptures* (Jerusalem : Koren Publishers), 2000, p. 859.

¹⁹⁷ *N. Jerusalem Bible*, ed. H. Wansbrough (Bombay: St Paul Sy.) 1037.

¹⁹⁸ *Strong's Dic. of the Hebrew Bible*, entry 3027; p. 47.

From 6388 [which is, ‘פלג’ (i.e. Falaj), meaning ‘river, stream’]; *pure* (gold); hence *gold* itself (as refined):- fine (pure) gold.¹⁹⁹

Then there is the word ‘ring’, which, in Heb., is ‘גליל’ (jalil). The meanings of this word and its roots have been explained in *Strong’s Dic.* as below:

A valve of a folding door; also a *ring* (as *round*); *great*;²⁰⁰

It is the same as the Arabic word ‘Jaḥīl’; which has the same meanings, i.e., ‘great; significant, magnificent, etc’.

According to the *Heb. and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT* the word, with reference to ‘Song 5:14’ means:

a round rod or ring.²⁰¹

Keeping in view the literal meanings and real sense of the original Hebrew words of this clause of the verse, as explained above by the Hebrew Bible Dictionaries, its translation would be:

Figuratively, his out-stretched hands are the symbol of his great power, authority, and generosity. Physically and apparently, they are clean bright, soft, smooth and precious like gold. He wears a ring in his finger wherein beryl and topaz have been inlaid properly.

The conditions and qualities of the hands of Jesus Christ (pbAh) have nowhere been recorded in history, but the holy and reliable companions of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) did not show any negligence in making the history rich through recording the details of the features of even the hands of their beloved Prophet (pbAh). Hind bin Abī Hālah states:

His wrists were long, his palms were large, and his fingers elongated to a suitable extent.²⁰²

¹⁹⁹ Strong’s *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 6337; p. 94.

²⁰⁰ Strong’s *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 1550, 59, 60; p. 27.

²⁰¹ *The Heb. and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT*, 1:193.

²⁰² Naʿīm Ṣiddīqūī, *Muḥsin-e-Insāniyyat*, 87.

Anas states:

عَنْ أَنَسٍ قَالَ (...) وَلَا مَسِسْتُ دِيْبَاجَةً وَلَا حَرِيرَةً أَلْتَمَسْتُ مِنْ كَفِّ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ²⁰³

I did not touch any thick or thin silk cloth (that I ever happened to touch) softer than the palms of the Prophet.

Abū Juhayfah reports:

عَنْ أَبِيهِ أَبِي جُحَيْفَةَ قَالَ فَأَخَذْتُ بِيَدِهِ فَوَضَعْتُهَا عَلَى وَجْهِهِ فَإِذَا هِيَ أَبْرَدُ مِنَ الثَّلْجِ وَأَطْيَبُ رَائِحَةً مِنَ الْمِسْكِ²⁰⁴

I put his hand at my face. It was cooler than ice and more fragrant than musk.

As regards the power of his hands (outstretched hands) it implies both his physical power and his authority. As to the physical power of his limbs, hereunder are afforded some events that exhibit it:

كَانَ رُكَّانَةً (...) أَشَدَّ قَرِيْشٍ فَخْلًا يَوْمَآ بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي بَعْضِ شُعَابِ مَكَّةَ (...)
(...) فَقَالَ لَهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَفَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ صَرَعْتُكَ أَتَعْلَمُ أَنْ مَا أَقُولُ حَقٌّ؟ قَالَ :
نَعَمْ قَالَ : ” فَقَمِ حَتَّى أَصَارِعَكَ “ قَالَ : فَقَامَ رُكَّانَةً إِلَيْهِ فَصَارِعَهُ فَلَمَّا بَطَشَ بِهِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَضْجَعَهُ وَهُوَ لَا يَمْلِكُ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ شَيْئًا ثُمَّ قَالَ : عَدِ يَا مُحَمَّدُ فَعَادَ فَصَرَعَهُ ثُمَّ قَالَ : يَا
مُحَمَّدُ وَاللَّهِ أَنْ هَذِهِ لِلْعَجَبِ أَتَصْرَعَنِي؟²⁰⁵

Rukānah was considered as the most powerful wrestler among the Qurayshites. (Nobody could ever defeat him.) Once he met the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) in some of the mountain paths of Makkah in alone [and challenged him to a bout]. (...) The Apostle of Allah (pbAh) said to him, ‘Look here, if I defeat you, would you understand that whatever I profess is right?’ He said ‘Yes.’ The Prophet said, ‘Come on, so that I throw you down.’ Rukānah came towards him to defeat him; but when the Prophet caught hold of him, threw

²⁰³ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* Tradition 2330, Kitāb al-Faḍā’il, Chapter ‘Fragrance of the Prophet (pbAh)’.

²⁰⁴ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, K. al-Manāqib, Bāb Ṣifāt al-Nabī. Tradn. 3553; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, K. al-Faḍā’il, Bab Ṭīb Rā’ihāt al-Nabī, Tradn. 2330.

²⁰⁵ Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabaviyyah* (Arabic, in one volume), (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2001), 179.

him down and defeated him. Rukānah was entirely helpless before him. He invited him for the second time and the Prophet (pbAh) threw him down again. He said, ‘Muḥammad (pbAh), it is strange, you have defeated me.’ [He meant to say that Muḥammad (pbAh) neither performed any wrestling exercises nor learnt any wrestling tricks. Still he astonished him by throwing him down twice. (later on, he embraced Islām as well)].

Sayyid Abū al-A‘lā Mawdūdī has recorded another event:

Once, when Muḥammad (pbAh) was still a boy, he was invited to a dinner at ‘Abdullah bin Jud‘ān’s house. Abū Jahl quarreled with him. He was almost a boy of the same age. Muḥammad (pbAh) lifted him up and threw him down so as his knee was wounded. Abū Jahl sustained this scar for the whole of his life.²⁰⁶

As to the authority of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), it is to be noted that he started his life as a resourceless orphan, but when he left this world, he wielded sole authority over whole of the Arabian peninsula which was thriving and spilling over the boundaries of Arabia in all dimensions. Montgomery Watt writes in *Muhammad at Madina*:

(...). Secondly, there is Muḥammad’s wisdom as a statesman. The conceptual structure found in the Qur’ān was merely a framework. The framework had to support a building of concrete policies and concrete institutions. In the course of this book much has been said about Muḥammad’s far-sighted political strategy and his social reforms. His wisdom in these matters is shown by the rapid expansion of his small state to a world-empire and by the adaptation of his social institutions to many different environments and their continuance for thirteen centuries. (...). The more one reflects on the history of Muḥammad [PbAh] and of early Islam, the more one is amazed at the vastness of his achievements. (...). Had it not been for his gifts as seer, statesman, and administrator and, behind these, his trust in

²⁰⁶ Sayyid Abū’l A‘lā Mawdūdī, *Sīrat-e-Sarwar-e-‘Ālam*, 2:126.

God and firm belief that God had sent him, a notable chapter in the history of mankind would have remained unwritten.²⁰⁷

The third implication of the outstretched hands may be generosity. Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) was very generous and did not like to hoard money for his own self. It is reported by Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī:

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ أَنَّ نَاسًا مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ سَأَلُوا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَعْطَاهُمْ ثُمَّ سَأَلُوهُ فَأَعْطَاهُمْ حَتَّى نَفَدَ مَا عِنْدَهُ ثُمَّ قَالَ مَا يَكُونُ عِنْدِي مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَنْ أَدْخِرَهُ عَنْكُمْ وَمَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُ يَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ يَسْتَعِزْ يُعِزَّهُ اللَّهُ²⁰⁸

Some persons from the tribes of Anṣār asked the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) for something and he gave them. They again asked him for it and he would give it to them until all that was with him finished. The Apostle said, ‘Whatever wealth be with me, I would never store it with me and spare it from you. However, whosoever retains his honour and chastity, Allah would retain it for him and whosoever abstains himself from begging, Allah would make him self-sufficient.’

The Apostle of Allah (pbAh) never said ‘No’ to anyone who solicited him for something. One of his companions, Jābir says:

حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ بْنُ عُيَيْنَةَ عَنْ ابْنِ الْمُسَكِّدِ سَمِعَ جَابِرَ بْنَ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ مَا سُئِلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ شَيْئًا قَطُّ فَقَالَ لَا²⁰⁹

Whenever the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) was asked for something, he never responded in negative.

The talented and beloved wife of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), Sayyidah ‘Ā’ishah Ṣiddīqah, reports that the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) never refused to give something when he was asked for it and he was extremely generous:

²⁰⁷ W. Montgomery Watt, *Muḥammad at Madina* (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1956), 334,5.

²⁰⁸ *Mu’aṭṭā Mālik*, Kitāb al-Jāmi’, Bāb ‘Mā jā’a fī al-Ta’affufi ‘ani’l-Mas’alah’, Tradition No. 1880.

²⁰⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Faḍā’l, al-Bāb ‘Mā Su’ila Rasūlullāhi Shay’an Qaṭṭu...’, Tradition No. 2311.

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ (...) وَلَا سَلَّ شَيْئًا قَطُّ فَمَنَعَهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يُسْأَلَ مَا تَمَّا فَإِنَّهُ كَانَ أَبْعَدَ النَّاسِ مِنْهُ وَلَا خَيْرَ بَيْنَ أَمْرَيْنِ قَطُّ إِلَّا اخْتَارَ أَيْسَرَهُمَا وَكَانَ إِذَا كَانَ حَدِيثَ عَهْدٍ بِجَبْرِئِيلَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يُدَارِسُهُ كَانَ أَحْوَدَ بِالْخَيْرِ مِنَ الرِّيحِ الْمُرْسَلَةِ²¹⁰

When asked for something, he never refused to give it, until he was asked for something sinful, because his disliking for sin was very much. Whenever he was given the choice, he always chose the easier of the two. (...). Whenever Gabriel brought some covenant and he studied it carefully together with him, he was more generous than a benevolent wind.

Similarly, he was even more generous during the month of Ramaḍān. Ibn ‘Abbās reports:

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَحْوَدَ النَّاسِ وَكَانَ أَحْوَدَ مَا يَكُونُ فِي رَمَضَانَ حِينَ يَلْقَاهُ جَبْرِئِيلُ وَكَانَ يَلْقَاهُ فِي كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ فَيُدَارِسُهُ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَحْوَدَ بِالْخَيْرِ مِنَ الرِّيحِ الْمُرْسَلَةِ²¹¹

The Apostle of Allah (pbAh) was the most generous among people and he was even more generous in Ramaḍān when Gabriel visited him. He met him every night of Ramaḍān and studied the holy Qurān carefully together with him. The Apostle of Allah was then more generous than a benevolent wind.

The Christian scholars explain the verse in almost similar terms. *The Pulpit Commentary of the Bible* observes:

Surely it is the outstretched hands that are meant.²¹²

Matthew Henry Explains the theme in the following terms:

Great men had their hands adorned with gold rings on their fingers, set with diamonds or other precious stones, but, in her eye, his hands themselves were as gold rings; all the instances of his power, the works of his hands, all the performances of his providence and grace, are all rich, and pure, and precious, as gold, (...). His hands which are,

²¹⁰ *Musnad Aḥmad*, al-Kitāb Bāquī Musnad al-Anṣār, al-Bāb Ḥaḍīth Sayyidah ‘Āyishah, Tradition No. 24464.

²¹¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb Bad’al-Wahy, Bāb Bad’al-Wahy, Tr. 6.

²¹² *The Pulpit Commentary of the Bible*, 123.

stretched forth both to receive his people and to give to them, are thus rich and comely.²¹³

As regards the phrase ‘as gold rings set with the beryl’ in the verse, it describes the condition of his fingers. However, Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) did use a ring on his finger. It is narrated by ibn ‘Umar in *Shamā’il Tirmidhī*:

عن ابن عمر قال اتخذ رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم خاتماً من ذهب فكان يلبسه في يمينه فاتخذ الناس خواتيم من ذهب، فطرحه وقال لا ألبسه أبدا فطرح الناس خواتيمهم.

The Prophet (pbAh) got a gold ring prepared and he used to wear it on his right hand, so the people also adopted gold rings. [But when wearing of gold was prohibited for men,] he put it away and said, ‘I would never wear it.’ So the people also put away their [gold] rings [and adopted silver rings]. (p.84f).

Anas reports that there was an Ethiopian beryl in it:

عن ابن شهاب حدثني أنس بن مالك قال كان خاتم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من ورق وكان فضه حبشيا²¹⁴

The ring of the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) was made of silver and its stone was an Ethiopian one.

Obviously, the words of the prophecy and the explanations of the Christian scholars find their fulfillment only in the person of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). The search of these qualities in Jesus Christ (pbAh) or to apply these explanations to the person of Jesus Christ (pbAh) is merely a vain effort, which can be based on internal credulity and not on some concrete, authentic, and objective reality.

After studying the first part of the verse the remaining part of the verse is to be explored now. Its words are:

His belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.

It is the exact and literal rendering of the clause. It is

²¹³ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition on the N&OT*, 4:852.

²¹⁴ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (al-Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah, al-Marḥalah al-Ūla, al-Iṣḍār al-Thānī, 2001), 3:1658, Tradn. No. 2094.

recorded hereunder in the original Hebrew words:

מעיו עשת שן מעלפת ספירים:

Strong's Dic. has recorded the meanings of its words as:

Belly מעיו (me'ah): Probably means to be soft; the *intestines*, the abdomen (Entry 4578, p. 69).

Bright עשת ('eshat): Its root word 'ashat means to be glossy; hence (through the idea of *polishing*) to ex-cogitate (as if forming in the mind; discover by thinking); shine, think (Entry 6245, p.92).

Ivory שן (shen): A tooth; spec. (for 8143 [where it means tooth of elephant]), ivory (Entry 8127, p. 119).

Overlaid מעלפ ('alaf): To veil, cover, overlaid (Entry 5968, p. 89).

Sapphires ספירים (sapheer): A gem, sapphire (Entry 5601, p.83).

In the light of these meanings, the Hebrew clause may be interpreted in the following terms:

His belly is soft and shining; it is brilliantly white like ivory; there are greenish/bluish brown hair on it, that look like sapphires on a white, soft, smooth, and shining surface.

It is an exact and complete picture of the relevant part of the body of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), as is explained in the coming pages.

Before giving these details it is pertinent to examine the following explanation of the theme in *Pulpit Commentary*:

The description of the body is of the outward appearance and figure only, though the word itself signifies 'inward parts'. The comparison with ivory work refers to the glancing and perfect smoothness and symmetry as of a beautiful ivory statue, the work of the highest artistic excellence. The sapphire covering tempers [mixes in due proportion; adjusts, matches] the white. The beautiful blue veins appear through the skin and give a lovely tint to the body.²¹⁵

²¹⁵ *The Pulpit Bible Commentary*, 123.

No doubt this passage of the *Pulpit Commentary* depicts the perfect and faithful picture of the words of the Bible; but it has nothing to do with the features of Jesus Christ (pbAh), because no proof or reference can be afforded to attach these details in favour of the person of Jesus Christ (pbAh). On the other hand it thoroughly applies to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), the details of whose features have been recorded in the annals of history in unequivocal terms. ‘Alī reports:

كَانَ عَلَيَّ رِضْيَ اللَّهِ عَنْهُ إِذَا وَصَفَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ (...) أَجْرَدٌ²¹⁶ ذُو مَسْرُوءَةٍ (...) قَالَ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ سَمِعْتُ الْأَصْمَعِيَّ يَقُولُ فِي تَفْسِيرِهِ صِفَةَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَالْمَسْرُوءَةُ هُوَ الشَّعْرُ الدَّقِيقُ الَّذِي هُوَ كَأَنَّهُ قَضِيبٌ مِنَ الصُّدْرِ إِلَى السَّرَةِ²¹⁷

The Prophet had no hair on his body [torso] except a thin line of hair from chest to navel. (...) Abū Ja‘far says that he heard al-Aṣma‘ī saying while describing the features of the Prophet (pbAh) that الْمَسْرُوءَةُ is the thin line of hair like a twig or stick from chest to navel.

Abū Ṭufayl says:

عَنْ أَبِي الطُّفَيْلِ قَالَ (...) كَانَ أَبْيَضَ مَلِيحَ الْوَجْهِ (...) مُقَصَّدًا²¹⁸

The Prophet had an elegant white colour, handsome face, and he was of an average height.

Khulāṣat al-Siyar has recorded:

The Prophet (pbAh) had a thin stick of hair from his chest to navel and there was no hair on his chest and belly besides this. His chest and belly were level.²¹⁹

The words speak of themselves who the ‘Beloved’ and the ‘Praised One’ of King Solomon (pbAh) had been. Obviously

²¹⁶ أَجْرَدٌ (Ajrad) means ‘hairless’ (*Modern Written Arabic Dic.* 119).

²¹⁷ *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, al-Kitāb. al-Manāqib ‘an Rasūl Allah, al-Bāb. fī Ṣifat al-Nabī, Tradn. No. 3638.

²¹⁸ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb. al-Manāqib, Tradn. No.2340.

²¹⁹ Ṣafī al-Raḥmān Mubārakpurī, *al-Raḥīq al-Makhtūm* (Lahore: al-Maktabah al-Salafiyyah, Shīsh Maḥal Road, 1987), 766.

the words literally apply to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). They can in no sense be applied to Jesus Christ (pbAh). However, the theme is explained below through juxtaposing the relevant traits from the biblical statements and their exegeses and lexicons by the biblical scholars; and the Islāmic tradition:

Figuratively, his out-stretched hands are the symbol of his great power, authority, and generosity. Physically and apparently, they are clean bright, soft, smooth and precious like gold. He wears a ring in his finger wherein beryl and topaz have been inlaid properly.

His belly is soft and shining; it is brilliantly white like ivory and there are greenish/bluish brown hair on it, that look like sapphires on a white, smooth, soft, and shining surface.

His wrists were long, his palms were large, and his fingers suitably elongated (Hind bin Abī Hālah). His palms were softer than silk (Anas) and more fragrant than musk (Abū Juhayfah). As to the physical power of his limbs, he defeated the most power-ful wrestler of Arabia of the time, Rukānah, in a bout.

As to his practical wisdom and authority it is to be noted that he started his life as a resourceless orphan, but when he left this world, he wielded sole authority over the whole Arabia. He was so generous that whenever he was asked for something, he never said 'No' [to anyone]. It is recorded that the Prophet used gold ring, but when wearing of gold was prohibited for men, he used a silver ring. Anas reports that there was an Ethiopian beryl in it.

The Prophet (pbAh) had an elegant white colour (Abū Ṭufayl). He had no hair on his body [torso] except a thin line of hair from chest to navel ('Alī). He had a thin stick of hair from his chest to navel and there was no hair on his chest and belly besides this. His chest and belly were level.

HIS LEGS AND COUNTENANCE

The next verse (15) is:

שוקיו עמודי שש מיסדים על-אדני-פז מראהו כלבנון בחור
כארזים²²⁰

His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.²²¹

This verse includes two independent descriptions. The first description relates to the legs of the ‘beloved’ and the second one relates to his countenance. Firstly, the study of the legs of the ‘beloved’ is being undertaken, for which the KJV has used the words ‘His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold’. The Rev. R. A. Redford explains it as follows:

So in the description of the legs we have the combination of white and gold, the white marble setting forth greatness and purity, and the gold sublimity and nobleness; intended, no doubt, to suggest that in the royal bridegroom, there was personal beauty united with kingly majesty.²²²

The commentator here asserts that these words undoubtedly signify the combination of personal beauty and kingly majesty in the bridegroom. As far as ‘Personal Beauty’ of Jesus is concerned:

It was never said of the child Jesus, as of the child Moses,

²²⁰ *The Holy Scriptures* (Jerusalem : Koren Publishers), 2000, p.859.

²²¹ Song of Solomon 5:15 KJV.

²²² *The Pulpit Commentary*, 123.

when he was born, that he was *exceedingly fair* [Acts 7:20]²²³; nay, *he had no form nor comeliness* (Isa. 53:2²²⁴).²²⁵

As to his ‘Kingly Majesty’, it is not a statement of fact, but is a grave mockery, to assign it to a person, about whom it is recorded in the very Bible:

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium²²⁶ and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knees

²²³ ‘In which time Moses [PbAh] was born, and was exceeding fair.’ (Acts 7:20 KJV). Exodus 2:2 states:

And the woman [Moses’ mother] conceived, and bare a son [Moses]; and when she saw him that he was a goodly *child*, she hid him three months. (KJV).

NKJV has rendered it as:

At this time Moses [PbAh] was born. He was a fine child, and pleasing to God.

All these quotations show that Moses (PbAh) was very beautiful even from his early childhood, whereas Jesus (PbAh) was not a conspicuously beautiful person.

²²⁴ Thomas Nelson Publishers’ *KJV* (p. 615) has given it the heading ‘*The Messiah’s Atonement*’. It writes:

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him.

The Nelson Study Bible explains it in its footnotes:

A root out of dry ground suggests Christ’s rejection by Israel. No form or Comeliness indicates that the Servant did not have a majestic manner. (*Nelson Study Bible*, p. 1198).

It indicates that the words of this sentence of the prediction can by no means be applied to Jesus Christ (PbAh).

²²⁵ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT*, 4:851.

²²⁶ ‘Praetorium’ means: ‘governor’s residence’.

before Him and mocked Him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head.²²⁷

The Pulpit Commentary did not indicate any literal application of this sentence of the ‘Song’. It gave it entirely a figurative sense (*‘that in the royal bridegroom, there was personal beauty united with kingly majesty’*). But, in fact, it can by no means be applied or related to Jesus Christ (pbAh).

When the description of the evangelists regarding the last days of Jesus Christ (pbAh) be studied, one comes across an unsteady, unstable, and wavering person. On the one hand, he wishes, ‘O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup [of death] pass from Me;²²⁸’ on the other hand, he seems to accept it half-heartedly saying, ‘nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.’²²⁹ No doubt the last words claimed to have been uttered by Jesus, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?’ (My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?)²³⁰ reveal the belief in the Oneness and Omnipotence of God, but at the same time they show his human limitations and complaint. Keeping in view the critical nature of the moment, they are not compatible with the ideals of perseverance and steadfastness. No doubt they are very apt and meaningful for supplication in solitude, but pronouncing these words openly in public at the time of suffering reveals lack of commitment, courage and confidence in one’s mission and ideals, which are not befitting of the Prophet Jesus (pbAh). ‘Stateliness’, ‘steadfastness’, and ‘magnificence’ are quite irrelevant words for Jesus Christ (pbAh). Such words can neither be applied literally nor figuratively to the life of Jesus Christ (pbAh) in the light of the Bible; whereas they are quite relevant to the life of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). The unwavering steadfastness of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) in

²²⁷ Matt. 27:27-30 NKJV.

²²⁸ Matt. 26:39 NKJV.

²²⁹ Matt. 26:39 NKJV.

²³⁰ Matt. 27:46 NKJV.

extremely adverse circumstances of the battlefields of Badr and Hunayn is a rare phenomenon in the annals of the world history.²³¹ Keeping in view these facts, one is forced to admit the adroitness of Matthew Henry to twist the facts in his favour. He asserts:

This bespeaks his stability and steadfastness; where he sets his foot he will fix it; he is able to bear all the weight of government that is upon his shoulders [one is at a loss to find any substance to this blatant misstatement], and his legs will never fail under him. This sets forth the stateliness and magnificence of the going of our God, our King, in his sanctuary.²³²

²³¹ Rev. V. C. Bodley writes in his '*The Life of Mohammed* [pbAh]' (London: Robert Hale Ltd., 18 Bedford square W. C. I, 1946):

What is remarkable is that Mohammed [pbAh], in spite of his ignorance of military matters, showed high talents as a general in every battle or skirmish in which he took part. He was brave too and, in spite of his old age, able to undergo hardships with the youngest of his soldiers. (p.153).

From the side of a hill Mohammed [pbAh] watched the battle, with Abu Bakr. Upto the moment of the general set-to, he had remained quiet and collected. (...), he mounted a horse and, calling his bodyguard, charged into the battle, (p.159).

Regarding the battle of Hunayn Bodley observes:

Mohammed [pbAh] did not ride in the rear of the column for the sake of safety. He did not consider such a contingency. He was as confident today as he had been cautious a few weeks before. (...). When, therefore, the Hawazan tribesmen sent avalanches of rocks on to the Moslems and followed them by showers of arrows and then by yelling swordsmen, everything in that dark gorge became turmoil.

(...). In a few minutes this proud army which had been promenading [take a leisurely ride] so splendidly up the defile [a narrow pass through mountains] had become a mob of disorganized men being hacked at by yelling tribesmen who seemed to multiply out of the dark cliffs. In vain did Mohammed

Setting aside the figurative application, even when these words of King Solomon (pbAh) be compared to the facts and physical features of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), one is not to face any disappointment.

Hasan bin Alī (the grandson of the Prophet pbAh) states that he asked his maternal uncle Hind bin Abī Hālah (the stepson of the Prophet) about the features of the Prophet (pbAh). He told (about the relevant features):

وَالْقَدَمَيْنِ شَاتِلَيْنِ²³³ الْأَطْرَافِ، خُمُصَانِ الْأَخْمَصَيْنِ²³⁴، مَسِيحٍ²³⁵ الْقَدَمَيْنِ، يَنْبُو²³⁶ عَنْهُمَا الْمَاءُ،
إِذَا زَالَ²³⁷ زَالَ قَلْعًا²³⁸، يَخْطُو²³⁹ تَكْفِيًا²⁴⁰، وَ يَمْشِي هَوْنًا، ذَرِيعَ²⁴¹ الْمَشْيِ إِذَا مَشَى

[pbAh] command and entreat his soldiers to rally. Panic, which has destroyed some of the finest battalions in the world, had taken charge. Trying to halt the rout was like trying to stem a tidal wave.

Mohammed [PbAh] was so mortified that he called on his veterans, who had stood fast, to follow him to death. He drew his sword and, spurring his mule, rode toward the seething ranks of the enemy which were themselves mobilized by the narrowness of the pass. (...). The Moslems turned to face up the gorge. Those who had fought at Khaiber and Muta suddenly felt shame. With the same ferocity with which they had made for safety, they now made for the enemy. (...). Moslems rushing to die for their cause, have always been irresistible. They were no less so on this February morning of 630. What had begun as a disorderly panic turned into a desperate battle. The hill tribesmen did their best, but, against these fanatics, well armed and now well disciplined, they gave ground. Soon they were running as quickly as had the Moslems.

Their rout was complete. (...). It was the most spectacular victory which Mohammed (pbAh) had ever won (p. 301-03).

²³² Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of O&NT*, 4:852.

²³³ شَاتِلَ (Shā'il), i.e. 'raised' (*A Dic. of Mod. Written Arabic*), 494.

²³⁴ الْأَخْمَصَيْنِ (al-Akhmaṣayn), i.e. hollow of the sole (of the foot), *ibid*, p.262.

²³⁵ مَسِيحٍ (Masīḥ), i.e. clean, smooth, anointed, *ibid*, p.907.

²³⁶ يَنْبُو (Yanbū), i.e. moves away, *ibid*, p.941.

²³⁷ زَالَ (zāla), i.e. go away, leave, *ibid*, p.386.

كَأَنَّمَا يَنْحَطُّ مِنْ²⁴² صَبَبٍ²⁴³

The middle parts of both of his feet were fully fleshed and raised. The soles of his feet were a bit deep [arch-like: which is the sign of strong and healthy feet, having firm ground-grip]. His feet were soft and smooth. Because of their cleanliness and smoothness the water did not remain there but flowed away quickly [as it flows down from gold]. When he walked, he lifted his legs with vigor, [as if walking towards a serious assignment or involvement] leaned slightly forward and placed his feet fully, carefully and softly on the ground. He did not walk arrogantly. He walked at a quick pace with measured treads and long steps. He did not take small steps. When he walked it seemed as if he was descending to a lower place.

Abū Hurayrah states:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَبْيَضَ كَأَنَّمَا صِيعَ مِنْ فِضَّةٍ²⁴⁴

The Apotle of Allah (pbAh) was so cleanly, clearly, and beautifully white, as though his body was fabricated by and moulded from silver.

White colour is generally associated with silver and marble. The association of the legs with marble indicates their white and bright colour and it is an established fact that Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) was of white colour as has been explained earlier and just above in Abū Hurayrah's

²³⁸ قَلَعَا (Qal'an), i.e. exterminate (destroy completely), root out, ibid, p.786.

²³⁹ يَخْطُورُ (Yakhṭū:Khaṭa'a yakhṭū), i.e. to advance, to step, ibid, p.248.

²⁴⁰ تَكْفِيًّا (Takfiyyan), i.e. appropriateness, suitability, competence, skill, p.834.

²⁴¹ ذَرِيعَ (Dharī' :dhara' yadhra'u), i.e. to measure, cover a distance, power, ability, ibid, p.308.

²⁴² صَبَبٍ (Ṣabab), i.e. slope, hillside, ibid, p.500.

²⁴³ *Shamā'il Tirmidhī*, Ch. I, . The Noble Features Of Rasūlullah.

²⁴⁴ *Shamā'il Tirmidhī*, Ch. I. The Noble Features Of Rasūlullah.

tradition. Moreover, this association of the legs with marble indicates internal strength and external beauty. The characteristics of the legs and feet of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) have been mentioned above under the tradition of Hind. Abū Hurayrah states:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ (...) مَا رَأَيْتُ أَحَدًا أَسْرَعَ فِي مَشْيِهِ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَأَنَّمَا الْأَرْضُ تُطَوَّى لَهُ إِنَّا لَنَجْهَدُ أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنَّهُ لَغَيْرُ مُكْتَرَبٍ²⁴⁵

I did not see anyone faster than the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) in his walking. It seemed as if the earth was being folded for him. We were exhausted in the effort to keep pace with him whereas he did not show even a sign of any fatigue.

Jābir bin Samurah says:

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ سَمُرَةَ قَالَ كَانَ فِي سَاقَيْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حُمُوشَةً²⁴⁶

Both the shanks of the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) were thin.

Had the shanks been fleshy, their lower part would have been slim and the middle part very fat. In that case, the simile of ‘pillars of marble’ could not have been applied to them, because the thickness of a pillar is almost equal throughout. As already stated:

عَنْ أَنَسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ضَخْمَ الْيَدَيْنِ وَالْقَدَمَيْنِ²⁴⁷

The Prophet’s (pbAh) hands and feet were heavy, large and magnificent.

It is a common phenomenon that the parts of the body which remain covered under clothes are white whereas the colour of the parts of the body of even the white people which are open to sun, becomes brownish (golden)²⁴⁸,

²⁴⁵ *Sunan Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Bāb Fī Ṣifāt al-Nabī, Trad. 3648.

²⁴⁶ *Sunan Tirmidhī*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, Bāb Fī Ṣifāt al-Nabī, Trad. 3645.

²⁴⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Libās, Bāb al-Ja’d, Trad. No. 5907.

²⁴⁸ It may be noted here that Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) generally wore the sandal that did not cover the whole feet. Tirmidhī reports:

[١٧٧٢] عَنْ قَتَادَةَ قَالَ قُلْتُ لِأَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ كَيْفَ كَانَ نَعْلُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَهْمَا قِبَالَانِ

especially in hot countries. Keeping in view all the above details it becomes quite clear that the slim shanks resembling white marble pillars on the brown, bulky, and beautiful feet (sockets of gold), present a true and exact picture of the beloved of King Solomon (pbAh). Whoever compares King Solomon's (pbAh) account of his beloved's relevant features with the features of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), would face no hardship in discovering the reality. It would be interesting to note that the detailed account of even the commentators of the Bible tallies only with Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), and the features of Jesus Christ (pbAh) have nothing to do with it.

The second part of verse 15 is:

His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

Matthew Henry explains this sentence as follows:

His countenance (his port and mien) is as Lebanon, that stately hill; his aspect²⁴⁹ beautiful and charming, like the prospect²⁵⁰ of that pleasant forest or park, excellent as the cedars, which, in height and strength, excel other trees, and are of excellent use. Christ is a goodly person; the more we look upon him the more beauty we shall see in him.²⁵¹ [Everything subjective and wishful description! No objective study or reference can be afforded in favour of his description.]

The explanation of Lebanon is being afforded from a relatively modern *Dictionary of the Bible*:

LEBANON, the name of the mountain range parallel to the eastern Mediterranean coast. (...). The name derives

There used to be two straps at both the sandals of the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) [i.e. they were not covered like shoes or boots].

²⁴⁹ 'Aspect is a common word' but it would be useful to recall its proper meanings. It means: 'a look, a glance; an appearance presented; face'.

²⁵⁰ 'Prospect' means: 'outlook; a wide view' (Chambers Eng. Dic., 1174).

²⁵¹ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition on the N&OT*, 4: 852

from a Hebrew word for ‘white’²⁵² and refers to snow-capped peaks of the range (Jer. 18:14). (...). The Lebanon mountains were famous not only for their beautiful white peaks but for their cedar forests (1Kg. 4:33; 2Kgs. 14:19; Pss. 92:12; 104:16). These tall and beautiful trees were sought by many peoples in the ancient world. (...). King Solomon used cedars of Lebanon in the construction of the Temple in Jerusalem (...) and in his palace (1kgs. 7:2-3).²⁵³

Strong’s Dic. indicates that the strong grip of its roots was an important quality of the cedar tree; ‘from the tenacity²⁵⁴ of its roots’.²⁵⁵

The Hebrew Bible word for ‘countenance’ is ‘מראה’, i.e. ‘mar’eh’. It means:

From 7200 [ra’ah; a primary root; to see, literally or figuratively:- advise, approve, appear, consider, perceive, think]; a view (the act of seeing); also an appearance (the thing seen), whether (real) a shape (esp. if handsome, comeliness; often plural, the looks), or (mental) a vision, (...) countenance, fair, favoured.²⁵⁶

It can thus be interpreted as follows:

His apparent beauty and comeliness, his lovely appearance and attractive features, his comprehensive looks and lofty ideals, his deep thoughts and far-sightedness are like Lebanon.

The word ‘Lebanon’ has been explained above. *Strong’s Dic.* explains it in following terms:

²⁵² It can either be a derivation from the Chaldean word ‘lebab’ meaning ‘heart’, or from the Hebrew primary root ‘laban’ meaning ‘white’ (See *Strong’s Dic.*, Entries No. 3825 and 3835, 36, p. 58).

²⁵³ *Harper’s Bible Dic.* (Bangalore: T. P. I., 1990), 553.

²⁵⁴ ‘Tenacious’ means: ‘holding fast to, sticking firmly, tough’ (*Chambers Eng. Dic.*, 1995, p. 1781).

²⁵⁵ *Strong’s Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 730; p. 16.

²⁵⁶ *Strong’s Dic. of the Heb. Bible.*, entry 4758, 7200; p. 72.

From 3825 [Lebab; heart {corresponding to 3824:- ‘lay’bawb, courage, friendly, kindly, understanding, intellect, mind’}]; (the) white mountain (from its snow), Lebanon, a mountain range in Palestine:- Lebanon.²⁵⁷

It signifies that this word is used for the mountain range of Lebanon and the land of Lebanon due to its snow-covering and white colour. But its literal meanings are ‘heart, courage, intellect and understanding’. The cumulative sense of this simile can be interpreted as below:

The beloved of King Solomon [pbAh] is like beautiful snow-covered mountains of Lebanon in apparent beauty and comeliness. His eyes are replete with love and affection. On the one hand he is a huge and high mountain of courage and valour and on the other hand, he is great in his intellect, understanding, and right thinking.

It has been explained above that according to the account of the New Testament these qualities cannot be attributed to Jesus Christ (pbAh). On the other hand, as far as Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) is concerned, they depict his complete picture. The theme has been discussed in the above pages at some places. A few sentences of Umm Ma‘bad’s account of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) are being afforded here again:

[4274] (...) (خرج من مكة مهاجرا إلى المدينة وأبو بكر رضي الله عنه ومولى أبي بكر عامر بن فهيرة ودليلهما الليثي عبد الله بن أريقط مروا على خيمتي أم معبد الخزاعية (...)) أبو معبد اللبن أعجبه قال من أين لك هذا يا أم معبد والشاء عازب حائل ولا حلوب في البيت قالت لا والله إلا أنه مر بنا رجل مبارك من حاله كذا وكذا قال صفيه لي يا أم معبد قالت رأيت رجلا ظاهر الوضاعة²⁵⁸ أبلج²⁵⁹ الوجه حسن الخلق (...) عنقه سطع (...) أحور اكحل. إن صمت

²⁵⁷ Strong’s Dic. of the Heb. Bible, entry 4844,25,24; p. 58.

²⁵⁸ الوضاعة (Zāhir) means ‘manifest, evident, conspicuous, seemingly’; ظاهر (wadā’ah) means ‘purity, cleanness, brightness’. So the phrase ظاهر الوضاعة (Zāhir al-wadā’ah) would mean ‘whose purity, cleanness, and brightness is quite evident and conspicuous’.

²⁵⁹ The verb ‘balaja yabluju’ means ‘to shine, to dawn (morning aurora)’ and its superlative adjective أبلج (ablaj) means ‘bright, clear, beautiful, nice, fair’ (A Dic. of Modern Written Arabic, 71f). Thus أبلج الوجه (ablaj al-wajh) would mean ‘whose countenance is bright and beautiful’.

فعليه الوقار وإن تكلم سماه وعلاه البهاء أجمل الناس وأجملهم²⁶⁰ من بعيد وأحسنه وأجمله من قريب حلو المنطق فصلا لا نزر ولا هذر كأن منطقهم خرزات نظم يتحدرن (...) غصن بين غصنين فهو أنضر الثلاثة منظرا وأحسنهم قدرا (...) محفود محشود لا عابس ولا مفند.²⁶¹

Umm Ma'bad said: I saw a man with bright colour, shining face, attractive structure, (...), long neck, white and black eyes, (...), serene, sober, and dignified when silent, attractive and captivating when speaking, brilliant and beautiful when seen from afar, comely and sweet when nearby [the simile of beautiful valleys and snow-clad peaks of the magnificent mountain of Lebanon be brought to mind], candid conversation, words clear-cut, plain, and unequivocal, neither insufficiently brief nor nonsensically verbose, style so beautiful as if pearls be falling down from a string, a branch between two branches, which is the most good-looking, full and fresh of the three, (...) obeyed (by his companions) and honoured, neither rude and crude nor extravagantly absurd.

The second simile of the sentence is 'excellent as the cedars.' The Hebrew Bible word for this 'excellent' is 'בָּחַר' (bahar). It means:

To try, i.e. (by implication) select, acceptable, appoint, choose (choice), excellent, join, be rather, require.²⁶²

The word 'cedar' has been explained above. *Collins Dic.* has explained it as below:

Any Old World coniferous tree having spreading branches, needle-like evergreen leaves, and erect barrel-shaped. See also cedar of Lebanon (with level spreading

²⁶⁰ The word أَبْهَى (abhā) is a commonly used word in Arabic having a vast scope of meanings. According to *A Dic. of Modern Written Arabic* it means 'More splendid, more brilliant'. How close in sense it is to the Hebrew word!

²⁶¹ Al-Hākim, *al-Mustadrik 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (al-Mawsū'ah al-Dhahabiyah, al-Marḥalah al-Ūla, al-Iṣḍār al-Thānī, 2001), 3:9,10, tradition No.4274.

²⁶² *Strong's Dic. of the Hebrew Bible*, entry 977; p. 19.

branches and fragrant wood), deodar.²⁶³

The beautiful colour and silk-like softness and smoothness of its wood, the beauty of the fabrication of its tissues, its tenacity and durability, its immunity and resistance against termite and corrosion, its soft and perpetual fragrance, the strength and firm ground grip of its roots, its long life, vast spreading of its branches and its soothing shade, its lofty stature make it matchless in value and quality. Keeping in view this lexical research this simile can be explained as follows:

This magnificent, choicest, and distinguished person of the tribe of Kedar [a play on the word ‘cedar’] and the impressive, invincible, and sweet word of Allah presented by him are beneficial and benevolent and the beauty and virtue incarnate like the cedar tree. He is esteemed and cherished as the fragrant, good-looking, strong, smooth, and soft cedar wood is. The grip of his root (base or foot) is firm. His branches (influence of his teachings) are stretched far and wide. He is extremely pleasant, agreeable and desirable.

The next and the last verse (16) of this prophecy is the most important one. In extreme love and devotion King Solomon (pbAh) pronounces even the name of his beloved, which is a rare phenomenon in the history of Biblical prophecy.

²⁶³ *Collins Dic. of the English Language* (London: 1981), 243.

Chapter-XI

SPEECH OF HIS MOUTH

The last verse of this passage is the most important verse of the prophecy. The wording of the verse is:

חכו ממתקים וכלו מחמדים זה דודי וזה רעי כנות ירושלים²⁶⁴

His mouth *is* most sweet, yea, he *is* altogether lovely. This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

The first clause of this verse is: 'His mouth is most sweet' which would be explored in this chapter. The remaining clauses will be dealt with in the next chapters. Matthew Henry explains it as follows:

His mouth is most sweet; it is sweetness in itself; it is sweetness (so the word is); it is pure essence, nay, it is the quintessence of all delights, v. 16. The words of his mouth are all sweet to a believer, sweet as milk to babes, as honey to those that are grown up. (Ps cxix, 103).²⁶⁵

The *Broadman's Com.* has explained it as follows:

Not only was her lover the epitome²⁶⁶ of character and of striking physique, but he wielded the language of love with eloquent²⁶⁷ sweetness.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁴ *The Holy Scriptures* (Jerusalem : Koren Publishers), 2000, p.859.

²⁶⁵ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O&NT*, 4:852.

²⁶⁶ 'Epitome' is a thing that shows on a small scale all the characteristics of something much large; person or thing that is perfect example of a quality type. A perfect example in miniature form.

²⁶⁷ 'Eloquence' means 'skilful use of language to persuade or to appeal

The *Pulpit Commentary* has interpreted it as follows:

His mouth, or palate, is sweetness itself; that is, when he speaks his words are full of winning love.²⁶⁹

Ronald A Knox has accomplished its commentary in a brief but beautiful and meaningful exclamatory sentence:

Oh, that sweet utterance!²⁷⁰

The commentator of the ‘Songs’ in the *New Bible Com. (Revised)*, J. A. Balchin, has explained this clause in a single sentence:

Speech; literally ‘palate’ which is considered as the organ of speech.²⁷¹

W. J. Cameron, has explained it only with the help of two references in the *New Bible Com*:

His mouth (16) cf. Pr.²⁷² xvi.21; Ps.²⁷³ xlv.2²⁷⁴

It may be noted here that verse 16 is not mentioned in the *Dummelow’s Com.* (NY: Macmillan & Co., 1956).

The *Pulpit Com.* has explained it further as:

His mouth was all sweetness (the literal rendering), both his holy words and his gracious looks. (...). The very tones of that

to the feelings; fluent speaking.’ (*Oxford Advanced Learners Dic.*, 1987, p. 280). In Urdu it is ‘Faṣāḥat-o-Balāghat’

²⁶⁸ *Broadman’s Commentary*, 5:143.

²⁶⁹ *The Pulpit Commentary*, 123, col. 2.

²⁷⁰ R. A. Knox, *The OT* (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne Ltd., 1949), 2:970.

²⁷¹ *The New Bible Com* (Revised), 585.

²⁷² ‘The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.’ (AV/KJV).

²⁷³ ‘Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.’ (AV).

²⁷⁴ *The New Bible Com*, 553.

most sacred voice must have had an indescribable sweetness.²⁷⁵

It becomes abundantly clear from the above exegetical quotations that the word ‘mouth’ of this clause stands for ‘speech’. It has not been used here in the literal sense of the physical ‘mouth’ or ‘lips’. The word ‘mouth’ has been used in the very Bible as well a number of times in the same sense, for example:

Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses.²⁷⁶

‘Mouth of witnesses’ here means the words of the witnesses. It can by no means signify the physical mouth or lips etc. In the same way, in Deu. 17:6²⁷⁷; 19:15,²⁷⁸ the word ‘mouth’ has been used for words and evidence. It has been noted in 2 Samuel, ‘thy mouth has testified against thee.’²⁷⁹ 1Ki. says:

Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commandeth thee.²⁸⁰

After being established that the word ‘mouth’ here means ‘speech or utterance’ and keeping in view the sense of these words of King Solomon (pbAh), one should explore their real and exact significance.

It may be noted here that Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) conveyed two things through his mouth: the Holy Qur’ān

²⁷⁵ *The Pulpit Commentary*, 129.

²⁷⁶ Nu. 35:30 KJV.

²⁷⁷ ‘At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.’ KJV.

²⁷⁸ ‘One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.’ NKJV.

²⁷⁹ 2Sa.1:16 KJV.

²⁸⁰ 1Kings 12:21 KJV.

and his own words regarding the Islāmic culture.

As regards his own words, they are admitted to be very lucid, compact, sweet, and eloquent. Hereunder are some of his sayings. Abū Hurayrah reports:

رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قال ليس الشديد بالصرعة إنما الشديد الذي يملك نفسه عند الغضب²⁸¹

The Prophet of Allah (pbAh) said that the strong is not the one who overcomes one's competitor in a bout. But the strong and brave is the one who controls oneself in anger.

عن أبي سعيد الخدري ألا وخيرهم بطيء الغضب سريع الفيء ألا وشهرهم سريع الغضب بطيء الفيء²⁸²

(...). Beware! (as regards anger) the best among you is the person who is slow in getting angry but calms down quickly; and the worst among you is the one who enrages immediately but calms down slowly.

عن أنس بن مالك عن النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قال لا يؤمن أحدكم حتى يحب لأخيه أو قال لجاره ما يحب لنفسه²⁸³

No one truly believes until he likes for his brother (or he said 'his neighbour') what he likes for himself.

عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إنما بعثت لأتمم مكارم الأخلاق²⁸⁴

I have been sent down to bring good manners and desirable behaviour to perfection.

عن أبي بردة بن أبي موسى الأشعري عن أبيه عن النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أنه كان يدعو بهذا الدعاء اللهم اغفر لي خطيئتي وجهلي وإسرافي في أمري وما أنت أعلم به مني اللهم اغفر لي جدي وهزلي وخطئي وعمدي وكل ذلك عندي اللهم اغفر لي ما قدمت وما أخرت وما أسررت وما أعلنت وأنت على كل شيء قدير²⁸⁵

O Lord, forgive me: my mistake and my ignorance and my transgression (wrong doings) in my affairs, and (all) the

²⁸¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Tradition 5763 and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Tradition 2609 (Mawsū'ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

²⁸² *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, Tradn. 2191 (Mawsū'ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

²⁸³ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Tradn. 45 (Mawsū'ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

²⁸⁴ *Sunan Bayḥiqū al-Kubrā*, Tr. 20571 (Mawsū'ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

²⁸⁵ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Tradition 2719 (Mawsū'ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

other errors that you know better than I. O Lord, forgive me those of my errors which I committed with serious effort, and which I took lightly and committed unmindfully; and the sins which I did mistakenly, and the sins that I committed intentionally: and I have committed all of these sins. O Lord, forgive me the sins that I have committed previously, and the sins that I put off to be done in future; and the sins that I committed secretly and the sins that I did shamelessly and openly. You are All-Potent.

عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده والمؤمن من أمانه الناس على دمائهم وأموالهم²⁸⁶

‘The true Muslim is the one from whose hands and tongue the other Muslims are (in peace and) secure and the true believer is the one from whom the human beings believe themselves to be safe and secure regarding their lives and property.’

عن أنس عن النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قال يسروا ولا تعسروا وبشروا ولا تنفروا²⁸⁷

Provide convenience and don't create troubles and hardships [for people]; deliver good message to people (in a pleasant manner) and do not present it in a way that creates hatred (towards the message or the messenger).

عن أبي أمامة قال قال رجل يا رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ما الإيمان قال إذا سرتك حسناتك وساعتك سيئاتك فأنت مؤمن قال يا رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فما الإثم قال إذا حاك في قلبك شيء فدعه²⁸⁸

A man asked the Holy Prophet (pbAh), ‘What is faith?’ He replied: ‘When your good deeds give you pleasure and your bad deeds grieve you, you are then a person of faith.’ He enquired: ‘O Apostle of Allah (pbAh), what is sin?’ The Prophet (pbAh) replied: ‘When anything pinches you in yourself [that is a sin]. You should avoid it.’

عن تميم الداري أن النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قال الدين النصيحة قلنا لمن قال لله ولكتابيه ولرسوله

²⁸⁶ *Sunan Tirmidhī*, Tradition 2627 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

²⁸⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Tradition 69 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

²⁸⁸ *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*, Tradn. 176 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

The Prophet (pbAh) said: ‘The Faith is (nothing but) well-wishing and sincerity;’ we asked for whom. He said, ‘For Allah, for His book, for His Prophet, for the leaders of the Muslims, and for the people at large.’

عن عبد الله بن مسعود عن النبي صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ مَنْ كَانَ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ مِنْ كِبَرٍ قَالَ رَجُلٌ إِنَّ الرِّجْلَ يَحِبُّ أَنْ يَكُونَ ثَوْبُهُ حَسَنًا وَنَعْلُهُ حَسَنَةً قَالَ إِنْ اللَّهُ جَمِيلٌ يَحِبُّ الْجَمَالَ الْكِبَرُ بَطَرُ الْحَقِّ وَغَمَطُ النَّاسِ²⁹⁰

The one who holds even the slightest pride, will not enter the kingdom of heaven. A person asked the Prophet: ‘O Prophet of Allah (pbAh), some people wish that their clothes and shoes should be beautiful.’ The Prophet (pbAh) said, ‘God is beautiful, and He likes beauty. As far as pride is concerned, it is to disregard righteousness due to arrogance and to look down upon people.’

عن أبي سعيد الخدري وعن أبي هريرة عن النبي صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ مَا يَصِيبُ الْمُسْلِمَ مِنْ نَصَبٍ وَلَا وَصَبٍ وَلَا هَمٍّ وَلَا حُزْنٍ وَلَا أَذًى وَلَا غَمٍّ حَتَّى الشُّوْكَةِ يُشَاكِكُهَا إِلَّا كَفَرَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ خَطَايَاهُ²⁹¹

If a Muslim undergoes some fatigue, grief and distress, or even feels a pain of the prick of a thorn [and forbears it patiently], Allah Almighty, in return, forgives some of his previous sins.

عن صهيب قال قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَجِبَا لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ إِنَّ أَمْرَهُ كُلَّهُ خَيْرٌ وَلَيْسَ ذَاكَ لِأَحَدٍ إِلَّا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ سَرَاءٌ شَكَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ ضَرَاءٌ صَبَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ²⁹²

The matter of the believers is marvellous and wonderful, as each of their affairs is good for them, and this is only for believers and none else. If they enjoy comfort and happiness, they show gratitude for it (towards Allah) and it is good for themselves, and if they have to face some adversity they show patience. It is also good for them.

²⁸⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Tradn. 55 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

²⁹⁰ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Tradn. 91 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

²⁹¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, 5318; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 2572 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

²⁹² *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Tradition 2999 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

يا أيها الناس ألا إن ربكم واحد وإن أباكم واحد ألا لا فضل لعربي على أعجمي ولا لعجمي على عربي ولا لأحمر على أسود ولا أسود على أحمر إلا بالتقوى²⁹³

O people, verily your Sustainer is One and your father is one. Listen attentively, no Arab has any superiority over a non-Arab and no non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; neither has any red person superiority over a black person, nor has a black person any superiority over the red one. The only superiority is due to Godliness.

عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ انظروا إلى من أسفل منكم ولا تنظروا إلى من هو فوقكم فهو أجدر أن لا تزدروا نعمة الله²⁹⁴

Look towards the one who is inferior to you (financially); do not look towards the one who is superior to you (in wealth). In this way you will most probably not underestimate the blessings of Allah upon you.

عن أبي شريح أن النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قال والله لا يؤمن والله لا يؤمن والله لا يؤمن قيل ومن يا رسول الله قال الذي لا يأمن جاره بوائقه²⁹⁵

The Holy Prophet (pbAh) said, ‘By God, they are not believers, by God they are not believers, by God they are not believers.’ People asked, ‘which ones, O Apostle of Allah (pbAh)?’ He said, ‘Whose neighbours are not safe and secure from their devastations and treacheries.’

أنس بن مالك رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ما آمن بي من بات شبعانا وجاره جائع إلى جنبه وهو يعلم به²⁹⁶

Those are not believers who spent their night while they had had their fill and their neighbour on their side was hungry; and they knew it.

قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إن من حسن إسلام المرء تركه مالا يعنيه²⁹⁷

The grace and beauty of the Islām of some human beings

²⁹³ *Musnad Ahmad*, Tradn. 23536 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

²⁹⁴ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Tradition 2963 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

²⁹⁵ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Tradn. 5670 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

²⁹⁶ al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, Tradn. 751 (Mawsū‘ah ...).

²⁹⁷ *Sunan Tirmidhī*, Tradn. 2318 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

is that they do not indulge in affairs irrelevant to them.

عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الكلمة الحكيمة ضالة المؤمن فحيث وجدها فهو أحق بها²⁹⁸

The word of wisdom is the lost property of the believer, so he has a better right to it wherever he finds it.

عن أنس بن مالك قال قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ طلب العلم فريضة على كل مسلم²⁹⁹

Seeking of knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim [irrespective of caste or gender].

عن أبي أمامة الباهلي قال ذكر لرسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رجلان أحدهما عابد والآخر عالم فقال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فضل العالم على العابد كفضلي على أدناكم³⁰⁰

The cases of two persons were mentioned before the Apostle of Allah; one of them was a devoted worshipper and the other was a scholar. The Apostle of Allah (pbAh) said ‘The pre-eminence of the scholar over (mere) worshipper is like my pre-eminence over the lowest among you.’

عن أبي مالك الأشعري قال قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الطهور شرط الإيمان³⁰¹

Purification [and cleanliness] is a part of the Faith.

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ من لم يدع قول الزور والعمل به فليس لله حاجة في أن يدع طعامه وشرابه³⁰²

Who did not abandon false words, and actions based on falsehood (while fasting), Allah is indifferent to their giving up food and drink.

عن جابر بن عبد الله قال مرت جنازة فقام لها رسول الله صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وقمنا معه فقلنا يا رسول الله إنما يهودية فقال إن الموت فرع فإذا رأيتم الجنازة فقوموا³⁰³

A bier (coffin) with dead body passed by (us) and the Apostle of Allah (pbAh) stood up for it and we also stood up

²⁹⁸ *Sunan Tirmidhī*, Tradn. 2687 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

²⁹⁹ *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, Tradn. 224. (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

³⁰⁰ *Sunan Tirmidhī*, Tradn. 2685 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

³⁰¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Tradn. 223 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

³⁰² *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Tradn. 1804 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

³⁰³ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Tradn. 960 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

with him. Then we said, ‘Apostle of Allah (pbAh)! it is a Jewess.’ He said, ‘Death is certainly a horror, so when you see a bier proceeding, do stand up (for it; whether it be a Muslim or a non-Muslim.)’

عن عبد الله بن الحارث بن حزم قال ما رأيت أحدا أكثر تبسما من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم³⁰⁴

I never saw anyone who might have been of more smiling face than the Apostle of Allah (pbAh).

عن جرير بن عبد الله قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من لا يرحم الناس لا يرحمه الله عز وجل³⁰⁵

Allah shall not extend [His Grace and] mercy to the one who does not show mercy to the people.

فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ليس منا من لم يرحم صغيرنا و لم يوقر كبيرنا³⁰⁶

The one is not of us who is not kind to our younger ones and who does not show due regard to our elderly ones.

عن أبي هريرة عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه قال لا يلدغ المؤمن من جحر واحد مرتين³⁰⁷

The believer is not bitten twice from the same hole.

عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من لا يشكر الناس لا يشكر الله³⁰⁸

Who does not express gratitude to the people, is not grateful to Allah.

عن واثلة بن الأسقع قال سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول من باع عيالا لم يبينه لم يزل في مقت الله³⁰⁹

Whoever sells something with a defect in it, which he does not expose, shall remain under displeasure of Allah for ever.

عن عبد الله بن عمر قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أعطوا الأجير أجره قبل أن يجف عرقه³¹⁰

Give the workers their wages before their sweat gets dry.

³⁰⁴ *Sunan Tirmidhī*, Tradn. 3641 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

³⁰⁵ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Tradn 2319 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

³⁰⁶ *Sunan Tirmidhī*, Tradn. 1919 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

³⁰⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Tradn. 5782 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

³⁰⁸ *Sunan Tirmidhī*, Tradn. 1954 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

³⁰⁹ *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, Tradn. 2247 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

³¹⁰ *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, Tradn. 2443 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabiyyah).

بن أبي قتادة عن أبيه أَنَّ النبي صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ هَمَى أَنْ يُتَنَفَّسَ فِي الْإِنَاءِ³¹¹

The Prophet (pbAh) forbade breathing into the vessel [while drinking].

عن المقدام رضي الله عنه عن رسول الله صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ مَا أَكَلَ أَحَدٌ طَعَامًا قَطُّ خَيْرًا مِنْ أَنْ يُأْكَلَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ يَدِهِ وَإِنَّ نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ دَاوُدَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ كَانَ يُأْكُلُ مِنْ عَمَلِ يَدِهِ³¹²

Nobody ever took any meal better than what he took through the (earnings of the) labour of his hands; and the Prophet of Allah, Dāwūd (pbAh) used to eat of the labour of his hands.

عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ رضي الله عنه (...) قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ³¹³

Verily actions depend on, and are to be judged according to, intentions.³¹⁴

عن أنس بن مالك قال (...) لَا إِيمَانَ لِمَنْ لَا أَمَانَةَ لَهُ وَلَا دِينَ لِمَنْ لَا عَهْدَ لَهُ³¹⁵

The one is not a believer who breaches trust and is dishonest; and the one has no faith who does not keep promise.

عن أنس قال قال رسول الله صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا تَزَوَّجَ الْعَبْدُ فَقَدْ اسْتَكْمَلَ نِصْفَ دِينِهِ فليَتَّقِ اللَّهَ فِي النِّصْفِ الْبَاقِي³¹⁶

When a man marries, he has indeed perfected half of his faith. As to the remaining half, let him be God-cautious.

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال جاء رجلٌ إلى رسول الله صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فقال يا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَنْ أَحَقُّ النَّاسِ بِحُسْنِ صَحَابَتِي قَالَ أُمُّكَ قَالَ ثُمَّ مَنْ قَالَ ثُمَّ أُمُّكَ قَالَ ثُمَّ مَنْ قَالَ ثُمَّ أُمُّكَ قَالَ ثُمَّ مَنْ قَالَ ثُمَّ أَبُوكَ³¹⁷

A man came [to the Prophet (pbAh)] and said, ‘O Apostle of Allah (pbAh), which one of the people deserves my favour and affection the most?’ He said, ‘Your mother.’ He said,

³¹¹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, in al-Jāmi‘ al-Kabīr, Tradn. 2028.

³¹² *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, in al-Jāmi‘ al-Kabīr, Tradn. 1966.

³¹³ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, in al-Jāmi‘ al-Kabīr, Tradn. 1.

³¹⁴ There is a legal maxim: ‘An act does not make a man guilty; unless thereto be guilty intention’.

³¹⁵ *Sunan al-Bayhiqī*, in al-Jāmi‘ al-Kabīr, Tradn. 12470.

³¹⁶ *Al-Bayhiqī*, as quoted by al-Durr al-Manthūr in al-Jāmi‘ al-Kabīr.

³¹⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, in al-Jāmi‘ al-Kabīr, Tradn. 5626.

‘Who next?’ He said, ‘Your mother.’ He asked the same question for the third time and the Prophet (pbAh) gave him the same answer. When the man repeated the same question for the fourth time the Prophet (pbAh) said, ‘Then your father.’

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الثَّابُّ مِنَ الذَّنْبِ كَمَنْ لَا ذَنْبَ لَهُ³¹⁸

The one who repents at and refrains from the sin, is like the one who committed no sin at all.

كتب أبو بكر إلى ابنه (...) بأن لا تقضي بين اثنين وأنت غضبان فلاي سمعت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول لا يقضين حكم بين اثنين وهو غضبان³¹⁹

An arbiter between two persons should not pass a judgment when he be enraged.

Some sayings of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) have been afforded above. There is great wisdom and beauty in them. The case of the Qur’ān is even more beautiful and charming. It is a masterpiece of its kind and style of literature. Hereunder are given some excerpts from the Holy Qur’ān that exhibit its eloquence, sweetness and captivating force:

وَلَا تَسْتَوِي الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا ذُو حُظٍّ عَظِيمٍ وَإِمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ³²⁰

And good and evil are not alike. Repel evil with what is good. Then you will find your enemy like an affectionate friend. But this quality can only be achieved by those who forbear (and are patient); and none is granted this except those who are gifted ones. If the Devil tempts you towards evil, seek refuge in Allah, surely He is the All-hearing, All-knowing.

وَاصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ³²¹

³¹⁸ *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, in al-Jāmi‘ al-Kabīr liKutub al-Turāth al-‘Arabī wa al-‘Islāmī, Tradn. 4250.

³¹⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Tradn. 6739 (Mawsū‘ah al-Dhahabīyah).

³²⁰ *The Holy Qur’ān*, Sūrah Fuṣṣilat, 41:34-36.

³²¹ *The Holy Qur’ān*, Sūrah Hūd, 11:115.

And be steadfast in patience; verily Allah will not let the reward of those who are righteous go waste.

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِن بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ³²²

There is no compulsion in religion; truly the right way has become clearly distinct from error; and the one who rejects false deities and believes in Allah has grasped a firm handhold which will never break. And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمُ الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ³²³

Allah is the protecting guardian of those who believe. He brings them out of darkness into the light; as for those who disbelieve, their guardians are false deities. They bring them out of light into darkness.

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا³²⁴

Consider the human self (soul) and its perfect proportioning; and how it is imbued with moral failings as well as with consciousness of God. He indeed prospers who causes this ‘self’ grow in purity; and truly lost is he who corrupts and buries it [into dust and dirt].

مَن عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَمَن أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهَا وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ³²⁵

Who act righteously benefit their own soul; and who commit evil, shall have to bear the burden thereof: your Lord will not be unjust towards His servants.

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بَالِغِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ³²⁶

Invite (them) to the path of your Lord with wisdom and word

³²² *The Holy Qur’ān*, Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2:256.

³²³ *The Holy Qur’ān*, Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2:257.

³²⁴ *The Holy Qur’ān*, Sūrah al-Shams, 91:7-10.

³²⁵ *The Holy Qur’ān*, Sūrah Fuṣṣilat, 41:46.

³²⁶ *The Holy Qur’ān*, Sūrah al-Naḥl, 16:125.

of good and beautiful advice, and argue with them in the way that is best (and most gracious), for your Lord knows best who have strayed from His path and who receive guidance.

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا
نَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ³²⁷

Say; 'People of the Book! Come now to a word common between us and you, that we serve none but God, and that we associate not aught with Him, and do not some of us take others as Lords, apart from God.' And if they turn their backs, say: 'Bear witness that we are Muslims.'³²⁸

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ مِلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ
إِبْرَاهِيمَ هُوَ سَمَّاكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَفِي هَذَا لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ
عَلَى النَّاسِ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَى وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ³²⁹

And strive hard in the cause of Allah with all the striving that is due to Him. It is He who has elected you [to carry His message], and has imposed no hardship on you regarding the religion. This is the way of your forefather Abraham. It is He who has named you Muslims [Muslim, i.e., those who have surrendered themselves to Allah], in bygone times as well as in this (divine writ), so that the Apostle might bear witness to the truth before you, and that you might bear witness to it before all humankind. So be constant in prayer, render the purifying dues, and hold fast unto Allah. He is your Protector, and how excellent is this Protector, and how excellent is this Giver of Succour!

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا
أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شُرْعَةً وَمَنْهَاجًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ
لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا
فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ³³⁰

Now We have revealed unto you the Book with the truth,

³²⁷ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah 'Āl 'Imrān, 3:64.

³²⁸ A.J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (Oxf Univ Press, 1982), 54.

³²⁹ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-Ḥajj, 22:78.

³³⁰ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-Mā'idah, 5:48.

fulfilling and testifying that which was revealed before it of the book, and as a guardian over it [and determining what is true therein]. Judge, therefore, between them [the followers of earlier revelation] in accordance with what Allah has revealed and do not follow their vain desires in preference to the truth which has come to you. To each among you We have prescribed a law and a pattern of life. Had Allah so willed, He would surely have made you a single community [professing one faith]. But His plan is to try and test you in what He has given you. So, strive as in a race in all virtues. All of you will return to Allah in the end. Then He will show you the truth of the matter in which you differed.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ فُرْقَانًا وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ³³¹

O you who believe! If you follow the path of Allah, He will grant you criterion (to judge between right and wrong), and will overlook your sins and will forgive you. For Allah is the Lord of unlimited grace.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ³³²

O you who believe! Do your duty to Allah, seek the means of approach unto Him, i.e. strive (with might and main) in His cause, so you may prosper.

(...) وَادْكُرْ رَبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ وَقُلْ عَسَى أَنْ يَهْدِيَنِي رَبِّي لِأَقْرَبَ مِنْ هَذَا رَشَدًا³³³

(...). Call your Lord to mind when you forget, and say: 'I hope that my Lord will guide me to that which is even nearer to the right path than this.'

لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهُ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوَى مِنْكُمْ³³⁴

Their [sacrificial animals'] flesh never reaches Allah, nor their blood: it is only your God-consciousness that reaches Him.

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ (...) ³³⁵

³³¹ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8:29.

³³² *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-Mā'idah, 5:35.

³³³ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-Kahf, 18:24.

³³⁴ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-Ḥajj, 22:37.

Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. (...).

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي يَدُهُ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طَبَاقًا مَا تَرَى فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِنْ تَفَوتٍ فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَى مِنْ فُطُورٍ ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنْقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ³³⁶

Blessed is He in Whose hand is the kingdom and He is powerful over everything. Who created death and life, that He might put you to a test and make it clear which of you is best in conduct. And He is the All-mighty, the All-forgiving. Who has created the seven heavens, one above the other [in full harmony with one another]. You will not see an imperfection or lack of proportion in the creation of the Gracious One. So turn your vision once more: can you see anything missing in it? Turn your vision [upon it] again and yet again: [and every time] your vision will fall back upon you, frustrated and worn out.

وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَى عُنُقِكَ وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُومًا مَحْسُورًا (...) وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ حَسْبِيَ إِمْلَاقٌ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُهُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ إِنْ قَتَلْتُمْ كَانَ خَطِئًا كَبِيرًا وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزَّوْجَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَمَنْ قُتِلَ مَظْلُومًا فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لَوْلِيٍّ سُلْطَانًا فَلَا يُسْرِفُ فِي الْقَتْلِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مَنْصُورًا (...) وَأَوْفُوا بِالْعَهْدِ إِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْئُولًا وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ إِذَا كُلْتُمْ وَزِنُوا بِالْقِسْطَاسِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا³³⁷

And do not keep your hand chained to your neck (out of miserliness), nor outspread it widespread altogether, or you will sit reproached and frustrated. (...). And do not kill your children for fear of poverty: it is We who provide sustenance for them and for you as well. Verily killing them is a great sin. And do not even approach adultery, for, behold, it is an abomination and an evil way. And do not take any human being's life, [the life] which God has willed to be sacred, except for just cause. If anyone has been slain wrongfully, We have empowered the defender of his rights [to exact a just retribution]; but even so do not let him transgress the

³³⁵ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-Nūr, 24:35.

³³⁶ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-Mulk, 67:1-4.

³³⁷ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17:30-37.

prescribed limits in exacting retribution, for he is upheld by law. (...). And be true to every promise: for, verily, [on the Day of Judgment] you will be called to account for every promise which you made. And give full measure when you measure out; and weigh with the straight balance: this will be [for your own] good, and best in the end. And do not concern yourselves with anything of which you have no knowledge: verily, the hearing, the sight, the heart, all of them, will be called to account for it.

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قَبْلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ
السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا
وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ³³⁸

Righteousness does not mean that you turn your face to the east or the west, but truly righteous are those who believe in Allah, and the Last Day, and the angels, and the divine revelation, and the prophets; and spend their wealth for love of Him, upon their near of kin and the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and the beggars, and getting the captives [slaves] freed from bondage; and are constant in prayer and pay regular purifying charity [Zakāh]; and who keep their word whenever they promise, remain patient in distress, and steadfast in adversity, and in their struggle against evil. It is they who have proved themselves true; and it is they who are virtuous.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ بَعْدِهَا
لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ³³⁹

Surely those who did evil out of ignorance, and, after repentance, reformed their conduct, shall find God Merciful and Gracious.

وَإِذَا جَاءَكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِنَا فَقُلْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ عَمِلَ
مِنْكُمْ سُوءًا بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَنَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ³⁴⁰

³³⁸ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2:177.

³³⁹ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-Naḥl, 16:119.

³⁴⁰ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-An'am, 6:54.

And when those who believe in our signs come to you, greet them with: Peace be upon you! Your Sustainer has prescribed for Himself the law of grace and mercy, so that if anyone of you does a bad deed out of ignorance, and thereafter repents and lives righteously, then He is Most Forgiving, Gracious.

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ دَابَّةٍ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَى بَطْنِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَى رِجْلَيْنِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَى أَرْبَعٍ يَخْلُقُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ³⁴¹

Allah created every animal from water. Some of them go upon their bellies, and some of them walk on two feet, and some of them go upon four; God creates whatever He wills; God is powerful over everything.³⁴²

خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا (...) يَخْلُقُكُمْ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ خَلْقًا مِنْ بَعْدِ خَلْقٍ فِي ظِلْمَاتٍ ثَلَاثَ دَلَكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَى تُصْرَفُونَ إِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنْكُمْ وَلَا يَرْضَى لِعِبَادِهِ الْكُفْرَ وَإِنْ تَشْكُرُوا يَرْضَهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَى ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ³⁴³

He created you from a single being, then from that being He created its mate. (...). He creates you in your mothers' wombs creation after creation (by stages) in threefold darknesses. Such is Allah your Lord; to Him belongs the sovereignty; there is no god but He; so how are you turned about? If you are unthankful, God is independent of you. Yet He approves not unthankfulness in His servants; but if you are thankful, He will approve it in you. No soul shall bear another's burden. Then to your Lord shall you return, and He will tell you what you have been doing. He knows the thoughts within the breast.³⁴⁴

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ تُؤْتِي أُكْلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ وَمَثَلُ كَلِمَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ كَشَجَرَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ اجْتُثَّتْ مِنْ فَوْقِ الْأَرْضِ مَا لَهَا مِنْ قَرَارٍ يُنَبِّئُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي

³⁴¹ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-Nūr, 24:45.

³⁴² A.J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted*, 358.

³⁴³ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-Zumr, 39:6-7.

³⁴⁴ See A.J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted*, 471-72.

الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ³⁴⁵

Do you not see how Allah sets forth a parable that a good word is like a good tree: its roots are firm and its branches are in heaven; it gives its produce every season by the leave of its Lord. So God strikes similitudes for people, so that they become mindful. And the likeness of a corrupt word is as a corrupt tree: uprooted from the earth, having no stability. Allah will strengthen the faithful with (His) steadfast Word, both in this life and the Hereafter.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ضَرْبٌ مِّثْلُ فَاستَمِعُوا لَهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَنْ يَخْلُقُوا ذُبَابًا وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا لَهُ وَإِنْ يَسْلُبْهُمُ الذُّبَابُ شَيْئًا لَا يَسْتَنْقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ضَعُفَ الطَّالِبُ وَالْمَطْلُوبُ مَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ³⁴⁶

O humankind, a similitude is struck; so give you ear to it. Surely those upon whom you call, apart from God, shall never [be able to] create a fly, though they banded together to do it; and if a fly should rob them of aught, they would never rescue it from him. Feeble indeed alike are the seeker and the sought! They measure not God with His true measure; surely God is All-strong, All-mighty.³⁴⁷

أَوَلَمْ يَرِ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُبِينٌ وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِيَ خَلْقَهُ قَالَ مَنْ يُحْيِي الْعِظَامَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا الَّذِي أَنْشَأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الشَّجَرِ الْأَخْضَرَ نَارًا فَإِذَا أَنْتُمْ مِنْهُ تُوقَدُونَ أَوَلَيْسَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِقَادِرٍ عَلَى أَنْ يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ بَلَىٰ وَهُوَ الْخَلَّاقُ الْعَلِيمُ إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ فَسُبْحَانَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ³⁴⁸

Has not man regarded how [Did not the human being ponder that] We created him from [a little life-germ in] a sperm drop? Then lo, he is a manifest adversary. And he has struck for Us a similitude and forgotten his creation; he says, ‘Who shall quicken [give life again to] the bones when they are decayed?’ Say: ‘He shall quicken them, who originated them the first time; He knows all creation, who has made for you out of the green tree fire and lo, from it you kindle.’ Is

³⁴⁵ *The Holy Qur’ān*, Sūrah Ibrahim 14:24-27..

³⁴⁶ *The Holy Qur’ān*, Sūrah al-Hajj 22:73-74.

³⁴⁷ A.J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted*, 341,42.

³⁴⁸ *The Holy Qur’ān*, Sūrah Yāsīn, 36:77-83.

not He, who created the heavens and earth, able to create the like of them? Yes indeed; He is the All-creator, the All-knowing. His command, when He desires a thing [to come into being], is to say to it 'Be,' and it is. So glory be to Him, in whose hand is the dominion of everything, and unto whom you shall be returned.³⁴⁹

أَوَلَمْ يَرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيًّا أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ³⁵⁰

Have not the unbelievers then beheld that the heavens and the earth were a mass all sewn up and then We unstitched them; and of water fashioned every thing living? Will they not believe?³⁵¹

وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ³⁵² وَالْأَرْضَ فَرَشْنَاهَا فَنِعْمَ الْمَاهِدُونَ وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ³⁵³

And heaven—We built it with might, and We extend it wide [expand it]. And the earth—We spread it forth; [behold how] excellent smoothers We are! And of everything created We two kinds [pairs];³⁵⁴ Maybe that you learn a lesson from it.

لَا تُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا³⁵⁵

We charge not any soul save to its capacity.³⁵⁶

وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْ قِطْمِيرٍ³⁵⁷ إِنْ تَدْعُهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوا دُعَاءَكُمْ وَلَوْ سَمِعُوا

³⁴⁹ A.J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted*, 455.

³⁵⁰ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-Anbi'ā 21:30.

³⁵¹ A.J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted*, 325.

³⁵² مُوسِعُونَ (Mūsī'un); from 'Isā'a, which means: to expand; to make wider, more spacious (*A Dic. of Modern Written Arabic*, p. 1067). To make or render s.th. ample, wide, spacious, roomy (*Lane's Lexicon*, 4:3053).

³⁵³ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-Dhāriyāt, 51:47-50

³⁵⁴ A.J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted*, 545.

³⁵⁵ *The Holy Qur'ān*, Sūrah al-An'am, 6:152.

³⁵⁶ A.J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted*, 140.

³⁵⁷ قِطْمِير (Qīṭmīr) means: 'the thin [film-like] skin which is upon a date-stone' (*Lane's Arabic-English Lexicon*, 4:2543). The clause thus means: 'They do not own even the thin film-like skin of a date-palm, which is quite worthless and trivial.' What a fine and complete simile!

Those whom you invoke besides Him have power over nothing. If you pray to them they cannot hear you, and even if they hear you they cannot answer you.³⁵⁹

A brief study of external evidence has also been afforded below which shows that the Holy Qur'ān is universally admitted to be sweetness in itself. Henry Stubbe asserts:

It is written in Arabic verse. (...) the language, the stile [sic.], the numbers are all so exquisite and inimitable, that Mahomet himself doth frequently urge this as the grand authentic testimony of his Apostleship, that the Alcoran doth surpass all human wit and Fancy, (...).³⁶⁰

The same author writes on the next page of his book:

The Truth is I do not find any understanding Author who controverts the Elegancy of the Alcoran, it being generally esteemed as standard of the Arabic language and eloquence.³⁶¹

George Sale is a renowned Orientalist. He has undertaken great labour to prove that the Qurān is not the word of Allah, but is the work of Muḥammad (pbAh). He translated the Holy Qur'ān (with footnotes) into English and gave it the name of 'alkoran of Muhammad'. In the beginning of it, he wrote a detailed introduction under the heading of 'The Preliminary Discourse'. One of its peculiarities is that it introduced the 'Gospel of Barnabas' to the world of knowledge for the first time. In section '3' of this introduction he was forced to pay due compliments to the impressiveness and sweetness of the Qur'ān. Here are some excerpts from this 'Preliminary Discourse':

The Koran is universally allowed to be written with the

³⁵⁸ The Holy Qur'ān, Sūrah Fāṭir, 35:13-14.

³⁵⁹ A.J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted*, 320.

³⁶⁰ Dr. Henry Stubbe, *Rise and Progress of Mahometanism* (Lahore: Orientalia, 1975), 157.

³⁶¹ Dr. Henry Stubbe, *ibid.*, 158.

utmost elegance and purity of language, in the dialect of the tribe Koreish, the most noble and polite of all the Arabians, (...). It is confessedly the standard of the Arabic tongue, (...).

And to this miracle [the Qur'ān] did Mohammed [PbAh] himself chiefly appeal for the confirmation of his mission, publicly challenging the most eloquent men in Arabia, which was at that time stocked with thousands whose sole study and ambition it was to excel in elegance of style and composition, to produce even a single chapter that might be compared with it. I will mention but one instance out of several to show that this book was really admired for the beauty of its composure by those who must be allowed to have been competent judges. A poem of Labid ibn Rabia, one of the greatest wits in Arabia in Mohammed's [pbAh] time, being fixed up on the gate of temple of Mecca, an honour allowed to none but the most esteemed performances, none of the other poets durst offer any thing of their own in competition with it. But the second chapter of the Koran being fixed up by it soon after, Labid himself (then an idolater) on reading the first verses only, was struck with admiration, and immediately professed the religion taught thereby, declaring that such words could proceed from an inspired person only. (...).

It is probable [that] the harmony of expression which the Arabians find in the Koran might contribute not a little to make them relish the doctrine therein taught, and give an efficacy to arguments which, had they been nakedly proposed without this rhetorical dress, might not have so easily prevailed. Very extra-ordinary effects are related of the power of words well chosen and artfully placed, which are no less powerful either to ravish or amaze than music itself; wherefore as much has been ascribed by the best orators to this part of rhetoric as to any other. He must have a very bad ear who is not uncommonly moved with the very cadence of a well-turned sentence; and Mohammed [pbAh] seems not to have been ignorant of the enthusiastic operation of rhetoric on the minds of men; for which reason he has not only employed his utmost skill in these his pretended revelations, to preserve

that dignity and sublimity of style which might seem not unworthy of the majesty of that Being, whom he gave out to be the author of them; and to imitate the prophetic manner of the Old Testament; but he has not neglected even the other arts of oratory; wherein he succeeded so well, and so strangely captivated the minds of his audience, that several of his opponents thought it the effect of witchcraft and enchantment, as he sometimes complains.³⁶²

Ibn Ishāq and Ibn Sa'd have recorded the event of Ṭufayl bin 'Amr Dawṣī's embracing Islām, as reported by himself. It is reproduced hereunder:

وكان طفيل بن عمرو البوسي يحدث: أنه قدم مكة ورسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بها، فمشى إليه رجلان قريش، وكان طفيل رجلاً شريفاً، شاعراً لبيباً، فقالوا له: يا طفيل، إنك قدمت بلادنا، وهذا الرجل الذي بين أظهرنا قد أعزل بنا، وقد فرق جماعتنا، وشتت أمرنا، وإنما قوله كالسحر، يفرق بين الرجل وبين أبيه، وبين الرجل وبين أخيه، وبين الرجل وبين زوجته، وإنما نخشي عليك وعلينا قومك ما قد دخل علينا، فلا تكلمنا، ولا تسمعنا منه شيئاً، قال: فوالله ما زالوا بي حتى أجمعت ألا أسمع منه شيئاً ولا أكلمه، حتى حشوت في أذني حين غدوت إلى المسجد كرسفاً فرقا من أن يبلغني شيء من قوله، وأنا لا أريد أن أسمع، قال: فغدوت إلى المسجد فإذا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قائم يصلي عند الكعبة، قال: فقمته منه قريباً، فأبى الله إلا أن يسمعي بعض قوله، قال: فسمعت كلاماً حسناً، قال: فقلت في نفسي: وإتكل أمي، والله إن لرجل لبيب شاعر ما يخفي علي الحسن من القبيح، فما بمنعني أن أسمع من هذا الرجل ما يقول؟ فإن كان الذي يأتي به حسناً قبلته، وإن كان قبيحاً تركته. قال: فمكثت حتى انصرف رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى بيته، فاتبعته حتى إذا دخل بيته دخلت عليه، فقلت: يا محمد، إن قومك قد قالوا لي كذا وكذا، للذي قالوا، فوالله ما برحوا يخوفوني أمرك حتى سددت أذني بكرسف لئلا أسمع قولك، ثم أبى الله إلا أن يسمعي قولك، فسمعت قولاً حسناً، فاعرض علي أمرك، قال: فعرض علي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الإسلام، وتلا علي القرآن، فلا والله ما سمعت قولاً قط أحسن منه، ولا أمراً أعدل منه، قال: فأسلمت، وشهدت شهادة الحق،³⁶³

Leaving aside some of the details, the essence of the above statement is being afforded hereunder:

I was the poet of the tribe of Daws. I went to Makkah for some task. When I reached there some people from the tribe of Quraysh gathered around me. They tried their best to provoke me against the Prophet of Islām. Consequently, I grew much disillusioned with him. I determined not to come across him and to avoid him. The second day I visited the

³⁶² George Sale, 'The Preliminary Discourse' to *Alkoran of Mohamed* (London: Fredrick Warn and Co.), 47f.

³⁶³ Ibn Hishām, *al-Sirat al-Nabawiyyah* (Beirūt: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2001), 176.

sanctuary (Ḥaram Sharīf). I found the Prophet (pbAh) saying prayer near the Ka‘bah. Some sentences happened to enter my ears. The words were exceedingly sweet and impressive. I said to myself I am an established poet. I am a reasonable and sensible young man. I am not a child that I may not distinguish between right and wrong. There is no logic in avoiding him. I must see him and ask him what he asserts. Therefore I followed him when he turned back after saying his prayer. When he reached home, I said, (...), please tell me in detail what you preach. In response to it the Prophet (pbAh) recited to me some verses from the Quran. I was so moved with it that I entered the fold of Islām at once.

There are a number of instances of the impressiveness of the beautiful style of the speech of the Prophet (pbAh) and the words of the Holy Qur’ān. This is rather the sole source of the expansion and diffusion of Islām. Only one more event is being afforded here to elaborate the theme further:

قال ابن إسحاق عن محمد بن كعب القرظي قال: حدثت أن عتبة بن ربيعة، وكان سيداً قال يوماً وهو جالس في نادي قريش، ورسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم جالس في المسجد وحده: يا معشر قريش، الا اقوم إلي محمد فأكلمه وأعرض عليه أموراً، لعله يقبل بعضها، فعطية أيها شاء ويكف عنا، وذلك حين أسلم حمزة، ورواها أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يزيدون ويكثرون، فقالوا: بلى يا أبا الوليد، قم إليه فكلمه، فقام إليه عتبة حتى جلس إلي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال: يا ابن أخي، إنك منا حيث قد علمت، (...) وإنك قد أتيت قومك بأمر عظيم فرقت به جماعتهم، وسفهت به أحلامهم، وعبت به آلتهم ودينهم، وكفرت به من مضى من آياتهم، فأتع مني أعرض عليك أموراً تنظر فيها لعلك تقبل منها بعضها، قال: فقال له رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: قل يا أبا الوليد، أسمع، قال: يا ابن أخي، إن كنت إنما تريد بما جئت به من هذا الأمر مالاً جمعنا لك من أموالنا حتى تكون أكثرنا مالا، وإن كنت إنما تريد به شرفاً سودناك علينا حتى لا نقطع أمراً دونك، وإن كنت تريد به ملكاً ملكناك علينا، وإن كان هذا الذي يأتيتك رتباً تراه لا تستطيع رده عن نفسك طلبنا لك الطلب وبلدنا فيه أموالنا حتى نبرئك منه، (...) قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: أقدم فرغت يا أبا الوليد؟ قال: نعم، قال: فاستمع مني، قال: أفعل، فقال: بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم حم تزييل من الرحمن الرحيم (...) <فصلت> ثم مضى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فيها يقرأها عليه، فلما سمعها منه عتبة أنصت لها، والتي يديه خلف ظهره معتمداً عليهما يسمع منه، ثم انتهى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى السجدة منها فسجد، ثم قال: قد سمعت يا أبا الوليد ما سمعت، فأنت وذاك، فقام عتبة إلى أصحابه، فقال بعضهم لبعض: نخلف بالله لقد جاءكم أبو الوليد بغير الوجه الذي ذهب به، فلما جلس إليهم قالوا: ما وراك يا أبا الوليد؟ قال: ورائي أبي قد سمعت قولاً والله ما سمعت مثله قط، والله ما هو بالشعر، ولا بالسحر، ولا بالكهانة، يا معشر قريش أطيعوني، (...) فاعتزلوه، فوالله ليكون لقوله الذي سمعت منه نبأ عظيم، (...) قالوا: سحرك والله يا أبا الوليد بلسانه، قال: هذا رأيي فيه، فاصنعوا ما بدا لكم.³⁶⁴

³⁶⁴ Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawiyyah*, 133f.

Once some Qurayshite chiefs were sitting in the sanctuary of Makkah. The Apostle of Allah (pbAh) was also sitting there alone in a corner of the sanctuary. It relates to that time of the Islāmic movement when Ḥamzah had embraced Islām and the worries of the Qurayshites were growing to see the numbers of the Muslims increasing day by day. At this stage ‘Utbah bin Rabī‘ah (Abū Sufyān’s father-in-law) suggested to the chiefs of Quraysh that if they liked he might go to Muḥammad [pbAh] and put forward some proposals before him. Perhaps he might accept one of them, which be acceptable for the Qurayshites as well. In this way he may give up our opposition. All of them agreed to it and said, ‘Abū al-Walīd, do go, please, and negotiate with him.’ ‘Utbah stood up and came to the Prophet. He said, ‘Dear nephew, you are fully aware of the honour you enjoyed among us. What this great trouble have you brought to your tribe? You have caused disunity in the nation. You consider all the wise people of the tribe to be stupid. You maligned and reviled the religion and the gods of the people. You pronounced that all our deceased ancestors had been infidel. Now please listen to me. I put some proposals before you. Please consider them. Maybe you find some of them agreeable.’ Allah’s Apostle (pbAh) said, ‘Abū al-Walīd, come forward with your proposals, I’ll attend to them.’ ‘Utbah said, ‘Dear nephew, if you intend to collect wealth through your this campaign, we are ready to give you so much wealth that you will become the wealthiest person among us. If you want to earn respect and honour for you through this movement, we are ready to accept you our chief leader and will not settle any of our affairs without you. If you wish to become a king, we make you our king. If some evil spirit or demon has got hold of you and you actually see something (while asleep or awake); and you are unable to get rid of it on your own, we would call for some competent physicians at our own expense and arrange your treatment. ‘Utbah went on talking and the Prophet would listen to him silently. Then he said, ‘Abū al-Walīd, have you conveyed whatever you wanted to say?’ He said, ‘Yes, (that’s all).’ The Prophet (pbAh) said, ‘Now please listen to me.’ He said, ‘OK, I’ll do.’ Reciting ‘Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm’ [In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the Merciful] the

Prophet (pbAh) recited Sūrah Hā Mīm al-Sajdah [No xli of the Qur'ān]. With his hands on the ground behind him, 'Utbah listened to it attentively. On reaching the verse of Sajdah the Prophet (pbAh) fell in Sajdah [prostration]. Then raising his head from the ground he said, 'Abū al-Walīd, you have heard my reply [that's all what I had to say]. Now do what you deem fit.' 'Utbah stood up and rolled towards the Qurayshite chiefs. Seeing him coming from a distance the people said, 'By God, 'Utbah's countenance is changed. This is not the face with which he had gone.' When he came to them and had his seat the people said, 'What is at the bottom of it?' He said, 'By God, I heard such a speech, as I had never heard before. By God, this is neither poetry, nor magic or soothsaying. O people of Quraysh, concede to my advice (...) and leave him to himself. I think these teachings, which I heard from him, will bear fruit.' (...). No sooner did the Qurayshite chiefs hear this proposal than they cried out, 'Father of Walīd, subsequently his magic has worked upon you.' 'Utbah said, 'I have put my opinion before you. Now do whatever you deem fit.'

Sayyid Abū'l A'lā Mawdūdī further explains:

Bayhaqī has added in the traditions that have been collected by him that when the Prophet (pbAh) reached verse 13 [But if they turn away, then say: I warn you of a scourge like the scourge of 'Ād and Thamūd. (xli:13)], 'Utbah spontaneously put his hand on the Prophet's (pbAh) mouth and requested him on the basis of kinship, 'Muḥammad [PbAh], please don't say so.' When his people asked him about his this act, he said, 'You know that when Muḥammad (pbAh) says something it does not prove to be untrue. That's why I felt afraid of the punishment.'³⁶⁵

The event of 'Umar bin Khaṭṭāb's embracing Islām is also an explicit example of the captivating force of the Qur'ān.

The book of Allah presented by Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), the Holy Qur'ān, is a living miracle as to its matchless beauty of style, its impressive words, its rhetoric,

³⁶⁵ Sayyid Abū'l A'lā Mawdūdī, *Sirat-e-Sarwar-e- 'Ālam*, 2:518.

revolutionariness, and comprehensiveness for all times to come. The real force and cadence of the composition of its verses and themes can only be experienced and appreciated by someone who listens it being recited with its sweet symphonic sound while, at the same time, understanding its themes. In addition to it, the easy, brief, and compact sayings of the holy Prophet (pbAh) are also unique in impressiveness, rhetoric, wisdom, and sweetness. On the other hand the words of Jesus Christ (pbAh) are not to be found on the face of earth that someone may reckon their sweetness, beauty of style or impressiveness. Whatever one finds in the NT of the Bible, is not the original Aramaic word of Jesus Christ (pbAh). The original words of Jesus Christ (pbAh) were never recorded and published in black and white in the Aramaic language, in which he had delivered them. The Gospels that one finds in the 'New Testament of the Bible' today, are the composition of some oral traditions regarding Jesus' life by some almost unidentified persons. Moreover, they were written in the Greek language from the very beginning. They had never been recorded in the language in which they were originally revealed to Jesus or delivered by him. As such it can be safely asserted that the words 'his mouth is most sweet' can by no stretch of sense be applied to the gospels which are by no means the word of Jesus Christ (pbAh). It is only Prophet Muhammad (pbAh) at whom the words 'his mouth is most sweet' pertinently apply.

HE IS EXACTLY
MUḤAMMAD [pbAh] THE MAGNIFICENT

The next clause of the verse is:

וכלו מחמדים (ו כ ל ו + מ ח מ ד י מ = הו כלה محمد يم)

Pronunciation: 'Wa kullu Muḥammadīm' (Arabic: huwa kulluhu Muḥammadīm [Muḥammad the Magnificent]). KJV has translated it as: 'He is altogether lovely.'

The English word 'altogether' of the clause stands for the Hebrew word 'כל' (k+l, i.e. Kull), which means:

From 3634: the whole; (in) all manner, altogether, whatsoever.³⁶⁶

Entry No. 3634 means:

To *complete*:- (make) perfect.³⁶⁷

The next word is 'lovely' which, according to the Revised Standard Version, is 'desirable'. In Hebrew it is 'חמדים' (M+Ḥ+M+D+I+M). *Strong's Dic* records the meanings of 'חמדים' (m+ḥ+m+d) as:

From 2530; delightful; hence a delight, i.e. object of affection or desire:- beloved, desire, goodly, lovely, pleasant.³⁶⁸ [And entry No. 2530 is: (ḥ+m+d): a prim. Root; to delight in;- beauty, greatly beloved, covet (desire eagerly); delectable (delightful, pleasant) thing, delight, desire,

³⁶⁶ Strong's *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 3605; p. 55.

³⁶⁷ Strong's *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 3634; p. 55.

³⁶⁸ Strong's *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 4261; p. 64.

pleasant, precious³⁶⁹].

First of all, it is to be noted that it is the sole place in the whole of the Hebrew Bible where this word 'מְהִמְדִּים' (M-H-M-D-I-M) has been used in its present form and has nowhere else been used in the Bible in this form.

Secondly, the Hebrew word consists of six letters (m-ḥ-m-d-i-m). The last two letters (i-m) stand for plurality. But this plurality does not denote the plurality of number; it denotes the plurality for majesty and honour. The word 'Elohim' (the Lord, God) is a very pertinent and relevant example of it. It is a well-known fact that the people of this book, the Jews, are monotheist people and they believe in the unity of God. Its singular form, Eloha, is also used, but generally they use the plural form of the word (Elohim) as a gesture of majesty and honour. This is not the sole example of the plural of majesty or grandeur. There are examples in the Bible where this suffix has been used with the words other than 'God' as well. The preceding clause of this very verse (his mouth is 'most sweet') is another example of it. Here the Hebrew word for 'most sweet' is 'מִמִּתְקִים' (mamittaḳim), which is the plural of 'mamittaḳ' and means 'plural of sweet: sweets'. It has been rendered as 'most sweet' by the translators of the Bible, which denotes the grandeur of quality and not the plurality of number. It indicates that 'His utterance (mouth) bears every kind of sweetness and beauty in the most perfect form.' There are examples of a number of names of places which have been given in the Bible in the plural or dual form, whereas they stand for singular places, e. g. Mt. Gerizim, Mizraim, etc. The translators of the Bible use singular verbs and pronouns in these instances. In most of the cases where this plural form is used for majesty or grandeur, it is used in singular sense and takes singular verbs or pronouns. The same is the case here. No translator of the Bible has translated this clause as 'they are altogether lovely (Mḥmdim)'. They have rather rendered it as 'he is

³⁶⁹ Strong's *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 2530; p. 40.

altogether lovely' which means 'He is altogether Muḥammad [pbAh] the Magnificent, Muḥammad [pbAh] the Great, or Muḥammad [pbAh] the Choicest [among ten thousand, as indicated in the first verse of this passage]'. It is out of the love and respect of Solomon [pbAh] for this 'M-ḥ-m-d' that he uses a plural of majesty for him. The reason of his love and respect will be given later in this book (at the end of Chapter XIV).

Thirdly, under entry 2530, *Strong's Dic.* describes that its primary root is 'ḥmd'. 'Muḥammad' (pbAh) is an adjectival passive participle from this root, which means 'Object of love and praise and liking'. Of course it is a meaningful word, but here it has been used as a proper noun. It is a common practice in the Bible that most of its proper nouns are meaningful words as well. It is the context that ascertains whether the word has been used as a proper noun or as a meaningful word.

In the passage under study, Solomon (pbAh) describes attributes of his beloved: he is beautiful; he is powerful; he has such and such attributes; he belongs to Arabia; his speech or the utterance of his mouth is most sweet; etc. The listener would now naturally like to know his proper identity. That's why Solomon (pbAh) tells them 'he is by all means Muḥammad (pbAh) the Magnificent [about whom I have already told you that he is the inhabitant of Arabia and is from among my cousins through the seed of Ishmā'el (pbAh)].'

Fourthly, Muḥammad (pbAh) being a meaningful word, the Prophet of Islām (pbAh) is out and out Muḥammad (pbAh) in true sense of the word. Its meanings in Hebrew have been given above. In Arabic as well it has similar meanings. Edward W. Lane has given its meanings as: 'To approve; to be such as is praised, commended, and approved'.³⁷⁰

He explains the word 'Muḥammad' (pbAh) as:

³⁷⁰ Edward W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, (Beirut: Librairie Du Liban, 1968), 2:638-40.

A man praised much, or repeatedly, or time after time:
(L.K.) endowed with many praiseworthy qualities.³⁷¹

Fifthly, some prominent Christian commentators of the Bible apply the words ‘He is altogether lovely/desirable’ to Jesus Christ. *The Pulpit Commentary* asserts:

Ver. 16. ‘Altogether lovely [וכלו מהמדים (w+kull+u M+h+m+d+i+m)].’ We apply these words to the Lord Jesus Christ, and affirm that they are true of him [stress added]. (...) but Christ is the Beloved of all ages.³⁷²

You ‘*apply these words to the Lord Jesus Christ, and affirm that they are true of him.*’ But on what ground? The words, spoken by Solomon (pbAh) in Hebrew, pronounce: ‘wa kullu Muḥammadim (this is the pronunciation of the Hebrew words ‘וכלו מהמדים’).’ They mean: ‘He is altogether Muḥammad (pbAh) the Great and Magnificent’. To whom an impartial listener would apply these words: to Muḥammad (pbAh) or to Jesus Christ (pbAh)? It is, moreover, to be noted that Solomon (pbAh) had just narrated the attributes of his ‘praised one’ in this passage in a fair detail which exclusively and explicitly apply to Muḥammad (pbAh) only and not to Jesus Christ (pbAh) in any way. Moreover, Solomon (pbAh) had used this word in the plural of majesty: ‘Muḥammadim’ which denotes the Great, Noble, and Magnificent Muḥammad (pbAh) to show his profound love and respect for this person.

Sixthly, the word ‘Muḥammadim’ (in the plural form for majesty) has been used only once in the entire OT of the Bible. Besides this, it has been used in the Hebrew Bible for nine times as a derivative of ‘חמד’ (ḥ+m+d). At all these nine places it has been used in singular form and as an adjective or a noun. All these nine places are mentioned below. It has neither been used with the sign of plurality ‘im’; nor it indicates a proper noun at any of these places:

³⁷¹ E. W. Lane, *Arab-Eng Lexicon*, 2:638-40.

³⁷² *The Pulpit Commentary* portion on ‘The Song of Solomon’ (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co Ltd, 1897), 133.

(...) and it shall be, *that* whatsoever is pleasant [obviously it is a meaningful word here and has been used as an adjective] in thine eyes, they shall put *it* in their hand, and take *it* away³⁷³

Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire; and all our pleasant [obviously it is (...) an adj.] things are laid waste.³⁷⁴

Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries all her pleasant [obviously, here also, it is (...) an adj.] things that she had in the days of old.³⁷⁵

I take away from thee the desire [used as a meaningful word (as a noun)] of thine eyes with a stroke.³⁷⁶

Behold, I will profane my sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, the desire [used here also as an abstract noun] of your eyes.³⁷⁷

when I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory, the desire [used here also as a noun] of their eyes.³⁷⁸

the pleasant [used as an adj.] places for their silver,³⁷⁹

yet will I slay even the beloved [used here also as an adj.]

³⁷³ KJV-1Kgs 20:6. It may be noted here that it can by no means be taken as a proper noun in this context. If it be taken to indicate a proper noun, it would make no sense. Obviously it can only be taken in the sense of 'good' or 'desirable', etc. in this context.

³⁷⁴ Isa 64:11 KJV. The similar case as above.

³⁷⁵ Lam I:7 KJV (and also 1:10: 'The adversary hath spread out his hand upon all her pleasant things' and 1:11: 'They have given their pleasant [the Hebrew word used here is 'Maḥmūd' (see *Strong's* entry No. 4262, p. 64)] things for meat to relieve the soul'). The similar case as above.

³⁷⁶ Eze 24:16 KJV. The similar case as above.

³⁷⁷ Eze 24:21 KJV. The similar case as above.

³⁷⁸ Eze 24:25 KJV. The similar case as above.

³⁷⁹ Hosea 9:6 KJV. The similar case as above.

fruit of their womb.³⁸⁰

Because ye have (...) carried into your temples my goodly
pleasant [used here also as an adj.] things.³⁸¹

At all these nine places the Hebrew spellings of this word are ‘מִחְמַד’ (M+Ḥ+M+D). It can be pronounced either as: (i) ‘Maḥmad’³⁸²; or (ii) ‘Muḥammad’. The primary root of all these three words is ‘ח־מ־ד’ (ḥ+m+d), whose meanings have been noted on the first page of this chapter³⁸³.

In the passage of the ‘Song’ under discussion here, Solomon (pbAh), after giving fairly detailed attributes of his beloved from his uncle ancestor (Ishmā‘el)’s progeny, pronounces his actual proper name ‘Muḥammad+im’, (Muḥammad (pbAh) the Magnificent) which, according to the unvocalized consonantal alphabet, was inevitably to be written as ‘M+Ḥ+M+D+im’. When there genuinely and physically exists an exact application of this word, it is misleading to translate this proper noun or to apply it to Jesus Christ (pbAh).

The application of the vocalization system to the text of the Bible has been discussed in Appendix-I.

³⁸⁰ Hosea 9:16 KJV. The similar case as above.

³⁸¹ Joel 3:5 KJV. The similar case as above.

³⁸² Strong’s *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 4261; p. 64.

³⁸³ Strong’s *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 2530; p. 40.

MY BELOVED MY FRIEND

The next part of this verse No. 16 is:

זה דודי וזה רעי (זה + ד ודי + ו + זה + ר ע י)

This is my beloved, and this is my friend,

The Heb. word which has been translated here as ‘beloved’, is ‘דוד’ (dod). *Strong’s Dic.* explains it as:

Lover, friend, spec. an uncle, beloved, father’s brother, uncle.³⁸⁴

It shows that the ‘beloved Muḥammadim’, whom King Solomon (pbAh) is mentioning here, does not belong to his real brothers, i. e. the Israelites. He rather belongs to Israel (Jacob)’s (pbAh) uncle Ishmā‘el (pbAh). The Israelites have applied it to Jesus Christ (pbAh) without any ground, but he can by no means be called an uncle from the paternal side, as he was not from the seed of any man. He was miraculously born without any father whatsoever. As to his maternal side as well he cannot be called Solomon’s dod (uncle or cousin), firstly, because his mother, the Virgin Mary, was not from the seed of any of Solomon’s uncles, but was from the direct lineage of King Solomon (see Mt, chapter i; Lk 3:23-38); and secondly, because the word can only be applied to ‘father’s brother’ and cannot be applied to ‘mother’s brother’. In this way King Solomon (pbAh) made his statement more clear by saying that my this ‘beloved’ is not a stranger to me, he is rather my cousin. If Solomon (pbAh) had intended to point to some of his friends, he should have used the word ‘אהב’ (’ahab) here, which

³⁸⁴ Strong’s *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 1730; p. 30.

means:

Love; beloved; lovely; friend.³⁸⁵

But the more pertinent Heb. word would have been 'ידיד' (yedeed), whose feminine is 'ידידה' (yedeedeh), both of which are from the same primary root as 'dod' and, according to *Strong's Dic.* these words mean:

Loved, amiable, beloved, an Israelite or Israelitess'.³⁸⁶

Had Solomon's 'beloved' been from the Israelite lineage, he must have used the word 'ידיד' (yedeed) and not 'דוד' (dod). But he has intentionally, scrupulously, cautiously, and precisely used the proper word 'דוד' (dod), which exclusively means a cousin from the line of father's brother and not a brother from the real father's side.

The last word of this clause is 'friend', which is one of the most important and decisive words of this prophecy. The Hebrew word used for it by King Solomon is 'רע' or 'ריע' (rea' or reya'). According to *Strong's Dic.* it means:

7453. From 7462; an associate (more or less close); companion, fellow, lover, neighbour, another.³⁸⁷

No. 7462 'רעה' (ra'ah), referred to in entry 7453, means:

A prim. Root, to tend a flock, generally to rule, to associate with (as a friend), companion, herdman shepherd.³⁸⁸

The *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT* has also recorded, inter alia, its meanings as:

Comrade, companion, neighbour, someone's colleague, neighbour with a shared boundary, another.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁵ Strong's *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 157; p. 9.

³⁸⁶ Strong's *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 3039, 40; p. 47.

³⁸⁷ Strong's *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 7453, 40; p. 109.

³⁸⁸ Strong's *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 7462, 40; p. 109.

³⁸⁹ *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT*, ed. M. E. J. Richardson (Leiden: Brill: 2001), 1:1254.

In this way King Solomon (pbAh) makes his this prophecy more clear. He explains that his this friend is:

- i) His Comrade, companion, and colleague (Muḥammadim) is an apostle, a prophet, and a king like him (Solomon). It may be borne in mind here that Jesus Christ had never been a king in worldly terms.
- ii) He (Muḥammadim) does not belong to his (Solomon's) own land, Canaan, but he is from his neighbouring country with shared boundary, i. e. Arabia, which is the ground reality without any doubt. On the contrary, Jesus was his country-fellow and cannot be called his neighbour with shared boundary.
- iii) He (Muḥammadim) is his associate in prophethood; but at the same time he is not from the lineage of Israel, because:
- iv) He (Muḥammadim) is 'רֵיעַ' (reya') 'another', i.e. he is an Ishmā'elite, whereas Jesus Christ was an Israelite and cannot be attributed as 'another'. Had Solomon meant to mention Jesus, he would have used the word 'יָדִיד' (yedeed), i.e. 'an Israelite beloved'.
- v) He (Muḥammadim) is a ruler (according to the meanings recorded in *Strong's Dic.*, entry 7462), whereas Christ had never been a ruler in worldly terms.
- vi) He (Muḥammadim) had also remained a herdman or shepherd (at his early age) whereas Jesus Christ had never been a shepherd or herdman. He can hardly be claimed to be other than a carpenter.³⁹⁰

All these qualities can truly be applied only to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh).

To sum up and recapitulate the theme of the chapter, it is to be remarked that King Solomon (pbAh) has used here two words for his beloved 'Muḥammadim' (pbAh). The first

³⁹⁰ W. Smith, *A Dic. of the Bible*, p. 308 explains:

Jesus no doubt learned the carpenter's trade of his reputed father Joseph, and, as Joseph probably died before Jesus began his public ministry, he may have contributed to the support of his mother.

word is 'דוד' (dod), which shows that Solomon's (pbAh) this beloved does not belong to the direct progeny of Abraham's (pbAh) son Isaac (pbAh), who is the forefather of Israelites. He rather belongs to the progeny of Ishmā'el (pbAh), who is Abraham's (pbAh) first-born son and Isaac's (pbAh) elder brother, and, as such, the 'uncle ancestor' of Solomon (pbAh).

The second word used by Solomon (pbAh) is 'רֵעַ or רֵיעַ' (rea' or reya'), which has been translated as 'friend'. It indicates that Solomon's 'Muḥammadim' is his 'comrade (prophet), a shepherd, a neighbour with a shared boundary, and does not belong directly to his own family (Israelites). He is rather an 'other', i.e. a non-Israelite'.

Had Solomon (pbAh) intended that this 'Muḥammadim' related directly to his own family of 'Israelites', he would have used the proper word 'יָדִיד' (yedeed) at this place, and had this 'Muḥammadim' been a quite stranger, having no relation whatsoever, he would have used the proper word of 'אָהָב' ('ahab) for him.

The use of meticulously applied proper words 'דוד' (dod) and 'רֵעַ' (rea') make it abundantly clear that the King and Prophet Solomon (pbAh) meant to mention here that his beloved 'Muḥammadim' (pbAh) is neither an Israelite nor quite alien and stranger to him. He is from the progeny of his uncle ancestor Ishmā'el (pbAh) and belongs to Arabia, which is a neighbouring country to his own motherland Canaan having a shared boundary. In this way he has made it clear with quite minute details that the object of his this prophecy is none other than Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh).

Now there remains only the following last phrase of the prophecy which is to be explored in the next chapter:

O daughters of Jerusalem.

Chapter-XIV

DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM

The last words of this prophecy are:

כנות ירושלים

O daughters of Jerusalem

The word ‘daughters’ here obviously means ‘citizens or inhabitants; whether male or female’.

As regards the original Hebrew word for the next word ‘Jerusalem’, it is ‘yer-oo-shaw-lah-yim’ (ירושלים). *Strong’s Dic.* explains it as follows:

yer-oo-shaw-lah-yim A dual (in allusion to its two main hills); *founded peaceful; Jerushalaīm* or *Jerushalem*, the capital city of Palestine, Jerusalem.³⁹¹

Hastings Dic. of Bible has recorded a scholarly research on this word. It says:

Various translations of the name have been proposed, (...), but these discussions are superseded by the discovery of letters from an early ruler of Jerusalem. (Tel-el-Amerna collection), which show not only that the name existed before the Hebrew conquest of Palestine, but also that its meaning (as spelt U-ru-sa-lem and URU- sa-lim) is ‘city of Salim,’ or ‘city of peace’, which agrees with the rendering by Jesenius, ‘abode of peace’. (...), and the word Sa-lem is elsewhere found in the Tel-el-Amerna letters with the meaning of peace. (...) the monumental spelling favours the view that the city may have been first called Salem only; but it is not doubtful that it was called

³⁹¹ Strong’s *Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 3389; p. 52.

Jerusalem as early as the time of Joshua.³⁹²

It thus becomes clear that Jerusalem stands for ‘City of peace’ or ‘abode of peace’, which, in Arabic language is ‘al-Balad al-Amīn’ or ‘Dār al-Salām’. But it should be noted here that the word used in the Bible at this place is not Jerusalem, i.e. in singular number; it is rather ‘ירושלים’ (yer-oo-shaw-lah-yim) in dual number, implying two Jerusalems, for which the *Strong’s Dic.* arbitrarily claims to be ‘in allusion to its two main hills’. It is as if to say that the phrase ‘two eggs’ means only one egg in allusion to its two parts: its yoke and its white (albumen). It can thus be appreciated that as the phrase ‘two eggs’ stands for two different eggs and not for two parts within one egg; in the same way the phrase ‘two Jerusalems’ would mean two different Jerusalems or two different cities with the name Jerusalem (city of Peace or ‘al-Balad al-Amīn’); and not two hills in one Jerusalem. It thus signifies that King Solomon (pbAh) is telling the citizens of both the abodes or cities of Peace, bearing the same name of ‘Jerusalem’, that his beloved of the progeny of his uncle Ishmā‘el (pbAh) belongs to his neighbouring country, Arabia, and he is none other than Muḥammad (pbAh).

Let us now consider what the phrase ‘two Jerusalems’ actually signifies. The Israelites are well-acquainted with the Jerusalem (City of peace) of Canaan, which relates to them. But where is the second Jerusalem (City of peace, or in Arabic ‘al-Balad al-Amīn’)? Its answer is unequivocally recorded in the N T of the Bible. It says:

Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.³⁹³

It means that, according to Paul, the ‘City of peace’ of the

³⁹² C. R. Conder in *J. Hasting’s Dic. of the Bible*, (1903), 2:583.

³⁹³ Galatians 4:24-26 RSV.

Israelites is Jerusalem; whereas the ‘City of peace’ of the Ishmā‘elites is Makkah, which, in Arabic, is called ‘al-Balad al-Amīn’³⁹⁴

As far as the Jerusalem (City of peace, or in Arabic ‘al-Balad al-Amīn’) of the Ishmā‘elites (Makkah, which, in the Holy Qur’ān, is named as ‘al-Balad al-Amīn’) is concerned, students of history know it well that it has always remained a ‘City of peace’. Even Abraha al-Ashram, the king of Yemen, who invaded the city with elephants to destroy the Ka‘bah, could not harm it.

As far as the Jerusalem (‘City of peace’) of the Israelites is concerned, a brief account of its destructions is afforded hereunder from the *Illustrated Bible Dic*:

As early as the 5th year of Solomon’s successor Rehoboam, the Temple and royal palace were plundered by Egyptian troops (1Ki. 14:25f.). Philistine and Arab Marauders again plundered the palace in Jehoram’s reign. In Amaziah’s reign a quarrel with the king of the N kingdom, Jehoash, resulted in part of the city walls being broken down, and fresh looting of Temple and palace. (...). Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon captured Jerusalem in 597 and in 587 BC, destroyed the city and Temple. At the end of that century the Jews, now under Persian rule, were allowed to return to their land and city, and they rebuilt the Temple, but the city walls remained in ruins until Nehemiah restored them in the middle of the 5th century BC. (...). In about 168 BC, Antiochus IV entered Jerusalem, destroying its walls and plundering and desecrating the Temple; (...). Roman Generals forced their way into the city in 63 and 54; a Parthian army plundered in 40 [BC]; and three years after that Herod the Great had to fight his way into it, to take control. He first had to repair the damage created by these various incursions; then he launched a big building programme, erecting some notable towers. (...). The Jewish revolt against the Romans in AD 66 could have but one conclusion; in AD 70 the Roman General Titus systematically forced his way

³⁹⁴ The Holy Qur’an, al-Tin, 95:3.

into Jerusalem, and destroyed the fortifications and the Temple. (...). This is, of course, partly due to the periodical disasters and destructions, and to the layers upon the layers of rubble that have piled up over the centuries.³⁹⁵

So this Canaanite Jerusalem having been destroyed and plundered for more than ten times cannot be assigned the name 'Jerusalem' in true sense of the word.

The calamities of Jerusalem were not without reason. The Israelites had worked hard to deserve it. Some of the relevant excerpts are afforded hereunder which show that they 'rebelled' against the Lord; they had 'forsaken' Him, they had 'provoked to anger the Holy One of Israel', and they were sinful people. Isaiah says:

Hear O heavens, and give ear, O earth! For the Lord has spoken: 'I have nourished and brought up children, and they rebelled against Me; The ox knows its owner And the donkey its master's crib [manger]; but Israel does not know, my people do not consider.' Alas, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a breed of evildoers, children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked to anger the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away backward.³⁹⁶

Jeremiah foretold the destruction of Jerusalem as follows:

Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem; see now and know; and seek in her open places if you can find a man, if there is *anyone* who executes judgment, who seeks the truth, and I will pardon her. (...). Therefore a lion from the forest shall slay them, a wolf of the deserts shall destroy them; a leopard will watch over their cities. Everyone who goes out from there shall be torn in pieces, because their transgressions are many; their backslides have increased. 'How shall I pardon you for this? Your children have forsaken Me and sworn by *those that are* not gods. When I had fed them to the full, then they committed adultery and

³⁹⁵ *The Illustrated Bible Dic.*, ed. Mary Gladstone, etc., (Inter-Varsity Press, 1980), 2:755,56,57.

³⁹⁶ Isa I:2-4 NKJV.

assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. They were *like* well-fed lusty stallions; everyone neighed after his neighbor's wife. Shall I not punish *them* for these *things*?' says the Lord. 'And shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this? Go up on her walls and destroy, (...). For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously with Me,'³⁹⁷

Micah predicted the destruction of Jerusalem as a result of their crimes in the following words:

Yet they lean on the Lord, and say, 'Is not the Lord among us? No harm can come upon us.' Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed *like* a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, and the mountain of the temple *like* the bare hills of the forest.³⁹⁸

The destruction was recorded by II-Kings as below:

Therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel: Behold, I am bringing *such* calamity upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle³⁹⁹. And I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab; I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. So I will forsake the remnants of My inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become victims of plunder to all their enemies.⁴⁰⁰

Ezekiel Had warned about it in the following words:

This is Jerusalem; (...). She has rebelled against my judgments by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against my statutes more than the countries that are all around her.⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁷ Jeremiah 5:1,6-11 NKJV.

³⁹⁸ Micah 3:11f NKJV.

³⁹⁹ 'Tingle' means: 'to have a slight pricking, stinging or throbbing feeling in the skin'.

⁴⁰⁰ II Kgs 21:12-14 NKJV.

⁴⁰¹ Ezek 5:5f NKJV.

The sanctity and peace of Jerusalem had been destroyed so many times that the application of the word Jerusalem (City of peace) to it becomes a mockery. And they aptly deserved this destruction due to their wickedness, for which their prophets had been warning them. Solomon (pbAh) had well depicted their character in the initial verses of this very chapter of the ‘Songs’ which shows their carelessness:

I sleep, but my heart is awake; *it is* the voice of my beloved! He knocks, *saying*, ‘Open for me, (...).’ I have taken off my robe; how can I put it on *again*? I have washed my feet; how can I defile them? My beloved put his hand by the latch *of the door*, and my heart yearned for him. I arose to open for my beloved, and my hands dripped *with* myrrh, my fingers with liquid myrrh, on the handles of the lock. I opened for my beloved, but my beloved had turned away *and* was gone. My heart leaped up when he spoke. I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him but he gave me no answer. The watchmen who went about the city found me. They struck me, they wounded me; the keepers of the wall took my veil away from me. I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that you tell him I am lovesick!⁴⁰²

But it is useless to cry over spilt milk. No friends (the daughters of Jerusalem) can restore her beloved to her. Now one can only lament over her misbehaviour towards her beloved in the following words:

You did not care when he was calling you. You disappointed him with your cold response and indifferent attitude. Now you deserve all kinds of maltreatment at the hands of the watchmen. Now don’t blame anyone; but blame yourself. You yourself are responsible for all your miseries and destructions!

This is the fate of the security of the so-called ‘City of Peace’. Israel herself caused the desecration of the holy city. She could not guard the sanctity of her Jerusalem. But there is another Jerusalem of Arabia. It is Jerusalem (City

⁴⁰² Song of Songs 5:2-8 NJKV.

of peace) in true sense of word. Nobody was allowed to capture it for destruction and plunder. It remained a 'City of peace' forever.

Solomon (pbAh) addresses the inhabitants of both these Jerusalems (the Israelites and the Ishmā'elites) to be cautious, conscious, and alert to welcome the apostle of Allah (pbAh) who is his Ishmā'elite cousin. There is a message in it for his Israelite brothers not to show callousness towards this apostle from the progeny of Ishmā'el (pbAh), for whom they had been anxiously waiting, as is evident from the questions they asked Jesus; and not to behave like the Israelite damsel who did not open to her beloved when he was calling her, but when he went away she repented.

The love, respect, and gratitude of King Solomon (pbAh) for his beloved Ishmā'elite cousin was not without reason. His Israelite brothers had attached a lot of blasphemy, religious and moral turpitude and had indulged in his character assassination. Here is an excerpt from *W. Smith's Dic. of Bible*:

And the King soon fell from the loftiest height of his religious life to the lowest depth. Before long the priests and prophets had to grieve over rival temples to Molech, Chemash, Ashtroth, and forms of ritual not idolatrous only, but cruel, dark, impure. This evil came as the penalty of another. 1Kings 11:1-8. He gave himself to 'strange women.' He found himself involved in a fascination which led to the worship of strange gods. (...). With this there may have mingled political motives. He may have hoped, by a policy of toleration, to conciliate neighbouring princes, to attract a larger traffic. But probably also there was another influence less commonly taken into account. The widespread belief of the East in the magic arts of Solomon is not, it is believed, without its foundation of truth Disasters followed before long as the natural consequence of what was

politically a blunder as well as religiously a sin.⁴⁰³

King Solomon (pbAh) has been depicted here as a very wicked man. He has been shown as committing idolatry and witchcraft and other sins. It was through the Holy Qur'ān revealed to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) that Allah Almighty exonerated him from all such accusations. Not to speak of 'giving himself to "strange women" and a fascination which led to the worship of strange gods mingled with political motives', we find him beautifully preaching 'Monotheism' even to Queen of Yemen, as a result of which she willingly embraced Islām, as stated in the Holy Qur'ān.

قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ⁴⁰⁴

She [the Queen of Yemen] said, 'My Lord, surely I have wronged myself, and I submit with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.'

As to King Solomon's (pbAh) indulgence in magic and witchcraft, the Holy Qur'ān explicitly announces,

وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السَّحْرَ⁴⁰⁵

Not that Sulayman disbelieved: it is the devils who disbelieved. They teach men witchcraft.'⁴⁰⁶

After fifteen centuries of desecration and character assassination of the holy King Solomon (pbAh), it was through the Prophet of Arabia (pbAh) that he was honourably acquitted by Allah Almighty of all false charges and his innocence was established. It was therefore a pleasant duty of King Solomon (pbAh) that he should pay homage to his real benefactor in advance in this way.

⁴⁰³ W. Smith, *A Dic. of the Bible*, (1984), 644f.

⁴⁰⁴ The Qur'ān, al-Naml, 27:44.

⁴⁰⁵ The Qur'ān, al-Baqarah 2:102.

⁴⁰⁶ N. J. Dawood, *Eng. Translation of the Qur'ān*, Revised by Mahmud Y Zayid (Beirut: Dar al-Choura, 1980), 11.

RECAPITULATION

There are so many predictions in the Bible regarding Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) that refer to him in unequivocal terms. But it is not a common practice to predict about some future prophet by name. It is almost a rare phenomenon that some coming prophet be foretold in the Bible by name. The prediction regarding Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) in King Solomon's 'Song of Songs' in the Bible (given below) is an example of such rare phenomenon:

(10) My beloved *is* white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.

(11) His head *is as* the most fine gold, his locks *are* bushy, *and* black as a raven.

(12) His eyes are as *the eyes* of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, *and* fitly set.

(13) His cheeks *are* as a bed of spices, *as* sweet flowers: his lips *like* lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

(14) His hands *are as* gold rings set with the beryl: his belly *is as* bright ivory overlaid *with* sapphires.

(15) His legs *are as* pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance *is* as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

(16) His mouth *is* most sweet: yea, he *is* altogether lovely. This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰⁷ Song of Solomon 5:10-16 AV (Authorized Version) of The Bible.

As to the authorship of this lyric idyll⁴⁰⁸, there are different opinions. The results of their study can be presented as⁴⁰⁹:

1. It is generally acknowledged that basically the author of the 'Song of Songs' is King and Prophet Solomon.
2. However, the entire work cannot be ascribed to him.
3. Solomon composed the 'Songs' in mid-tenth century BC, but its final redaction was accomplished in the post-exilic period, probably during the 3rd-4th centuries BC.
4. Obscene and profane material has freely been interpolated into it by some redactors.
5. Due to its obscene and indecent material it was felt desirable by some authorities that its study should be banned for young people.
6. There is no structural unity in it, and it can be treated 'as a string of independent lyrics'.

Some of the Christian commentators of the Bible apply this prophecy to Jesus Christ (pbAh);⁴¹⁰ but the contents of the

This Version is also called KJV (King James Version).

⁴⁰⁸ For 'idyll' see footnote No.7 above.

⁴⁰⁹ Some of these authorities are:

(a) *The Nelson Study Bible*, 1997, p. 1097. (b) *The Open Bible Expanded Edn.*, 1985, p. 667, 68. (c) *New Jerusalem Bible*, 1993, p. 1027-29. (d) *The NIV Study Bible*, Gen. ed. Kenneth Barker, 1995, p. 997. (e) *The Broadman Bible Com.*, 1971, p. 5:128-30. (f) William Smith, *A Dic. of Bible*, 1984, p. 105. (g) Walter F. Adeney, Prof. NT Exegesis and Church History, New College, London, 'The Song of Solomon' in *The Expositor's Bible* (NY: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1903), 3. (h) *The International Bible Com, An Ecumenical Com.* for the 21st Century, ed. William R. Farmer, 2004, p. 954. (i) *The Wycliffe Bible Com.*, ed. Charles F. Pfeiffer, 1983, p. 595.

⁴¹⁰ *The Pulpit Com.* ed. (i) the Rev. Spence, Dean of Gloucester and (ii) Joseph Exell [*sic*], S M A; Exposition (on the 'Song of Solomon') by R. A., Redford, MA, LLB (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co Ltd, 1897), 128, asserts: 'Ancient writers have applied the description to our Lord.' Other authorities are: (a) *The Wycliffe Bible Com.*, 595. (b) Roland E. Murphy, in *The New Jerome Biblical Com.*, 1994, p. 463. (c) Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the O & N T*, nd, p. 820. (d) F. W.

passage do not endorse it.

To ascertain the real significance of the prediction, one is to trace the exact Hebrew words uttered by King Solomon (pbAh) and to explore their meanings.

The first phrase of the passage is ‘my beloved’, which has been dealt with in Chapter III of the book. It clearly settles the intent and relevance of the prophecy. The actual Hebrew word for ‘beloved’ is ‘דוד’ (dod), which means ‘friend, esp. an uncle, father’s brother; lover, beloved (son of father’s brother was considered most suitable as customary husband)’. It signifies that the ‘beloved’ relates to the lineage of paternal uncle of the writer. There being no father of Jesus (pbAh), the question of paternal uncle does not arise in his case. If some uncle may be ascribed to him, it can only be his uncle from maternal side, whereas lexicographically it is out of question. In this way Jesus (pbAh) can by no means be considered to be the ‘dod’ of this verse. Isaac (pbAh) is King Solomon’s (pbAh) forefather in his direct lineage. Ishmā‘el (pbAh) is the brother of his forefather Isaac (pbAh). As such Ishmā‘el (pbAh) is the ‘uncle’ of the King and the Prophet Solomon (pbAh) and Muḥammad (pbAh) is from the offspring of Ishmā‘el (pbAh). In this way Muḥammad (pbAh) is the ‘dod’ of the King and the Prophet Solomon (pbAh).

After explaining the first phrase (my beloved) of the first clause: ‘My beloved is white and ruddy’, the last two words ‘white’ and ‘ruddy’ have been explored in detail in chapter IV. Its salient points have been afforded here.

The word ‘white/radiant’ does not signify some spiritless,

Dobbs-Allsopp (on the) ‘Song of Solomon’ in *New Oxford Annotated Bible*, 2001, p. 959. (e) *The International BC, An Ecumenical Com. For The 21st Century*, 2004, p. 958. (f) *The 7th Day Adventist BC*, 1977, in ‘Introduction to Songs’, 3:1110, 11, 19, 20. (g) *Bible Knowledge Com., OT*, 1986, p. 1009. (h) *Reader’s Digest Bible, Illustrated edn.*, 1985, p. 448. (i) *The Learning Bible*, 1212. (j) *Annotated Paragraph Bible*, no editors mentioned (London: Religious Tract Society, 1866, 713).

morbid, or deadly whitish colour. It rather stands for brightness, brilliance, beauty of the countenance and sound health. The word 'ruddy' means 'to show blood (in the face), i.e. flush or turn rosy:- be red'. The combination of both these words, i.e. 'white and ruddy' depicts a comely figure of healthiness, strength, beauty and brightness. It reflects the exact features of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). They cannot be physically applied to Jesus Christ by any stretch of sense. He was literally neither 'radiant' nor 'ruddy'. These words can only be applied to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) in true sense of the word. It is a historical fact that he was perfectly 'radiant and ruddy'. The Christian scholars have vainly attempted to relate these words to Jesus Christ (pbAh).

Chapter V deals with the phrase 'the chiefest among ten thousand'. The original Hebrew term for the first English word of the phrase 'The chiefest', (or choicest) is 'דגל' (dagal). *Strong's Dic.* explains it as: 'a primary root; to flaunt, i.e. raise a flag; figuratively to be conspicuous:- (set up with) banners, chiefest.' Matthew Henry has explained it as 'the chiefest among ten thousand'; 'fairest of ten thousand'; 'a standard bearer among ten thousand'. 'He is higher than the kings of the earth and has obtained a more excellent name than any of the principalities and the powers of upper or lower world.' At the same time it may also be noted that this commentator had previously stated that Christ (pbAh) was not exceedingly beautiful or attractive in the words: 'It was never said of the child Jesus, (...), that he was exceedingly fair [Acts vii.20]; nay, he had no form nor comeliness, Isa. liii.2);'⁴¹¹ It can thus be appreciated that (i) the Christian commentators of the Bible take these lines as a prophecy; (ii) they apply it to Jesus Christ (pbAh); and (iii) they do not stick to its literal, natural, and obviously direct meanings. They rather interpret it in accordance with their predetermined and desired aims quite arbitrarily. Whereas it is an historical fact that these words can aptly be

⁴¹¹ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of O&NT.*, 4:851.

applied to Prophet Muhammad (pbAh), who was the Leader of the ‘Conquest of Makkah’ at the head of an army of ten thousand. Michael Hart has rightly ranked him as number one of all the human history, observing:

My choice of Muhammad [pbAh] to lead the list of the world’s most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but *he was the only man in history* [stress added] who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels. (...). Furthermore, Muhammad [pbAh] (unlike Jesus) was a secular as well as a religious leader. In fact, as the driving force behind the Arab conquests, he may well rank as the most influential political leader of all time. (...). Nothing similar had occurred before Muhammad [pbAh], and there is no reason to believe that the conquest would have been achieved without him. (...). We see, then, that the Arab conquests of the seventh century have continued to play an important role in human history, down to the present day. It is this unparalleled combination of secular and religious influence which I feel entitles Muhammad [pbAh] to be considered the most influential single figure in human history.⁴¹²

Chapter VI of the book is ‘His Head and Hair’. It deals with verse 11 of the ‘Song of Solomon’, i.e. ‘His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven.’ The first clause of the verse is ‘His head is as the most fine [NKJV: ‘finest’; NIV: ‘purest’] gold.’ Matthew Henry has defined the ‘head’ as ‘sovereignty’. *Strong’s Dic* also endorses it. The Hebrew word for the ‘head’ is ‘ראש’ (Ra’sh) which means ‘The head, captain, chief, Principal, ruler, top’. The second important word in the clause is ‘gold’ for which the Hebrew word is ‘פז’ (paz). *Strong’s Dic.* explains it as: ‘pure (gold); hence gold itself (as refined): fine pure gold’. Keeping in view the above meanings of the original Hebrew words of the Bible, the sentence would mean: ‘His excellent rule and authority and

⁴¹² Michael H. Hart, ‘*The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*’, (NY City: Hart Publishing Co., Inc.), 33ff.

sovereignty is flawless, pure and refined, beautiful and powerful,’ as the monarchy of Nebuchadnezzar has been analogized with the head of gold in the book of Daniel. The commentator’s remarks: ‘Christ’s head bespeaks his sovereign dominion over all (...). Christ’s sovereignty is both beautiful and powerful,’ need no comments. Everyone who has studied the biography of Jesus Christ (pbAh), knows it of certain that he never achieved any sovereignty anywhere. According to the gospels he was humiliatingly taken to the place of crucifixion. On the other hand this sentence presents a literal fulfillment in the person of the ‘Conqueror of Makkah.’

Jesus (pbAh) never achieved power and authority (sovereignty) in his life whereas Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) enjoyed full power and authority of the state of Maḍīnah and consequently the whole of the Arabian Peninsula (and full respect and love of the believers) and his decisions and commands in that position had always been pure, beautiful, and flawless. Now it is unto the reader to decide in whose person the words of the Bible find their exact and literal fulfillment.

In the clause ‘His locks are bushy [or wavy], and black as a raven’ (KJV), the Hebrew word for ‘wavy’ is ‘תַּלְתַּל’ (taltal), which, according to *Strong’s Dic.*, means: ‘A trailing bough (as pendulous); bushy’. It means that his hair was like a drooping (hanging or bending down) bough of a tree in which there is a natural curve at the end.

The second clause of the sentence is ‘and black as a raven.’ The Hebrew for its first main word ‘black’ is ‘שָׁחַר’ (saḥar or shachar)’. *Strong’s Dic.* has explained it as: ‘[identical with 7836 through the idea of the duskiess of early dawn]; to be dim or dark (in color):- be black’. 7836 is: ‘to dawn, i.e. (fig.) be (up) early at any task (with the implication of earnestness); seek (diligently) early, in the morning.’. The second main word of this clause is ‘raven’. The word used for it in the Hebrew Bible is ‘עֶרֶב’ (‘arab/‘areb). *Strong’s Dic.* explains it under entry No. 6158 as: ‘A raven (from its dusky hue)’.

It may be noted here that ‘raven’ is not the literal meaning of the Hebrew word ‘עֶרֶב’ (arab). It is its figurative meaning in view of its ‘dusky hue’. It may also be noted here that Arabic and Hebrew are to a great extent similar and sister languages of Semitic family of languages and have lot of commonalities. Their basic alphabet consists of twenty-two letters (א, ב, ג, ד, ה, ו, ז, ח, ט, י, כ, ל, מ, נ, ס, ע, פ, צ, ק, ר, ש, ת). In addition to these 22 letters the Arabs framed six more letters (th, kh, dh, d, z, gh) to accommodate their additional sounds, which do not exist in the Hebrew alphabet. The Arabic letter ‘ghayn’ (gh) is one of those six letters which do not exist in the Hebrew language. Now, there are two words ‘arab and ghurab in Arabic; the former for an Arabian person and the latter for a raven or crow. The Hebrew alphabet, having no letter for ‘gh’ sound, has only one word ‘עֶרֶב’ for both: ‘Arabian’ and ‘crow’. It has no separate and independent word for a ‘raven’ and uses the same word for an Arabian and a raven or crow. As such they cannot ascertain for which sense the Hebrew word ‘arab’ stands here. The translators of the Bible take it in the sense of a raven in view of the dark colour of the hair, whereas actually it stands for an Arabian. Here is a study of some more meanings of the word. According to entry No. 6150 the word ‘עֶרֶב’ (‘arab) means: ‘[identical with 6148 through the idea of covering with a texture]; to grow dusky at sun down:- be darkened, (toward) evening’. Under entry No. 6152, the same word, ‘עֶרֶב’ (‘arab), has been explained as: ‘In the fig. sense of sterility; Arab (i.e. Arabia), a country E. of Palestine’. It can also be ‘עֶרְבִי’ (‘arabiy), which, according to the same *Dictionary*, means: ‘An Arabian or inhabitant of Arab (i.e. Arabia)’.

A lexical study of the sentence ‘His locks are bushy, and black as a raven’ has been undertaken in the above lines. The results of the study and some further relevant information is being presented hereunder:

1. Basically the word ‘עֶרֶב’ (‘arab) means: ‘to grow dusky at sun down: be darkened, (toward) evening, an Arab, an Arabian, or an inhabitant of Arabia’.

2. It also bears the sense of 'sterility'. 'Arabia' was given this name because of being basically a barren, sterile, and inarable land. It also implies 'an *Arabian* or an Arab'.
3. Being void of the Arabic sound 'gh', the Hebrew language has only one word for both 'a raven' and 'an Arab'.
4. As to the word bushy/wavy the Hebrew word is 'תלתל' (taltal), which, according to the *Strong's Dic.*, means: 'a trailing bough (as pendulous)'. 'Bushy' or 'wavy' is not its proper translation. 'A trailing bough' is not bushy or wavy. It rather has a curl only at its end.
5. The hair of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) have been depicted by different authorities as: 'The hair of his head and beard was thick: neither intertwistingly curly like those of Negroes nor quite straight. It had rather a light touch of curl. Even in his last years hardly twenty hairs had grown white, and they too were visible only when he had not anointed (applied oil to) them, but he almost always kept his hair anointed. Sometimes the locks of his hair went to the middle of his ears, sometimes to their end and at times even longer.
6. The hair of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) was extremely black and remained as such till the end of his life. In the hair of both his head and beard there were not more than totally twenty hairs white. Even those were visible only when he had not anointed them. On the other hand the head and hairs of Jesus (pbAh) were extremely white, as can be appreciated from: 'His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow.'⁴¹³ So this part of the prophecy cannot be applied to Jesus (pbAh) whereas it exactly applies to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh).
7. The proper translation of 'His locks are bushy, and black as a raven' is: 'There is a slight bend in his locks and they are extremely black. He is an inhabitant of Arabia'.

It is, therefore, not difficult to ascertain whom do these words indicate: Prophet Muḥammad of Arabia (pbAh) or Jesus Christ (pbAh). But it is surprising to note how the Christian scholars interpret or, rather, manipulate this statement in favour of Jesus Christ. Matthew Henry asserts:

(...) black as raven, whose blackness is his beauty.

⁴¹³ Rev.1:14 KJV.

Sometimes Christ's hair is represented as white (Rev. i:14), denoting his eternity, that he is the ancient of days; but here as black and bushy, denoting that he is ever young and that there is in him no decay, nothing that waxes. Everything that belongs to Christ is amiable in the eyes of a believer, even his hair is so; (...).⁴¹⁴

The reader can easily appreciate the trickery of translation and interpretation in the above passage. How adroitly 'white' has been proved to be 'black'! Objective study is considered basic precondition for a just and impartial research. It demands that some theme should be presented faithfully in its actual form and it should be interpreted according to the requirement of the context and the intent of the writer without twisting or manipulating it to one's own intent, interest, and purpose. But in the above passage the skill of interpreting a theme quite contrary to its actual sense, has been exercised freely and unhesitatingly. It is by no means a faithful interpretation. It is obviously an example of misinterpretation and corruption.

Chapter VII relates to verse 12 of the 'Song of Solomon' which deals with the eyes of Solomon's beloved. The verse 12 reads as: 'His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set'.

The *Pulpit Commentary* has explained the verse as: 'The eyes are not only pure and clear, but with a glancing moistness in them which expresses feeling and devotion. (...). The pureness of the white of the eye is represented in the bathing or washing in milk. They are full and large, "fine in their setting," (...).' Matthew Henry explains this verse as: '*His eyes are as the eyes of doves*, fair and clear, and chaste and kind, (...). They are washed, to make them clean, *washed with milk*, to make them white, and fitly set, neither starting out nor sunk in.'

The detailed features of the countenance and the eyes of Jesus Christ (pbAh) are available neither in the Bible nor in

⁴¹⁴ Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of O&NT*, 4:851.

any other reliable and authentic record. There are only some brief, casual, and partial glimpses of some of his features scattered here and there, which are quite useless and irrelevant to the qualities stated in this stanza of the 'Songs'. The Christian scholars attach the qualities, which Solomon (pbAh) is describing about his 'Praised One', to Jesus Christ (pbAh) without any proof or relevance.⁴¹⁵

It would be quite pertinent to explore the meanings of the word 'fitly' of this verse at first place. The original Hebrew word for it is 'מלאית' (millayth). The *Strong's Dic* explains it as: 'From 4390; *fulness*, i.e. (concretely) a *plump* [fat in a pleasant looking way] socket (of the eye)=X fitly.' The Hebrew word under entry No. 4390 is 'מלא', (mala). It means: 'To fill or be full of; consecrate'. As such, the words for the beloved's eyes, 'fitly set', would mean: 'The eyes have been set in the face and forehead of the beloved of King Solomon (pbAh) in such a proportionate manner that they look to be beautiful, big, well-filled up, plump, risen up, and attractive.'

The other important word in this verse is 'dove', for which the original Hebrew word is 'יונה', i.e. 'yownah'. *Strong's Dic*. explains it as: 'Probably from the same as 3196; a dove'. The Hebrew word under entry No. 3196 is 'יין', i.e. 'yayin'. It has been explained as: 'From an unused root meaning to *effervesce* [to be happy lively and excited]; *wine* (as fermented); by implication *intoxication*.'

Keeping in view various meanings and implications of all the significant words the verse can be interpreted as:

The eyes have been set in the face and forehead of the beloved of King Solomon (pbAh) in such a proportionate

⁴¹⁵ If the Christian scholars and commentators find it useful to their purpose to attach some prediction to Jesus Christ (pbAh), they do it without any hesitation. If they do not find the requisite qualities in the NT, they fill up this lacuna by snatching such quality, features, event, or beautiful details from some verse or verses of the OT of Bible, and then attach it to Christ (pbAh).

manner that they look to be beautiful, big, well-filled up, plump, risen up, and attractive. His eyes exhibit the warmth of love and happiness. They look to be intoxicated as there are light red filaments in them. 'The eyes are not only pure and clear, but with a glancing moistness in them which expresses feeling and devotion. (...). They are full and large,'. 'His eyes are as the eyes of doves, fair and clear, and chaste and kind,'

The commentators of the Bible have arbitrarily attached these details and qualities to Jesus Christ (pbAh), but they do not afford any grounds for their claim. What has allegorically been stated, is only out of their wishful thinking and designed purpose. There is no substantial proof or objective relevance in favour of their assertion. As already stated, the details of the figures of Jesus Christ (pbAh) have nowhere been given in the Bible. On the other hand, the details of the figures and features of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) have so meticulously been recorded in authentic traditions that we feel as if he himself is present among us. The features of king Solomon's beloved related in the Bible apply to prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) so exactly and accurately that there remains no doubt in their relevance.

The details of the eyes of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) have been got recorded by the eyewitnesses through reliable chain of narrators in the books of the traditions and the biography of the Prophet. A brief sketch regarding his eyes is recorded below from the books of the traditions:

His eyes were intensely black. Eyelashes were long. The pupils of the eyes were extremely black. Eyeballs were extremely white [washed with milk]. His eyes were large and very beautiful. Even without antimony it seemed as if he had applied antimony to his eyes. There were light red threads in his eyes (which depict the intoxication of his eyes as stated by *Strong's Dic.*). Eyelashes were thick and long.

Only one conspicuous feature is being elaborated here. As to the 'light red threads in his eyes' and their largeness, Jābir reports in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*:

(...) كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ (...) أَشْكَلُ الْعَيْنِ⁴¹⁶

The Apostle of Allah (pbAh) was large-eyed having light red threads in them.

There is so conspicuous concordance in the statement of the verse of the ‘Song’ and the features of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) that the reader would easily appreciate that King Solomon (pbAh) is describing here the features of none other than Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh).

Chapter VIII of the book deals with the verse 13 of the ‘Song of Solomon’ which is about ‘His Cheeks and Lips’. The wording of the verse is ‘His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.’ Firstly, the study of its first half ‘His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers,’ is being undertaken. The first main word of the verse is ‘cheeks’. The Hebrew word for this ‘cheek’ is ‘לֶחִי’ (lehiy). *Strong’s Dic.* has recorded its meanings as: ‘From an unusual root meaning to *be soft*; the *cheek* (from its *fleshiness*)’. The next main word of the verse is ‘bed’ for which the Hebrew word is ‘עֲרוּגָה’ (‘Aroojah). According to *Strong’s Dic.* it means: ‘Something *piled up* (as if [figuratively] *raised* by mental aspiration.), i.e. bed, furrow’. The third important

⁴¹⁶ E. W. Lane has explained the words ‘أَشْكَلُ الْعَيْنِ’ in his ‘*Arabic English Lexicon*, p. 1588’ as follows:

(Qāmūs) A man is said to be ‘أَشْكَلُ الْعَيْنِ’ meaning *Having a redness*, (‘Maghrib’ of El-Muṭarrizee,) *or the like of a redness*, (‘Obab’ of Eş-Şaghaneē,) *in the white of the eye* : (‘Maghrib’ of El-Muṭarrizee, ‘Obab’ of Eş-Şaghaneē:) the Prophet is said to have been أَشْكَلُ الْعَيْنِ: and it has been explained as meaning *long in the slit of the eye*: (Qāmūs:) but Ibn Seedeḥ, author of the ‘Moḥkam’ says that this is extraordinary; and Moḥammad Ibn-Eṭ-Ṭeiyib El-Fasee, author of ‘Annotations on the Qāmūs’, [says] that the leading authorities on the traditions consentaneously assert it to be pure mistake, and inapplicable to the Prophet, even if lexicologically correct.

⁴¹⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb. al-faḍā’il, Bāb fī Ṣifāh Fam al-Nabī wa ‘Aynayhi, Tradition No. 2339.

word of the clause is ‘spices’ for which the Hebrew word in the Bible is ‘בֶּשֶׂם’ (besem). *Strong’s Dic.* has recorded its meanings as: ‘*Fragrance*; by impl. *spicery*; also the *balsam* plant: smell, spice, sweet (odour)’. The fourth main word of the clause is ‘sweet’. The original Hebrew word for it is ‘מֶרְקָח’, i.e. ‘merqah’. *Strong’s Dic.* has recorded its meanings as: ‘From 7543; a *spicy* herb:- X sweet’. And the meanings of entry No. 7543 are: ‘A primary root; to *perfume*; make [ointment]’. The last main word of the clause is ‘flowers’. The Hebrew word for it is ‘מִגְדָּל’, (mijdal). Its meanings in *Strong’s Dic.* are: ‘From 1431; a *tower* (from its size or height); figuratively a (pyramidal) *bed* of flowers’.

Keeping in view the above lexical research, the correct translation of the original Hebrew clause, which has been rendered into English as: ‘*His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers*’ will be as below:

His raised up fleshy and soft cheeks, and the thick beard thereupon, seem as if they are layers of perfumes or heaps of fragrances. They are like the beds of small fragrant herbs and the pyramids of sweet smelling flowers.

If someone tries to trace these qualities in the person of Jesus Christ (pbAh), he is bound to face utter disappointment. On the other hand, if it be tried to trace these qualities in the life of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), the veracity of its application to him will be fully confirmed.

Matthew Henry has vainly applied this sentence of the ‘Song’ to Jesus Christ (pbAh). The commentator is the king of the world of letters and the master of the realm of rhetoric. But the words of King Solomon (pbAh) cannot be applied to Christ (pbAh) through verbosity, eloquence, and credulity. It requires objective study and authentic references. Although the writer is an erudite scholar, it is impossible for him to afford some credible evidence in favour of his assertion; and how can he present it when there is none on the record whatsoever.

The second and the last clause of the verse is: ‘His lips *like*

lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh'. The first important word in the clause is 'lips'. The original Hebrew word for it is 'שפה' (shaphah), which means: 'The *lip*; by implication *language*, speech, talk, words'. The next important word is 'lilies'. The original word for it is 'שושן', (shoshan). It means: 'a primary root; to be *bright*, i.e. *cheerful*:- be glad, X greatly, joy, make mirth, rejoice'. The next main word of this part of the verse is 'dropping'. The original word for it is 'נטף' (nataph). It means: 'a primary root; to ooze, i.e. *distill* gradually; by impl. to *fall in drops*; figuratively to *speak* by inspiration, prophesy'. The last word of the verse is 'myrrh'. Its original Hebrew is 'מר' or 'מור' (more). It means: 'From 4843 [which is 'to be or make bitter']; *myrrh* (as *distilling* in drops, and also as *bitter*)'.

In the light of the meanings of all the important original Hebrew words of this clause, its correct sense would be:

His lips are bright and beautiful like a lily flower. The rejoicing, greeting, and bright word that comes out of them, is altogether prophecy and inspiration. There is the fragrance and sweetness of lawful and clean acts and edibles in it as well as a limited and meager quantity of the bitterness of unlawful and unclean ones and this bitterness ultimately results in fragrance which brings pleasant feelings. [The implied brightness of 'lilies' includes the brightness and light that radiated physically from the lips of the Prophet.]

The qualities of the lips (and, by implication speech) of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) have been recorded in the text of the book from lucid traditions. Their concordance to the attributes described by Solomon does not depend on some allegory, symbolism, or figurativeness. But there is clearly a literal application in them. On the other hand, the actual Aramaic word of Jesus Christ (pbAh) cannot be found on the face of the earth that someone may be able to evaluate their sweetness and eloquence.

As to the sweetness of the word of his mouth, some beautiful traditions of the Prophet (pbAh) and a few selected verses of the Qur'ān have been noted in the text of the

book.

Chapter IX of the book deals with verse 14 of the ‘Song of Solomon’, which is about ‘His Hands and Belly’. The wording of the verse is: ‘His hands *are as* gold rings set with the beryl: his belly *is as* bright ivory overlaid *with* sapphires’. There are two clauses in this verse. The first clause is: ‘His hands *are as* gold rings set with the beryl’. The original Hebrew word for ‘hand’ is ‘יד’ (yad). According to *Strong’s Dic.* its meanings are: ‘A hand (the open one) [indicating power, means, i.e. resources and money etc.], in distinction from 3709 (‘כף’, i.e. ‘kaph’), the closed one; used in a great variety of applications, both literally and figuratively, both proximate and remote, dominion, force’. As such, the ‘יד’ (yad) indicates open and stretched hands, which are the symbol of power, authority, and generosity. The next main Hebrew word of this part of the verse is ‘פז’ (paz), which means: “From 6388 [which is, ‘פלג’ (Falaj), meaning ‘river, stream’]; pure (gold); hence gold itself (as refined):- fine (pure) gold”. Then there is the word ‘ring’, for which the Hebrew word is ‘גליל’ (jailil). The meanings of this word and its roots have been explained in *Strong’s Dic.* under entries No.1550, 59, 60 as: ‘A valve of a folding door; also a ring (as round); great;’. According to the *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT* the word, with reference to ‘Song 5:14’ means: ‘a round rod (it may also be noted here that ‘rod’ is a symbol of authority) or ring’. It is the same as the Arabic word ‘Jaḥil’; which has the same meanings, i.e., ‘great; significant etc.’

Keeping in view the literal meanings and real sense of the original Hebrew words of this clause of the verse, its translation would be:

His out-stretched hands are the symbol of his great power, authority, and generosity. Physically and apparently, they are clean bright, soft, smooth and precious like gold. He wears a ring in his finger wherein beryl and topaz have been inlaid properly.

The conditions and qualities of the hands of Jesus Christ (pbAh) have nowhere been recorded in history, but the companions of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) did not show any negligence in making the history rich through recording the details of the features of even the hands of their beloved Prophet (pbAh). Hind bin Abī Hālah states: ‘His wrists were long, his palms were large, and his fingers elongated to a suitable extent’. Anas states: ‘Any thick or thin silk cloth that I ever happened to touch, was not softer than the palms of the Prophet (pbAh)’.

As regards the power of his hands (outstretched hands) it implies both his physical power and his authority. As to the physical power of his limbs, it is interesting to note that he defeated Rukānah, the most powerful wrestler among the Qurayshites’ who invited him to a bout. Muḥammad (pbAh) threw him down and defeated him. Once, when Muḥammad (pbAh) was still a boy, he was invited to a dinner at ‘Abdullah bin Jud‘ān’s house. Abū Jahl quarreled with him. He was almost a boy of the same age. Muḥammad (pbAh) lifted him up and threw him down so as his knee was wounded. Abū Jahl sustained its scar for the whole of his life.

As to the authority of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) it is to be noted that he started his life as a resourceless orphan, but when he left this world, he wielded the sole authority over the whole of the Arabian Peninsula which was thriving and spilling over the boundaries of Arabia in all dimensions.

The third implication of the outstretched hands is generosity. It is clearly recorded that Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) was extremely generous and did not like to hoard money for his own self. He never said ‘No’ to anyone who solicited him for something.

The explanations of the Christian scholars find their fulfillment only in the person of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). The search of these qualities in Jesus Christ (pbAh) or to apply these explanations to the person of Jesus (pbAh) Christ is merely a vain effort, which can be based on internal

credulity and not on some concrete, authentic, and objective reality.

The remaining part of the verse is: 'His belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires'. The *Pulpit Commentary* has explained it as: 'The comparison with ivory work refers to the glancing and perfect smoothness and symmetry as of a beautiful ivory statue, the work of the highest artistic excellence.'

No proof or reference can be afforded to attach these details in favour of the person of Jesus Christ (pbAh). On the other hand, the details of the features of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) have been completely recorded. 'Aḥi reports: 'The Prophet had no hair on his body except a thin line of hair from chest to navel'.

There is no need of any explanation or interpretation. The words speak of themselves who the 'Beloved' and the 'Praised One' of King Solomon (pbAh) had been. Obviously the words literally apply to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). They can in no sense be applied to Jesus Christ (pbAh).

Chapter X of the book deals with verse 15 of the 'Song of Solomon', which is about 'His Legs and Countenance'. The wording of the verse is 'His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.' This verse includes two independent descriptions. The first description relates to the legs of the 'beloved' and the second one relates to his countenance. First sentence of the verse is: 'His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold'. The *Pulpit Commentary* explains it as follows:

So in the description of the legs we have the combination of white and gold, the white marble setting forth greatness and purity, and the gold sublimity and nobleness; intended, no doubt, to suggest that in the royal bridegroom, there was personal beauty united with kingly majesty.

The commentator asserts that these words undoubtedly signify the combination of personal beauty and kingly

majesty in the bridegroom. As far as 'Personal Beauty' is concerned:

It was never said of the child Jesus, (...) that he was exceedingly fair; nay, he had no form nor comeliness, (...).

As to his 'Kingly Majesty', it is not a statement of fact, but is a grave mockery, to assign it to a person, about whom it is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew:

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium [governor's residence] and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knees before Him and mocked Him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head.

When the description of the evangelists regarding the last days of Jesus Christ (pbAh) be studied, one comes across an unsteady, unstable, and wavering person. On the one hand, he wishes, 'O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup [of death] pass from Me'. On the other hand, he seems to accept it half-heartedly saying, 'nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.' No doubt the last words claimed to have been uttered by Jesus, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' (My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?) reveal the belief in the Oneness and Omnipotence of God, but at the same time they show his human limitations and complaint. Keeping in view the critical nature of the moment, they are not compatible with the ideals of perseverance and steadfastness. No doubt they are very apt and meaningful for supplication in solitude, but pronouncing these words openly in public at the time of sufferings reveals lack of commitment, courage and confidence in one's mission and ideals. 'Stateliness', 'steadfastness', and 'magnificence' are quite irrelevant words for Jesus Christ (pbAh). Such words can neither be applied literally nor figuratively to the life of Jesus Christ (pbAh); on the other hand, they are quite relevant to the life of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). The

unwavering steadfastness of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) in extremely adverse circumstances of the battlefields of Badr and Ḥunayn is a rare phenomenon in the annals of the world history. Keeping in view these facts, one is forced to admit the adroitness of Matthew Henry to twist the facts in his favour. He asserts:

This bespeaks his stability and steadfastness; where he sets his foot he will fix it; he is able to bear all the weight of government that is upon his shoulders [one is at a loss to find any substance to this blatant misstatement], and his legs will never fail under him. This sets forth the stateliness and magnificence of the going of our God, our King, in his sanctuary.

It is a mere mockery to apply these words to Jesus (pbAh); but when these words of King Solomon (pbAh) be compared to the facts and features of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), one is not to face any disappointment.

Taking the words even literally, it is an established fact that Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) was of white and bright colour as has been explained in the text of the book. Thus the association of the legs with marble indicates internal strength and external beauty. The Prophet's hands and feet were heavy, large and magnificent. It is a common phenomenon that the parts of the body which remain covered under the clothes are white whereas the colour of the parts of the body of even the white people which are open to sun, becomes brownish (golden), especially in hot countries. It may be noted here that Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) generally wore the sandal that did not cover the whole feet. The slim shanks resembling white marble pillars on the brown, bulky, and beautiful feet (sockets of gold), present a true and exact picture of the beloved of King Solomon (pbAh). Whoever compares King Solomon's account of his beloved's relevant features with the features of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), would face no difficulty in discovering the reality. It would be interesting to note that the detailed account of even the commentators of the Bible tallies only with Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), and the features of Jesus Christ (pbAh) have nothing to do with it.

The second part of verse 15 is: 'His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars'. Matthew Henry explains this sentence as:

His countenance (his port and mien) is as Lebanon, that stately hill; his aspect beautiful and charming, like the prospect of that pleasant forest or park, excellent as the cedars, which, in height and strength, excel other trees, and are of excellent use. Christ [pbAh] is a goodly person; the more we look upon him the more beauty we shall see in him.

The Hebrew Bible word for 'countenance' is 'מראה', i.e. 'mar'eh'. It means:

From 7200 [ra'ah; a primary root; to see, literally or figuratively:- advise, approve, appear, consider, perceive, think]; a view (the act of seeing); also an appearance (the thing seen), whether (real), a shape (esp. if handsome, comeliness; often plural, the looks), or (mental) a vision, (...) countenance, fair, favoured.

The literal meanings of Lebanon are 'heart, courage, intellect and understanding'. The cumulative sense of this simile can be interpreted as below:

The beloved of King Solomon is like beautiful snow-covered mountains of Lebanon in apparent beauty and comeliness. His eyes are replete with love and affection. On the one hand he is a huge and high mountain of courage and valour and on the other hand, he is great in his intellect, understanding, and right thinking.

It has been explained above that according to the account of the New Testament these qualities cannot be attributed to Jesus (pbAh). On the other hand, as far as Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) is concerned, it depicts his complete picture.

The second simile of the sentence is 'excellent as the cedars.' The Hebrew word for this 'excellent' is 'בחר', i.e. 'bahar'. It means: 'To try, i.e. (by impl.) select, acceptable, appoint, choose (choice), excellent, join, be rather, require'.

The beautiful colour and silk-like softness and smoothness of its wood, the beauty of the fabrication of its tissues, its tenacity and durability, its immunity and resistance against termite and corrosion, its soft and perpetual fragrance, the strength and firm ground grip of its roots, its long life, vast spreading of its branches, its soothing shade, and its lofty stature make it matchless in value and quality. Thus the simile can be explained as follows:

This magnificent, choicest, and distinguished person of the tribe of Kedar and the impressive, invincible, and sweet word of Allah presented by him are beneficial and benevolent and the beauty and virtue incarnate like the cedar tree. He is esteemed and cherished as the fragrant, good-looking, strong, smooth, and soft cedar wood. The grip of his root (base or foot) is firm. His branches (influence of his teachings) are stretched far and wide. He is extremely pleasant, agreeable and desirable.

Chapter XI, XII, XIII, and XIV of the book deal with the next and the last verse (16) of this prophecy which is the most important one. In extreme love and devotion King Solomon (pbAh) pronounces even the name of his beloved ‘Muḥammad the Magnificent’ in this verse, which is a rare phenomenon in the history of the Biblical prophecy. The wording of the verse is: ‘His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.’ Its first clause, ‘His mouth is most sweet’ has been explained in Chapter XI under the heading of the ‘Speech of His Mouth’.

This clause has been explained by *Pulpit Commentary* as:

His mouth was all sweetness (the literal rendering), both his holy words and his gracious looks. (...). The very tones of that most sacred voice must have had an indescribable sweetness.

Thus it becomes clear that the word ‘mouth’ of this clause stands for ‘speech’. It has not been used here in the literal sense of the physical ‘mouth’ or ‘lips’. The word ‘mouth’ has been used in the Bible a number of times in the sense of

‘speech’.

It may be noted here that Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) conveyed two things through his mouth: the Holy Qur’ān and his own words regarding the Islāmic culture.

As regards his own words, they are admitted to be very sweet and eloquent. Some of his sayings have been recorded in the text of the book.

The material of the Qur’ān is even more magnificent. It is a masterpiece of its kind and style of literature. Some excerpts from the Holy Qur’ān that exhibit its eloquence, sweetness and captivating force have been recorded in the text of the book.

A brief study of external evidence has also been afforded in the text of the book which shows that the Holy Qur’ān is universally admitted to be sweetness in itself. Some of the non-Muslim scholars have also acknowledged it. A few instances have been afforded here. Henry Stubbe asserts:

The language, the stile [sic.], the numbers are all so exquisite and inimitable, that Mahomet himself doth frequently urge this as the grand authentic testimony of his Apostleship, (...), it being generally esteemed as standard of the Arabic language and eloquence.⁴¹⁸

George Sale is a renowned Orientalist. He has undertaken great labour to prove that the Qur’ān is not the word of Allah, but is the work of Muḥammad (pbAh). He translated the Qurān (with footnotes) into English and gave it the name of ‘*alkoran of Muḥammad*’ which reveals his designs. In the beginning of it he wrote a detailed introduction under the heading of ‘The Preliminary Discourse’. In section ‘3’ of this introduction he was forced to pay due compliments to the impressiveness and sweetness of the Qur’ān. Here are some excerpts from this ‘Preliminary Discourse’:

The Koran is universally allowed to be written with the

⁴¹⁸ Dr. Henry Stubbe, 158.

utmost elegance and purity of language, (...). It is confessedly the standard of the Arabic tongue, (...). And to this miracle [the Qur'ān] did Mohammed himself chiefly appeal for the confirmation of his mission, publicly challenging the most eloquent men in Arabia, (...) to produce even a single chapter that might be compared with it. (...). A poem of Labid ibn Rabi'a, one of the greatest wits in Arabia in Mohammed's time, being fixed up on the gate of temple of Mecca, an honour allowed to none but the most esteemed performances, none of the other poets durst offer any thing of their own in competition with it. But the second chapter of the Koran being fixed up by it soon after, Labid himself (then an idolater) on reading the first verses only, was struck with admiration, and immediately professed the religion taught thereby, declaring that such words could proceed from an inspired person only. (...). He must have a very bad ear who is not uncommonly moved with the very cadence of a well-turned sentence; and Mohammed seems not to have been ignorant of the enthusiastic operation of rhetoric on the minds of men; (...), and so strangely captivated the minds of his audience, that several of his opponents thought it the effect of witchcraft and enchantment, as he sometimes complains.⁴¹⁹

Ibn Ishāq and Ibn Sa'd have recorded the event of Ṭufayl bin 'Amr Dawsī's embracing Islām, which is a great evidence of the captivating force of the eloquence of the Qur'ān. The same is the case of 'Umar bin Khaṭṭāb's embracing Islām.

There are a number of instances of the impressiveness of the beautiful style of the speech of the Prophet and the words of the Qur'ān. This is rather the sole source of expansion and diffusion of Islām. One more event regarding 'Utbah bin Rabī'ah (Abū Sufyān's father-in-law) has been afforded in the text of the book to elaborate the theme further.

The book of Allah presented by Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh),

⁴¹⁹ George Sale, *Alkoran of Mohamed*, 'The Preliminary Discourse', (London: Fredrick Warn and Co.), 47f.

the holy Qur'ān, is a living miracle as to its matchless beauty of style, impressive words, eloquence, rhetoric, revolutionariness, and comprehensiveness, for all times to come. In addition to it, the easy, brief, and compact sayings of the holy Prophet are also unique in impressiveness, eloquence, rhetoric, wisdom, and sweetness. On the other hand the words of Jesus Christ (pbAh) are not to be found on the face of the earth that someone may reckon their sweetness, beauty of style or impressiveness. Whatever one finds in the N. T. of the Bible, is not the original Aramaic word of Jesus Christ. The original words of Jesus Christ (pbAh) were never recorded and published in black and white in the Aramaic language, in which he had delivered them. The Gospels that one finds in the NT of the Bible today, are the composition of some oral traditions regarding Jesus' life by some almost unidentified persons. They were written in the Greek language from the very beginning. They had never been recorded in Aramaic, the language in which they were originally delivered by Jesus Christ (pbAh). As such it can be safely asserted that the words 'his mouth is most sweet' can by no stretch of sense be applied to the words of Jesus Christ. It is only Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) at whom the words 'his mouth is most sweet' perfectly apply.

Chapter XII of the book 'He is Exactly Muḥammad (pbAh) the Magnificent' deals with the second clause of verse 16. The wording of the verse is 'He is altogether lovely'.

The English word 'altogether' stands for the Hebrew word 'כל' (k+l, i.e. Kull), which means: 'From 3634: the whole; (in) all manner, altogether, whatsoever'. Entry No. 3634 means: 'To complete:- (make) perfect'. The next word is 'lovely' which, according to the Revised Standard Version, is 'desirable'. In Hebrew it is 'מְהֻמָּדִים' (M+H+M+D+I+M). *Strong's Dic.* records the meanings of m+h+m+d 'מְהֻמָּד' as: 'From 2530; delightful; hence a delight, i.e. object of affection or desire:- beloved, desire, goodly, lovely, pleasant'. 2530 is '(h+m+d): a prim. Root; to delight in:- beauty, greatly beloved, covet (desire eagerly); delectable (delightful, pleasant) thing, desire, pleasant, precious'.

First of all, it is to be noted that it is the sole place in the whole of the Hebrew Bible where this word 'מְחַמְדִּים' (M+Ḥ+M+D+I+M) has been used in its present form and has nowhere else been used in the Bible in this form.

Secondly, the Hebrew word consists of six letters (m-ḥ-m-d-i-m). The last two letters (i,m) denote the plurality for majesty and honour. The word 'Elohim' (the Lord, God) is a very pertinent and relevant example of it. The Jews, are monotheist people and they believe in the unity of God. Still they generally use the plural form of the word 'Eloha', i.e. 'Elohim' as a gesture of majesty and honour. There are other examples in the Bible as well where this suffix has been used for the words other than 'God'. The preceding clause of this very verse (his mouth is 'most sweet') is a clear example of it. Here the Hebrew word for 'most sweet' is 'מַמִּיטָאִים' (mamittaḳim), which is the plural of 'mamittaḳ' and means 'plural of sweet: sweets'. It has been rendered as 'most sweet' by the translators of the Bible, which denotes the grandeur of quality and not the plurality of number. It indicates that 'His utterance (mouth) bears every kind of sweetness and beauty in the most perfect form.' There are examples of a number of names of places which have been given in the Bible in the plural or dual form, whereas they stand for singular places, e. g. Mt. Gerizim, Mizraim, etc.

Thirdly, *Strong's Dic.* states that its primary root is 'ḥmd' under entry No. 2530. 'Muḥammad' is an adjectival passive participle from this root, which means 'Object of love and praise and liking'. Of course it is a meaningful word, but here it has been used as a proper noun. It is a common practice in the Bible that most of its proper nouns are meaningful words as well. It is the context that ascertains whether the word has been used as a proper noun or as a meaningful word.

In the passage under study, Solomon (pbAh) describes attributes of his beloved: he is beautiful; he is powerful; he has such and such attributes; he belongs to Arabia; his speech or the utterance of his mouth is most sweet; etc. The listener would now naturally like to know his proper

identity. That's why Solomon tells them 'he is by all means Muḥammad (pbAh) the Magnificent [about whom I have already told you that he is the inhabitant of Arabia].'

Fourthly, Muḥammad being a meaningful word, Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) is out and out Muḥammad in true sense of the word. Its meanings in Hebrew have been given above. In Arabic as well it has similar meanings. Edward W. Lane has given its meanings as: 'To approve; to be such as is praised, commended, and approved'. He explains the word 'Muḥammad' as: 'A man praised much, or repeatedly, or time after time: (L.K.) endowed with many praiseworthy qualities'.

Fifthly, some prominent Christian commentators of the Bible apply the words 'He is altogether lovely/desirable' to Jesus Christ. The *Pulpit Commentary* asserts: 'Verse 16. "Altogether lovely [וְכָל מְדִינָה (w+kull+u Mḥmd+im)]" We apply these words to the Lord Jesus Christ (pbAh), and affirm that they are true of him. (...), but Christ is the Beloved of all ages'. You '*apply these words to the Lord Jesus Christ, and affirm that they are true of him.*' But on what ground? The words, spoken by Solomon (pbAh) in Hebrew, pronounce: 'wa kullu Muḥammadim (וְכָל מְדִינָה)'. They mean: 'He is altogether Muḥammad (pbAh) the Magnificent'. To whom an impartial listener would apply these words: to Muḥammad (pbAh) or to Jesus Christ (pbAh)? It is, moreover, to be noted that Solomon (pbAh) had just narrated the attributes of his 'praised one' in this passage in a fair detail which explicitly apply to Muḥammad (pbAh) only and not to Jesus Christ (pbAh) in any way.

Sixthly, the word 'Muḥammadim' (in the plural form for majesty) has been used only once in the entire OT of the Bible. No doubt it has been used in the Hebrew Bible for nine times⁴²⁰ besides this as a derivative of 'הִמְד' (ḥ+m+d); but at all these nine places it has been used in singular form

⁴²⁰ KJV 1Kings 20:6; Isa 44:11; Lam 1:10; Eze 24:16; Eze 24:21; Eze 24:25; Hosea 9:6; Hosea 9:16; Joel 3:5.

and as an adjective or a noun. It has neither been used with the sign of plurality 'im'; nor it indicates a proper noun at any of these places. At all those nine places the Hebrew spellings of the word are 'םהמד' (M+H+M+D). It can be pronounced either as: 'Maḥmad', or 'Muḥammad'. The primary root of both these words is 'המד' (ḥ+m+d).

In the passage of the 'Song' under discussion here, Solomon (pbAh), after giving fairly detailed attributes of his beloved from his uncle ancestor (Ishmā'el)'s progeny, pronounces his actual proper name 'Muḥammad' (pbAh), which, according to the unvocalized consonantal alphabet, was inevitably to be written as 'M+H+M+D'. When there genuinely and physically exists an exact application of this word, which fitly suits the context, it is misleading to translate this proper noun or to apply it to Jesus Christ.

Chapter XIII of the book, 'My Beloved My Friend', deals with the third clause of verse 16 of the 'Song', i.e. 'This is my beloved, and this is my friend'.

The Heb. word which has been translated here as 'beloved', is 'דוד' (dod). *Strong's Dic.* has recorded its meanings as: 'Lover, friend, spec. an uncle, beloved, father's brother, uncle'. It shows that the 'beloved Muḥammadim', whom King Solomon (pbAh) mentions here, does not belong to his real brothers, i. e. the Israelites. He rather belongs to Israel (Jacob)'s uncle Ishmā'el (pbAh). The Christians have applied it to Jesus Christ without any ground, because he can by no means be called an uncle from the paternal side, as he was not from the seed of any man. He was miraculously born without any father whatsoever. As to his maternal side as well he cannot be called Solomon's dod (uncle or cousin): firstly, because his mother, the Virgin Mary, was not from the seed of any of Solomon's uncles, but was from the direct lineage of King Solomon (see Mt, chapter i; Lk iii:23-38); and secondly, because the word can only be applied to 'father's brother' and cannot be applied to 'mother's brother'. In this way King Solomon (pbAh) made his statement more clear by saying that my this 'beloved' is not a stranger to me, he is rather my cousin. If Solomon

(pbAh) had intended to refer to some of his friends quite outside of his family, he would have used the word 'אהב' ('ahab), which means: 'Love; beloved; lovely; friend'. If he had intended to indicate that his this 'beloved' was from among the Israelites, the more pertinent Hebrew word to be used here, should have been 'ידיד' (yedeed), whose feminine is 'ידידה' (yedeedeh). Both of these words are from the same primary root as 'dod' and mean 'loved, amiable, beloved, an Israelite or Israelitess'. Had Solomon's 'beloved' been from the Israelite lineage, he must have used the word 'yedeed' and not 'dod'. But he has precisely, scrupulously, cautiously, and intentionally used the proper word 'dod', which exclusively means a cousin from the line of father's brother and not a brother from the real father's side.

The last word of this clause of the verse is 'friend', which is one of the most important and decisive words of this prophecy. The Hebrew word used for it by King Solomon (pbAh) is 'רע or ריע' (rea' or reya'). According to *Strong's Dic*, it means: '7453. From 7462; an associate (more or less close); companion, fellow, lover, neighbour, another'. And the entry No. 7462 'רעה' (ra'ah) means: 'A prim. Root, to tend a flock, generally to rule, to associate with (as a friend), companion, herdsman, shepherd'. The *Heb. and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT* has also recorded its meanings as: 'Comrade, companion, neighbour, another, someone's colleague, neighbour with a shared boundary'. In this way King Solomon makes his this prophecy more clear. He explains that his this friend is:

i) His Comrade, companion, and colleague, Muḥammadim (pbAh), is an apostle, a prophet, and a king like him (Solomon). It may be borne in mind here that Jesus Christ (pbAh) had never been a king in worldly terms.

ii) He (Muḥammadim [pbAh]) does not belong to his (Solomon's) own land, Canaan, but he is from his neighbouring country with shared boundary (Arabia), which is the ground reality without any doubt. On the contrary, Jesus was his country-fellow and cannot be called his

neighbour.

iii) He (Muḥammadim [pbAh]) is his associate as a prophet; whereas Jesus is attributed as 'Lord' and 'Son of God' (and not a prophet) by the Christians.

iv) He (Muḥammadim [pbAh]) is 'another', i.e. he is an Ishmā'elite, whereas Jesus Christ (pbAh) was very much an Israelite and cannot be attributed as 'another'.

v) He (Muḥammadim [pbAh]) is a ruler (according to the meanings recorded in *Strong's Dic.*, entry 7462), whereas Jesus Christ (pbAh) had never been a ruler in worldly terms.

vi) He (Muḥammadim [pbAh]) had also remained a herdman or shepherd (at his early age) whereas Jesus Christ (pbAh) had never been a shepherd or herdman. He can hardly be claimed to be other than a carpenter.⁴²¹

All these qualities can truly be applied only to Prophet, Muḥammad (pbAh).

Now there remains only the last phrase of the prophecy to be explored, which is: 'O daughters of Jerusalem'. It has been explained in Chapter XIV of the book.

'Daughters' here obviously means 'citizens or inhabitants; whether male or female'. The next word is 'Jerusalem' or 'yer-oo-shaw-lah-yim' (ירושלים). *The Strong's Dic.* explains it as: 'yer-oo-shaw-lah-yim A dual (in allusion to its two main hills); founded peaceful; Jerushalāim or Jerushalem, the capital city of Palestine, Jerusalem'. *Hastings Dictionary of the Bible* has recorded a scholarly research on this word. It says:

(...), Its meaning (as spelt U-ru-sa-lem and URU- sa-lim) is 'city of Salim,' or 'city of peace', which agrees with the

⁴²¹ W. Smith, *A Dic. of the B.*, 308 explains:

Jesus no doubt learned the carpenter's trade of his reputed father Joseph, and, as Joseph probably died before Jesus began his public ministry, he may have contributed to the support of his mother.

rendering by Jesenius, ‘abode of peace’. (...), and the word Sa-lem is elsewhere found in the Tel-el-Amerna letters with the meaning of peace. (...) The monumental spelling favours the view that the city may have been first called Salem only; but it is not doubtful that it was called Jerusalem as early as the time of Joshua.⁴²²

It thus becomes clear that Jerusalem stands for ‘City of peace’ or ‘abode of peace’, which, in Arabic language is ‘al-Balad al-Amīn’ or ‘Dār al-Salām’. But it should be noted here that the word used in the Bible at this place is not Jerusalem, i.e. in singular number; it is rather ‘ירושלים’ (yer-oo-shaw-lah-yim) in dual number, implying two Jerusalems, for which the *Strong’s Dic.* arbitrarily claims to be ‘in allusion to its two main hills’. It is as if to say that the phrase ‘two eggs’ means only one egg in allusion to its two parts: its yoke and its white (albumen). It can thus be appreciated that as the phrase ‘two eggs’ stands for two different eggs and not for two parts within one egg; in the same way the phrase ‘two Jerusalems’ would naturally mean two different Jerusalems or two different cities with the name Jerusalem; and not two hills in one Jerusalem. It thus signifies that King Solomon (pbAh) is telling the citizens of both the abodes or cities of Peace, bearing the same name of ‘Jerusalem’, that his beloved of the progeny of his uncle Ishmā‘el belongs to his neighbouring country, Arabia, and he is none other than Muḥammad the Magnificent (pbAh).

Let us now consider what the phrase ‘two Jerusalems’ actually signifies. The Israelites are well acquainted with the Jerusalem (City of peace) of Canaan, which relates to them, but where is the second Jerusalem (City of peace)? Its answer is unequivocally recorded in the Bible. It says:

Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants.
One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she

⁴²² C. R. Conder, in *J. Hasting’s Dic. of the Bible* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1903), 2:583.

corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.⁴²³

It means that, according to Paul, the ‘City of peace’ of the Israelites is Jerusalem; whereas the ‘City of peace’ of the Ishmā‘elites is Makkah, which, in Arabic, is called ‘al-Balad al-Amīn,⁴²⁴’ where Hagar lived and was buried.

As far as the Jerusalem (‘City of peace’) of the Ishmā‘elites (Makkah, which, in the holy Quran, is named as ‘al-Balad al-Amīn’) is concerned, students of history know it well that it has always remained a ‘City of peace’. Even Abraha al-Ashram of Yemen could not harm or desecrate it.

As far as the Jerusalem (City of peace) of the Israelites is concerned, a very brief account of its destructions is afforded hereunder from the *Illustrated Bible Dic*:

As early as the 5th year of Solomon’s successor Rehoboam, the Temple and royal palace were plundered by Egyptian troops (1Ki. 14:25f.). Philistine and Arab Marauders again plundered the palace in Jehoram’s reign. In Amaziah’s reign a quarrel with the king of the N kingdom, Jehoash, resulted in part of the city walls being broken down, and fresh looting of Temple and palace. (...). Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon captured Jerusalem in 597 and in 587 BC destroyed the city and the Temple. At the end of that century the Jews, now under Persian rule, were allowed to return to their land and city, and they rebuilt the Temple, but the city walls remained in ruins until Nehemiah restored them in the middle of the 5th century BC. (...). In about 168 BC, Antiochus IV entered Jerusalem, destroying its walls and plundering and desecrating the Temple; (...). Roman Generals forced their way into the city in 63 and 54 [BC]; a Parthian army plundered in 40 [BC]; and three years after that Herod the Great had to fight his way into it, to take control. He first had to repair the damage created by these various incursions; then he launched a big building programme,

⁴²³ Galatians 4:24-26 RSV.

⁴²⁴ The Holy Qur’an 95:3.

erecting some notable towers. (...). The Jewish revolt against the Romans in AD 66 could have but one conclusion; in AD 70 the Roman General Titus systematically forced his way into Jerusalem, and destroyed the fortifications and the Temple.⁴²⁵

The calamities of Jerusalem were not without reason. The Israelites had worked hard to deserve it. Some of the relevant excerpts have been recorded in the body of the book which show that they rebelled against the Lord; they had forsaken Him, they had provoked to anger the Holy One of Israel, and they were sinful people.

The sanctity and peace of Jerusalem had been destroyed so many times that the application of the word Jerusalem (City of peace) to it loses all justification, whereas, on the other hand, its destruction was fully justified due to the wickedness of its citizens.

This is the fate of the security of the so-called 'City of Peace'. Israel herself caused the desecration of the holy city. She could not guard the sanctity of her Jerusalem. But there is another Jerusalem (City of peace) of Arabia. It is Jerusalem (City of peace) in true sense of the word. Nobody was allowed to capture it for destruction and plunder. It remained a 'City of peace' forever.

Solomon (pbAh) addresses the inhabitants of both these Jerusalems (the Israelites' and the Ishmā'elites') to be cautious, conscious, and alert to welcome the apostle of Allah who is his Ishmā'elite cousin. There is a message in it for his Israelite brothers not to show callousness towards this apostle from the progeny of Ishmā'el (pbAh) and not to behave like the Israelite damsel who did not open to her beloved when he was calling her, but when he went away she repented.

The love, respect, and gratitude of King Solomon (pbAh) for his beloved Ishmā'elite cousin was not without reason. His Israelite brothers had attached a lot of blasphemy, religious and moral turpitude and had indulged in his character assassination. Here is an excerpt from *W. Smith's DB*:

⁴²⁵ *The Illustrated Bible Dic*, 2:755,56,57.

And the King soon fell from the loftiest height of his religious life to the lowest depth. Before long the priests and prophets had to grieve over rival temples to Molech, Chemash, Ashtroth, and forms of ritual not idolatrous only, but cruel, dark, impure. This evil came as the penalty of another. 1Kings 11:1-8. He gave himself to ‘strange women.’ He found himself involved in a fascination which led to the worship of strange gods. (...). With this there may have mingled political motives. He may have hoped, by a policy of toleration, to conciliate neighbouring princes, to attract a larger traffic. But probably also there was another influence less commonly taken into account. The widespread belief of the East in the magic arts of Solomon is not, it is believed, without its foundation of truth. Disasters followed before long as the natural consequence of what was politically a blunder as well as religiously a sin.⁴²⁶

King Solomon (pbAh) has been depicted here as a very wicked man. He has been shown as committing idolatry and witchcraft and other sins. It was through the Holy Qur’ān revealed to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) that Allah Almighty exonerated him from all such accusations. Not to speak of ‘giving himself to “strange women” and a fascination which led to the worship of strange gods mingled with political motives’, we find him beautifully preaching ‘Monotheism’ even to the Queen of Yemen, as a result of which she willingly embraced Islām, as stated in the Holy Qur’ān:

قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ⁴²⁷

She [the Queen of Yemen] said, ‘My Lord, surely I have wronged myself, and I submit with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.’

As to King Solomon’s (pbAh) indulgence in magic and witchcraft, the Holy Qur’ān explicitly announces,

⁴²⁶ W. Smith, *A Dic. of the B.*, (1984), 644f.

⁴²⁷ The Qur’ān, al-Naml, 27:44.

وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ⁴²⁸

Not that Sulayman disbelieved: it is the devils who disbelieved. They teach men witchcraft.’⁴²⁹

After fifteen centuries of desecration and character assassination of the holy King Solomon (pbAh), it was through the Prophet of Arabia (pbAh) that he was honourably acquitted by Allah Almighty of all false charges and his innocence was established. It was therefore a pleasant duty of King Solomon (pbAh) that he should pay homage to his real benefactor in advance in this way.

⁴²⁸ The Qur’ān, al-Baqarah 2:102.

⁴²⁹ N. J. Dawood, *Eng. Tr. of the Qur’ān*, Revised by Mahmud Y. Zayid (Beirut: Dar al-Choura, 1980), 11.

The Hebrew Words of the Prophecy

Entry/Page of Strong's Dictionary.	English Words	Hebrew Words	Pronunciation of Heb Words	Meanings as recorded in the Strong's Dictionary of the Heb. Words in the B.
1730/30	Beloved	דוד	Dod	Lover, friend, esp an uncle, beloved, father's brother.
6703/99	White/radiant	עֹה	Tsach	Dazzling, i.e. sunny; bright; clear, white [A bright shining brightness; it is not the same as lavan, which would mean dead white' (Pulpit Bible Commentary, p.122)].
122/08	Ruddy	אדם	Adom	To show blood in the face; flush; turn rosy.
1713/29	Chiefest	דגל	Dagal	Raise a flag; fig. to be conspicuous; chiefest.
7233/106	Ten thousand	רבבה	Rebobah	Ten thousand; myriad.
7218/106	Head	ראש	Rosh	Top; company; excellent; first; ruler; chiefest.
6337/94	Gold	פז	Paz	Pure (gold); hence gold itself.
8534/124	Bushy	תלתל	Taltal	A trailing bough.
7838/114	Black	שחר	Scachar/schahor	Black, dusky from 7835 [i.e., 'identical with 7836 (i.e., 'be up early at any task with the implication of earnestness'), through the idea of the duskiness of early dawn'].
6158/91	Raven	ערב	'Areb	A raven (from its dusky hue); 6152 and 6154 are also 'ereb and mean Arabia; 6163 is 'Arabi: 'an Arabian or inhabitant of Arabia'.
4402/66	Fitty set	מלאת	Milla'th	Fulness; a <i>plump</i> socket (of the eye); from 4390, [i.e., 'full, fil, fulfil'].
3123/48	Doves	יונה	Yownah	Probably from the same as 3196 [i.e., 'wine; by impl. intoxication]; a dove.
3895/59	Cheeks	לחי	Lechiy	To be soft; the cheek (from its <i>fleshiness</i>).
6170/91	Bed	ערוגה	'aroojah	Something piled up; bed.
1314/24	Spices	בשם	Besem	<i>Fragrance</i> ; by impl. <i>spicery</i> ; the <i>balsam</i> plant; smell, spice, sweet (odour).
4840/73	Sweet	מרקח	Merqach	Sweet; a <i>spicy</i> herb.
4026/61	Flowers	מגדל	Mijdal	A <i>tower</i> (from its size or height); fig. A (pyramidal) <i>bed</i> of flowers; castle.
8193/120	Lips	שפה	Shafah	The lip; by impl. language; language, speech, talk, words.
7799/114	Lilies	שושן	Shoshan	From an equiv. of 7797 [i.e. 'to be bright i.e. cheerful, rejoice'] a lily;
5197/78	Dropping	נטף	Nataph	To ooze, to fall in drops; fig. to speak by inspiration, prophesy.
4261/64	Lovely	מחמד	M+H+M+D/Muhammad	From 2530 [chamad, i.e. to delight in; greatly beloved; goodly; pleasant thing, precious thing] delightful, a delight, i.e. object of affection or desire, lovely.
7453/109	Friend	ריע/רע	Rea'/reya'	From 7462 ['To rule; to associate with: companion, herdsman, shepherd']; friend, fellow, an associate (more or less close):- lover, neighbour, (an) other.
157/9	Friend	אהב	Ahab	To have affection for (sexually or otherwise):- beloved, friend. (It has not been used here)
3039,40/47	Friend	ידיד/ידידה	Yedeed/Yedeedah	Loved: amiable, beloved. fem. Of 3039; beloved; an Israelitess. (It has not been used here)
3389/52	Jerusalem	ירושלים	Yerushalayim	A dual (in allusion to its two main hills); founded peaceful; Jerusalem.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT
OF THE HISTORY OF Jerusalem

by

Dr. Ihsanur Rahman Ghauri

Jerusalem is one of the most ancient Canaanite cities. Its meanings have been explained by *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* as:

With regard to the meaning of the original name there is no concurrence of opinion. The oldest known form, Ura-salim, has been considered by many to mean either the 'City of Peace' or the 'City of (the god) Salem,' but other interpreters, considering the name as of Hebrew origin, interpret it as the 'possession of peace' or 'foundation of peace.' *It is one of the ironies of history that a city which in all of its long history has seen so little peace and for whose possession such rivers of blood have been shed should have such a possible meaning for its name* (stress added).⁴³⁰

It has been recorded as 'Salem' in the Bible (Gen 14:18) which has been identified with Jerusalem in Ps 76:3 and in early Jewish tradition. Modern scholars also endorse this tradition. 'The priest of God Most High', Melchizedek, was the king of Salem when Abraham visited it in nineteenth century BC. As to its antiquity the book *Jerusalem* explains:

⁴³⁰ *International Standard Bible Enc.*, (Albany, OR USA: Books For The Ages, AGES Software, Version 1.0 © 1997), s.v. 'Jerusalem' by Geerhardus Vos, 6:181.

Various pre-historic sites of the Lower Paleolithic⁴³¹ period have been found. In the Mesolithic⁴³² period, which followed, the climate was stabilized in its present form and, due to the prevailing dryness, conditions became much more difficult for prehistoric man in the Jerusalem area. Only two sites are dated to this period. The agricultural revolution of the Neolithic⁴³³ period enabled man to make progress against the desert: 16 sites are indicated for this period. In the Chalcolithic⁴³⁴ period, settlement contracted somewhat, probably because of the strong attraction of the Jordan Valley and the Negev, which led to a relative decline of the mountain area.⁴³⁵

International Standard Bible Enc. traces its antiquity as follows:

Pre-Israelite period. — The beginnings of Jerusalem are long before recorded history: at various points in the neighbourhood, e.g. at el Bukei`a to the Southwest, and at the northern extremity of the Mount of Olives to the Northeast, were very large settlements of Paleolithic man, long before the dawn of history, as is proved by the enormous quantities of Celts⁴³⁶ scattered over the surface. It is certain that the city's site itself was occupied many centuries before David, and it is a traditional view that the city called SALEM (Genesis 14:18), over which Melchizedek

⁴³¹ 'Paleolithic' is the 'Old Stone Age: before 10,000 BC'.

⁴³² 'Mesolithic' is the 'Middle Stone Age: 10,000 to 7,500 BC'.

⁴³³ 'Neolithic', i.e. 'the latest part of the Stone Age, following the mesolithic period, esp. as characterized by the use of ground or polished stone implements and weapons' (*New Shorter Oxf. Dic*).

⁴³⁴ 'Chalcolithic', i.e. 'Copper Age: 4,000 to 3,150 BC'.

⁴³⁵ Israel Pocvket Library, *Jerusalem*, (Keter Books, 1973), 5.

⁴³⁶ It should have been 'celts' and not 'Celts'. 'celts' means 'a stone or metal axe without perforation or groove for hefting (handle)'; whereas 'Celts' were ancient W European people settled in Britain before coming of the Romans. They were fierce fighters and fine horsemen. They were good farmers and used ploughs pulled by oxen.

was king, was identical with Jerusalem.⁴³⁷

The first certain reference to this city is about 1450 BC, when the name Ur-u-salem occurs in several letters belonging to the Tell el-Amarna Letters correspondence. In 7 of these letters occurs the name Abd Khiba, and it is clear that this man was 'king,' or governor of the city, as the representative of Pharaoh of Egypt. (...). Incidentally we may gather that the place was then a fortified city, guarded partly by mercenary Egyptian troops, and there are reasons for thinking that then ruler of Egypt, Amenhotep IV, had made it a sanctuary of his god Aten — the sun-disc.⁴³⁸

It is reported to be 'inhabited as early as 3200 B.C.E.'⁴³⁹ Pottery from the fourth millennium B.C. has been excavated at Jerusalem.⁴⁴⁰ Pottery of Early Bronze (3150-2200 BC) and Middle Bronze Ages (2200-1550 BC) shows that people lived there during the third and early second millennia. Stewart Henry Perowne, Orientalist, historian, and author, explains:

Excavation has shown that a settlement existed on the site south of the Temple platform, possibly in the Early Bronze Age and certainly by 1800 BC. A massive town wall still survives, just above the spring that determined the location of the ancient settlement.⁴⁴¹

The walled city of this period was very small, occupying only between eight and nine acres. At the upper end, a little to the N of the spring, there was a sanctuary. The royal palace and cemetery lay below this, and the rest of the hill to its South tip was occupied by the city. Remains of Early Bronze Age wall have been discovered on this part of the hill. In 15th century BC the Hurrians or Horites came into

⁴³⁷ *International Standard Bible Enc.*, 6:227.

⁴³⁸ *International Standard Bible Enc.*, 6:227-28.

⁴³⁹ *Enc. of Judaism* Second (2005) edn., 2:1201.

⁴⁴⁰ *Interpreter's Dic. of the Bible* (2000), 2:846.

⁴⁴¹ *Britannica: Macropaedia* 15th edn. (1982), s.v. 'Jerusalem' 10:139.

Palestine. One of the writers of Amarna Letters was ‘*Abd Hiba* or *Arti-Hepa*, who reigned at Jerusalem in the 14th century BC. A strong masonry rampart which has been excavated on the East slope of Ophel comes from this period.⁴⁴² In the early twelfth century BC ‘the children of Judah [as well as the children of Simeon (see Judg. 8:3)] fought against Jerusalem and took it; they struck it with the edge of the sword [slaughtered its inhabitants] and set the city on fire.’⁴⁴³ Quoting this verse W. Smith observes:

In the fifteen centuries which elapsed between this siege and the siege and destruction of the city by Titus, A.D. 70, the city was besieged no fewer than *seventeen times* [stress added]; twice it was razed to the ground, and on two other occasions its walls were levelled. In this respect it stands without a parallel in any city, ancient or modern.⁴⁴⁴

The Jebosites soon recaptured and rebuilt the city.⁴⁴⁵

Defeating the Jebosites, King David (pbAh) captured Jerusalem in about the first quarter of the tenth century BC and made it his capital which was a step of great historical importance. It was neither situated in the area of northern tribes nor in the area of southern tribes. It, therefore, played an important role in the unification of the kingdom. He made it a religious capital of the nation as well by bringing the Ark of Covenant and setting up a tent for it near his palace. After building his own palace, David (pbAh) wanted to build a house for God too, but was not allowed to do so (II Sam.7).⁴⁴⁶

King Solomon (pbAh) built his palace and the Temple. He

⁴⁴² *Interpreter's Dic. of the Bible* (2000), 2:846-47.

⁴⁴³ Judges 1:8 NKJV. It shows that even before the construction of the temple, Jerusalem was not a ‘City of Peace’.

⁴⁴⁴ William Smith, *A Dic. of the Bible*, (Michigan: Regency Reference Library, Zondervan Pblg. House, Grand Rapids, 1967), 302.

⁴⁴⁵ *Interpreter's Dic. of the Bible* (2000), 2:847.

⁴⁴⁶ See *Interpreter's Dic. of the Bible* (2000), 2:848.

also built the wall of the city as it had been considerably expanded during his and his father David's (pbAh) reign.

In 922 BC the city was plundered by the Egyptian Pharaoh, Sheshak (Sheshonq I).

About the middle of the 9th century BC it was plundered by the Palestinians and Arabians.

By the reign of Jehoshaphat the city had again largely recovered its importance (cf. 1 Kings 22), but in his son Jehoram's reign (849-842 BC) Judah was invaded and the royal house was pillaged by Philistines and Arabs (2 Chron. 21:16-17).⁴⁴⁷

In 786 BC, during Amaziah's reign (797-767 BC), Jehoash of Israel (798-782 BC) invaded Jerusalem⁴⁴⁸ (2 Kings 14:8-9). Judah was defeated in the battle at Beth-shemesh.

(...), and [Jehoash of Israel] brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim unto the corner gate, 400 cubits. And he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.⁴⁴⁹

Amaziah's son, Azariah (Uzziah), was the king of Judah during 767-740 BC. He repaired the town-wall and fortified it with towers. His son Ahaz feeling the weakness of his little kingdom, bought with silver and gold the alliance of Tiglath-pileser III, king of Assyria (745-727 BC). He exhibited such a weakness about his faith that he made an altar similar to Tiglath-pileser's for his own ritual in the temple (2 Kings 16:10-12). His reign is darkened by a record of heathen practices, so much so that he made his son pass through the fire as a human sacrifice (1 Kings 16:3-4; compare 2 Chr. 28:3).

⁴⁴⁷ *International Standard Bible Enc.*, 6:231.

⁴⁴⁸ *Enc Britannica: Macropaedia* 15th edn. (1982), 10:139.

⁴⁴⁹ 2 Kings 14:14 KJV.

In 722 BC, in the reign of Hoshea (731-722 BC), the northern kingdom of Israel came to an end, its capital, Samaria, having been captured by the Assyrian emperor Sargon II, son of Shalmanesser. 27,290 captives were deported from Samaria to Gozan, Haran, Media, Hulah, and Nineveh. Judah was ruled by king Ahaz (732-716 BC) at that time.

King Ahaz of Judah was succeeded by his son Hezekiah (716-686 BC) who undertook some religious reforms. Hezekiah was succeeded by his son, Manasseh (686-642 BC). He reigned Judah for almost half a century and his period was the dark age for the Israelite religion. He introduced idol-worship in the very temple of Solomon. He did not tolerate the religion of Israel. He was made prisoner in 701 BC by the Assyrian king Sennacherib (705-681 BC) who carried him off to Babylon and made Judah his tributary. He returned after some uncertain interval of time to Jerusalem.

In 640 BC Josiah, son of Amon, succeeded his father. He destroyed all relics of idolatry. The Temple was restored. In the course of repairs (in *ca.* 620 BC) Hilkiah the chief priest found the 'book of the law of the Lord'. He was aided by Jeremiah the prophet in spreading through his kingdom the knowledge and worship of Jehovah. He carried out his endeavours to abolish every trace of idolatry and superstition. In 609 BC he was mortally wounded in the battle against Pharaoh Necho in the valley of Esdraelon and died before he could reach Jerusalem.⁴⁵⁰

On the Eastern side the Babylonians captured Nineveh, the capital of Assyrian empire. In 612 BC they also took the suzerainty of Jerusalem from the Assyrians. They brought the Assyrian empire to an end in 609 BC, despoiled Jerusalem and took its king to Babylonia.

During this time Jeremiah (*ca.* 620-580 BC) prophesied for forty-two years (*ca.* 626-584 BC), actively foretelling in streets and courts of Jerusalem the approaching ruin of the

⁴⁵⁰ See W. Smith's *Dic. of the Bible*, 1967, s.v. 'Josiah', p.324.

city. These messages were received with contempt and anger by the king and court (Jeremiah 36:23).

On 15 March, 597 BC Nebuchadnezzar II took Jerusalem. Jerusalem was despoiled of all its treasures. Many Jews exiled including Jehoiachin and Ezekiel. Nebuchadnezzar nominated Zedekiah as king of Jerusalem. After ten years Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. Jerusalem was besieged for more than a year until 'famine was sore in the city.' All the men of war 'fled by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden,' and the king 'went by the way of the Arabah,' but was overtaken and captured 'in the plains of Jericho.' A terrible punishment followed his faithlessness to Babylon (2 Kings 25:1-7). The city and the temple were despoiled and burnt; the walls of Jerusalem were broken down (2 Kings 25:8f; 2 Chronicles 36:17f). It is probable that the ark was removed also at this time.

In 538 BC Cyrus the Persian captured the Babylonian empire. He allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem and to rebuild the house of Yahweh (Ezr 1:1f). Over 40,000 Jews (Ezr 1:2-64) under Sheshbazzar, prince of Judah (Ezr 1:8,11), governor of a province, returned, bringing with them the sacred vessels of the temple. The daily sacrifices were renewed and the feasts and fasts restored (Ezr 3:3-7). The foundations of the restored temple were laid (Ezr 3:10; 5:16), but on account of the opposition of the people of the land and the Samaritans, the building was not completed until 20 years later (Ezr 6:15).

In March 516 BC the building of the Temple was completed and in 515 BC Jerusalem was given the autonomous status and became the capital of the new state of Judea.

In 444 BC Nehemiah built the fortifications and the walls of the city. The rebuilding took 52 days. No doubt the wall was far weaker than that which Nebuchadnezzar destroyed 142 years previously, but it followed the same outline and had the same general structure. As to the history of the next 100 years, *International Standard Bible Enc.* explains:

For the next 100 years we have scarcely any historical knowledge of Jerusalem. A glimpse is afforded by the papyri of Elephantine where we read of a Jewish community in Upper Egypt petitioning Bagohi, the governor of Judea, for permission to rebuild their own temple to Yahweh in Egypt; incidentally they mention that they had already sent an unsuccessful petition to Johanan the high priest and his colleagues in Jerusalem. In another document we gather that this petition to the Persian governor was granted. These documents must date about 411-407 BC. Later, probably about 350, we have somewhat ambiguous references to the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of numbers of Jews in the time of Artaxerxes (III) Ochus (358-337 BC). With the battle of Issus and Alexander's Palestinian campaign (*ca.* 332 BC), we are upon surer historical ground.⁴⁵¹

In 333 BC the Greek king [Alexander the Great](#) of Macedonia captured the city. After the death of [Alexander the Great](#) (323 BC), Palestine suffered much from its position, between the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucids of Antioch. Each became in turn its suzerain, and indeed at one time the tribute appears to have been divided between them. Ptolemy captured Alexandria and made it the capital of the state. In 321 Ptolemy Soter invaded Palestine, and, it is said, captured Jerusalem by a deceitful way, entering the city on the Sabbath as if anxious to offer sacrifice. He carried away many of his Jewish prisoners to Egypt and settled them there. In the struggles between the contending monarchies, although Palestine suffered, the capital itself, on account of its isolated position, remained undisturbed, under the suzerainty of Egypt. In 217 BC, Ptolemy (IV) Philopator, after his victory over Antiochus III at Raphia, visited the temple at Jerusalem and offered sacrifices. He is reported (3 Macc:1) to have entered the 'Holy of Holies.'

Antiochus III the Great (223-187 BC) defeated Ptolemy V in 198 BC as a result of which Palestine went under the control of the Seleucids. The Jews helped him in besieging the

⁴⁵¹ *International Standard Bible Enc.*, 6:237.

Egyptian garrison in the AKRA. Jesus ben Sira has given an account of the prosperity of the city about this time (190-180 BC). The Jews had enjoyed considerable prosperity and religious liberty under the Egyptians. But the new Seleucid ruler increased the taxes, and fidelity to the tenets of Judaism came to be regarded as treachery to the Seleucid rule. Antiochus III suffered a defeat by the Romans at Magnesia in 190 BC who took his son Antiochus IV to Rome as hostage. He was released in exchange to Demetrius in 175 BC and was allowed to seize the throne of Syria (175-164 BC). Antiochus hastened (170 BC) against Jerusalem with a great army, captured the city, massacred the people and despoiled the temple (1 Macc 1:20-24). Two years later Antiochus, being afraid of Rome in Egypt, appears to have determined that in Jerusalem, at any rate, he would have no sympathizers with Egypt. In 168 BC he sent his chief collector of tribute, who attacked the city with strong force and entered it (1 Macc 1:30). He looted the city, set it on fire and demolished the dwellings and walls. He massacred the men, and many of the women and children he sold as slaves (1 Macc 1:31-35; 2 Macc 5:24). He destroyed the Great Temple of Jerusalem and tried to convert the people of Judea to idolatry. *International Standard Bible Enc.* has observed:

He (Antiochus IV) sacrificed swine upon the holy altar, and caused the high priest himself — a Greek in all his sympathies — to partake of the impure sacrificial feasts; he tried by barbarous cruelties to suppress the ritual of circumcision. In everything he endeavoured, (...), to organize Jerusalem as a Greek city, and to secure his position he built a strong wall, and a great tower for the Akra, and, having furnished it well with armor and victuals⁴⁵², he left a strong garrison. But the Syrians had overreached⁴⁵³ themselves this time, and the reaction against persecution and attempted religious suppression produced

⁴⁵² ‘Victuals’ means ‘supplies of food and stores’.

⁴⁵³ ‘overreach’ means ‘fail by trying to achieve more than is possible’.

the great uprising of the Maccabees.⁴⁵⁴

In 167 BC Mattathias of Modin, a Jewish priest, defied Antiochus' ban on Judaism and escaped into mountains outside Lydda with his sons and began a revolt. In 165 BC Mattathias died, his sons continued the revolt. Judas Maccabaeus and his brothers retook Jerusalem from the Syrians. They cleansed the Great Temple, reconstructed the altar, restored the temple-services, and destroyed the idols.

Judas defeated three Syrian armies in the open, but he could not expel the garrison in the Akra. In 163 BC a great Syrian army came to the relief of the hard-pressed garrison. Lysias, accompanied by the boy-king himself (Antiochus V), approached the city from the South via Beth-Zur. At Beth-zachariah the Jews were defeated, and Judas' brother Eleazar was slain, and Jerusalem was soon captured. The fort on Mt. Zion which surrounded the sanctuary was surrendered by treaty, but when the king saw its strength he broke his oath and destroyed the fortifications (1 Macc 6:62). But even in this desperate state Judas and his followers were saved. A certain pretender, Philip, raised a rebellion in a distant part of the empire, and Lysias was obliged to patch up a truce with the nationalist Jews more favorable to Judas than before his defeat; the garrison in the Akra remained, however, to remind the Jews that they were not independent. In 161 BC another Syrian general, Nicanor, was sent against Judas, but he was at first won over to friendship and when, later, at the instigation of the Hellenistic party, he was compelled to attack Judas, he did so with hastily raised levies and was defeated at Adasa, a little North of Jerusalem. Judas was, however, not long suffered to celebrate his triumph. A month later Bacchides appeared before Jerusalem, and in April, 161 BC, Judas was slain in battle with him at Berea.⁴⁵⁵

By 152 BC, Judas' brother, Jonathan, was virtual ruler of the land. He gained more than any of his family had ever done.

⁴⁵⁴ *International Standard Bible Enc.*, 6:239.

⁴⁵⁵ *See International Standard Bible Enc.*, 6:240f.

He was appointed high priest and *strategos*, or deputy for the king, in Judea. He repaired the city and restored the temple-fortress. He made the walls higher and built up a great part of the eastern wall. He also made a great mound between the Akra and the city to isolate the Syrian garrison.

Simon succeeded Jonathan. He captured the Akra in 139 BC, destroyed it, and partially levelled the hill on which it stood. In 135 BC his son, John Hyrcanus⁴⁵⁶ (King of Judea from 135-104 BC), succeeded him.

The name 'Maccabees' and the 'Maccabean' is generally given to Mattathias and his sons, and the name 'Hasmonean' to their descendants (135-63 BC), when John Hyrcanus became the ruler. In 134 BC John Hyrcanus was besieged in Jerusalem by Antiochus VII Sidetes and J. Hyrcanus had to surrender hostages and heavy tributes. McKenzie states in his *Dic. of the Bible*:

After the death of Antiochus VII in 128 Judea was practically independent. John ruled with the title of ethnarch and high priest. He extended Jewish rule over E Palestine and Edom, where he forced the Edomeans to submit to circumcision. He attacked Samaria and destroyed the temple of Samaritans on Mt. Gerizim. The Pharisees, alarmed at his ambitions and the secular character of his rule, broke with Hasmonians during his reign.

Aristobulus I (105-104 BC), son of John Hyrcanus: He imprisoned his mother, to whom the sovereignty had been bequeathed by the will of John, and imprisoned his brothers except Antigonus, whom he associated with himself in government but later assassinated. Aristobulus assumed the title of king.

Alexander Jannaeus (Jonathan), brother of Aristobulus I (104-76 BC): Salome Alexandra, widow of Aristobulus, released her brothers-in-law from prison and set Jonathan,

⁴⁵⁶ John Hyrcanus or Johanan (135-104 BC), son of Simon Maccabeus, was the High priest and a prince of the Hasmonian family. He was a wise and just ruler and a skilful warrior.

who preferred to go by his Greek name, Alexander, upon the throne. Alexander extended the Jewish kingdom, in spite of a number of setbacks, almost to the limits of the ancient kingdom of David. (...). Alexander extended his rule over Philistia (capturing it from Ptolemy Lathyrus of Egypt's Control) and (...) some of the Hellenistic cities. In his expansion northward in Palestine he confronted the Nabatean king Obodath, who held Damascus and halted his advance in that direction. This defeat aroused his adversaries among his own people, who summoned help from the Seleucid king Demetrius III Eukairos. Demetrius invaded Judea and defeated Alexander. The defeat, however, turned the patriotism of the Jews to sympathy with Alexander; Demetrius, thus deprived of support, was forced to withdraw. Alexander revenged himself by having 800 of his Jewish captives and their wives and children executed before their eyes; he himself dined with his concubines, watching the spectacle. Antiochus XII Dionysus, the successor of Demetrius III, invaded Palestine, and Alexander was unable to resist him; but after Antiochus was defeated and killed by the Nabateans, Alexander continued his conquest in E Palestine. (...).

Salome (75-67 BC), widow of Alexander Jannaeus: She appointed Hyrcanus II, the elder son of Alexander, high priest and, recognizing the unchecked ambition of Aristobulus II, the younger son, kept him in private life. After her death the civil war between Hyrcanus and Aristobulus led each brother to seek the assistance of Pompey, then engaged in his eastern conquests. Aristobulus, however, finally refused Roman arbitration; and Pompey attacked and took Jerusalem in 63 BC. He ended the Hasmonean monarchy, detached the territories conquered by earlier Hasmonean rulers, and made Judea part of the province of Syria.⁴⁵⁷

Pompey allowed Hyrcanus to remain high priest, but without the title of 'king.' He reverently left the treasures in

⁴⁵⁷ John L. McKenzie, *Dic. of the Bible*, (1984), 340.

the temple untouched; he merely laid a tribute upon the city, and demolished the walls. Aristobulus II was taken to Rome as prisoner, and the city became tributary to the Roman Empire. The greedy Crassus two years later (54 BC) plundered what Pompey had spared.

In 47 BC Antipater was appointed procurator in return for very material services rendered by him to Julius Caesar in Egypt. At the same time Caesar allowed Hyrcanus to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Antipater made his eldest son, Phaselus, governor of Jerusalem, and gave Galilee to the care of his younger son, Herod.

Julius Caesar confirmed Hyrcanus in the high priesthood, and gave him civil power as ethnarch, and made Herod's father, Antipater the Idumean, his chief minister, procurator of Judaea. Upon Antipater's assassination, his sons Herod and Phasaelus, with Hyrcanus, resisted Antigonus (Aristobulus' son and Hyrcanus' nephew), who with a Parthian army attacked Jerusalem. Herod escaped.

In 40 BC Herod succeeded his father as procurator of Judea by order of the Roman Senate, but the same year the Parthians under Pacorus and Barzapharnes captured and plundered Jerusalem and re-established Antigonus. Herod, was appointed king of Judea by Antony in 37 BC. He took Jerusalem after a 5 months siege. Antigonus was killed by Antony's command. Herod slew the chiefs of the Asmonaeans, and the whole Sanhedrim, and finally, the last of the Asmonaeans, Hyrcanus.

Herod's most magnificent work was to rebuild the temple from its foundations beginning 20 or 19 BC. The construction of the sanctuary was accomplished in 11-10 BC by 1,000 specially trained priests. The court was finished in 9 BC. However, the temple was not considered completed until AD 63 or 64, under Herod Agrippa II and the procurator Albinus. Herod also built four great towers on the old wall. In 4 BC disturbances occurred, and shortly afterward Herod died. He died some months after Christ's birth. Jesus Christ was born somewhere in AD 1-5. *Fausset's Bible Dic.* writes:

At the Passover A.D. 30 our Lord's crucifixion and resurrection took place.⁴⁵⁸

Roman emperor, Caligula⁴⁵⁹ ordered his statue to be erected in the temple. The Jews protested against it, and by Agrippa's intercession Caligula agreed to withdraw his order. A famine commenced in A.D. 45 which lasted two years.

Gessius Florus (A.D. 65) tested the Jews' endurance to the last point, desolating whole cities and openly allowing robbers to buy impunity in crime. He tried to get the treasure from the temple, but after plundering the upper city failed. Young Eleazar, son of Ananias, led a party which withheld the regular offerings from the Roman emperor, virtually renouncing allegiance. So the last Roman war began. The insurgents from the temple and lower city set on fire the Asmonaeon palace, the high priest's house, and the archives repository, 'the nerves of the city'. They slew the Roman garrison, and burnt Antonia. The high priest and his brother were found slain in the aqueduct.

Cestius Gallus marched on the city, but was obliged to retire from the N. wall of the temple back to Scopus, where he was utterly defeated in November, A.D. 66. C. Gallus' first advance and retreat gave the Christians the opportunity of fleeing as Christ counselled them, 'when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains (Matthew 24:16). Vespasian, until the fall of Gistala, in October or November, A.D. 67, was subduing the northern country. John son of Levi escaped to Jerusalem, and in two years and a half (A.D. 70)

⁴⁵⁸ A. R. Fausset, *Fausset's Bible Dic.*, (AGES Software Albany, OR USA, Version 1.0 © 2000), 2(G-M):434.

⁴⁵⁹ Caligula (Caesar Augustus) was third emperor of Rome. He was born on Aug. 31, 12 C.E. and was assassinated at Rome on Jan. 24, 41. He formed a strong friendship for the Jewish king Agrippa. He professed belief in his own divinity, and ordered alters to be erected to himself and worship to be paid to him (Jewish Enc. 3:514).

Titus began the siege, the Zealots then having overcome the moderate party. The Zealots were in two parties: one under John of Giscala and Eleazar, holding the temple and Antonia, 8,400 men; the other under Simon Burgioras in a tower, holding the upper city, from the Coenaculum to the Latin convent, the lower city in the valley, and the Acre N. of the temple, 10,000 men and 5,000 Idumeans. Strangers and pilgrims swelled the number to 600,000. Josephus says a million perished in the siege, and 40,000 were allowed to depart into the country, besides an immense number sold to the army, part of the '97,000 carried captive during the whole war'. This number is thought an exaggeration.⁴⁶⁰

On 7 September, 70 Jerusalem fell to the Roman general, Titus, son of Vespasian. The Roman troops put the city to fire and destroyed most of the Third Temple. Only the 'Wailing Wall' was left standing. The Romans abolished the Jewish high priesthood and the Sanhedrin.

At that time the city was distracted by internal feuds. Simon held the upper and lower cities; John of Gischala, the temple and Ophel; the Idumeans, introduced by the Zealots, fought only at Walls for themselves. Yet another party, too weak to make its counsels felt, was for peace with Rome, a policy, which, if taken in time, would have found in Titus a spirit of reason and mercy. The miseries of the siege and the destruction of life and property were at least as much the work of the Jews themselves as of their conquerors. On the 15th day of the siege the third wall (Agrippa's) was captured; the second wall was finally taken on the 24th day; on the 72nd day the Antonia fell, and 12 days later the daily sacrifice ceased. On the 105th day the temple and the lower city were burnt, and the last day found the whole city in flames.

The city and temple were wholly burnt and destroyed, excepting the W. wall of the upper city and Herod's three great towers, which were left as memorials of the strength

⁴⁶⁰ Extracted from *Fausset's Bible Dic.*, 2 (G-M):435-36.

of the defenses. The old and weak were killed, the children under 17 sold as slaves, the rest were sent to the Egyptian mines, the amphitheatres, and Rome. The 10th legion of the Roman army so thoroughly levelled and dug up, that no one visiting Jerusalem would believe it had ever been inhabited. Hadrian completed the fulfillment of Christ's (pbAh) words⁴⁶¹ by razing the ruins still left and drawing a plow over the temple foundations.

For 60 years after its capture silence reigns over Jerusalem. The site continued to be garrisoned, but it was not rebuilt to any extent. In 130 AD it was visited by Hadrian, who found only few buildings standing. Two years later (132-35 AD) occurred the last great rebellion of the Jews in the uprising of Bar-Cochba (son of a star), who was encouraged by the rabbi Akiba. With the suppression of this last effort for freedom by Julius Severus, the remaining traces of Judaism were stamped out, and it is even said that the very site of the temple was plowed up by T. Annius Rufus and an altar of Jupiter was placed upon the temple-site. The Jews were excluded from Jerusalem.

In 138 Hadrian rebuilt the city, giving it the name AElia Capitolina. A statue of horse-ridden Hadrian was placed on the site of the 'Holy of Holies'. Either Hadrian himself, or one of the Antonine emperors, erected a temple of Venus on the north-western hill, where subsequently was built the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The habit of pilgrimage to the holy sites, which appears to have had its roots far back in the 2nd century, seems to have increasingly flourished in the next two centuries.

International Standard Bible Enc. has recorded:

In 362 Julian is said to have attempted to rebuild the temple, but the work was interrupted by an explosion. The

⁴⁶¹ He beheld the city and wept over it, saying, (...); 'and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another;' (Luke 19:41,42, 44).

story is doubtful.⁴⁶²

Fausset's Bible Dic. relates the event as follows:

In the apostate Julian's reign the Jews at his instigation attempted with great enthusiasm to rebuild the temple; but a whirlwind and earthquake shattered the stones of the former foundation, and a fire from the temple mount consumed their tools. Ammianus Marcellinus (23:1), the emperor's friend, attests the fact. Providence baffled Julian's attempt to falsify Christ's words.⁴⁶³

International Standard Bible Enc. states:

The site of the temple itself appears to have remained in ruins down to the seventh century.⁴⁶⁴

In AD 614/615 Palestine was conquered by the Persians Chosroes II who destroyed Jerusalem including the church of the Holy Sepulchre and took the 'True Cross' as booty, on which Jesus was believed to have been crucified. He slew thousands of monks and clergy.

About the recapture of Jerusalem by the Romans *International Standard Bible Enc.* states:

In 629 Heracleus, (...), reached Jerusalem in triumph, bearing back the captured fragment of the cross. (...). The triumph of Christendom was but short. Seven years earlier had occurred the historic flight of Mohammed [pbAh] from Mecca (the Hegira), and in 637 the victorious followers of the Prophet appeared in the Holy City. After a short siege, it capitulated, but the khalif [or 'khalifah?'] Omar treated the Christians with generous mercy. The Christian sites were spared, but upon the temple-site, which up to this [time] had apparently been occupied by no important Christian building but was of peculiar sanctity to the Moslems through Mohammed's [pbAh] alleged visions there, a wooden mosque

⁴⁶² *International Standard Bible Enc.*, (1997) 6:247.

⁴⁶³ *Fausset's Bible Dic.*, 2000, 2 (G-M):437-38.

⁴⁶⁴ *International Standard Bible Enc.*, (1997) 6:248.

was erected, capable of accommodating 3,000 worshippers.⁴⁶⁵

Fausset's Bible Dic. asserts:

Caliph Omar (637 A.D.) took the city from the patriarch Sophronius, who said, 'Verily, this is the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place. Christians were allowed liberty of worship.'⁴⁶⁶

Dr. Tāriq al-Suwaydān has recorded the event as follows:

When the patriarch [Sophronius] saw this scene, he was impressed and the grace of Islām seemed to be great. He said to his fellow citizens that no man on earth could withstand this nation. Surrender to them to salvage yourselves. Agreement was written among them. 'Umar granted them peace and security in the city. He guaranteed that their places of worship, their churches, and their holy places shall neither be demolished, nor touched. In this way the holy city witnessed the most merciful conqueror of its history. It is recorded in the history of the holy land that whenever any conqueror took hold of the land, he completely destroyed it and murdered its inhabitants.'⁴⁶⁷

The author further noted:

After this agreement the gates of the holy city were opened for 'Umar bin Khaṭṭāb and he entered it. He began to go around the city. When he reached the Church of the Holy Sepulchre there was the call for Prayer. The Patriarch asked him to offer his prayer there in the Church. 'Umar said to him, 'No; if I offered prayer at this place, the Muslims might take it from you at some later time, saying 'Umar offered his prayer here.' (...).'Umar kept going around in search of al-Aqṣā Mosque but could not find it. He enquired the Patriarch about it. He said, 'Is it that one which is sacred to Jews?'

⁴⁶⁵ *International Standard Bible Enc.*, (1997) 6:248, 49.

⁴⁶⁶ *Fausset's Bible Dic.*, 2000, 2 (G-M):438.

⁴⁶⁷ Dr. Tāriq al-Suwaydān, *Falaṣṭīne, al-Tārīkh al-Muṣawwar*, (al-Ibdā' al-Fikrī, Kuwait, 2004), 84.

‘Umar replied in positive. He led him to it. He found it in the condition that the Christians had turned it into the place for rubbish and impurities. ‘Umar pulled up his sleeves and started sweeping and cleansing the mosque. When the Muslims, the leaders, and the troops saw it, they gathered and started cleansing the Holy Mosque. (...). Then ‘Umar took his coat, offered his prayer on it, and left it there. It was the first prayer of the Muslims in the al-Aqṣā Mosque after Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). (...). Then ‘Umar ordered at the spot to start the construction of the al-Aqṣā Mosque after removing the dunghill and garbage. (...).⁴⁶⁸

In *ca.* 640 AD (about two years after the fall of Jerusalem), Mu‘āwīya was appointed commander of the army operating in Syria and Palestine. He governed these countries for forty years, first as governor, and later as caliph. Some of the events are being recorded below from the *Enc. of Islam*:

During the long rule of Mu‘āwīya, the Muslim place of worship on the Temple area, approximately described by Bishop Arter in *ca.* 680 must have taken shape. (...) Mu‘āwīya built the Muslim sanctuary there “after ‘Umar”. It stands also to reason that the plan for erection of the Dome of the Rock, which needed immense preparations, was made during the protracted and orderly rule of Mu‘āwīya. The inscription in the dome bears the year 72/691-2, but the beginning of ‘Abd al-Malik reign (65-86/685-705) was extremely turbulent. ‘Abd al-Malik had good reasons to make efforts towards the completion of the building, which would show him as the great champion of Islām, but the early years of his caliphate were hardly suited for both conceiving such an enormous undertaking and carrying it out to its very end during a comparatively short period. Contrari-wise Mu‘āwīya is known also by his extensive buying and building activities in Mecca, in which he was not followed by later Umayyads. (...).

The real urge for the erection of the Dome of the Rock on the site where it stands and in the form which it has, was

⁴⁶⁸ *Falaṣṭīne, al-Tārīkh al-Muṣawwar*, (2004), 85, 86.

religious, in addition, of course, to the natural acculturation of the Arabs to an environment, where magnificent edifices were the eloquent witnesses of a triumphant Church and of great rulers. (...).

The end of Umayyad rule was for Jerusalem (*ca.* 750 AD), (...), a period of great tribulations. In the wake of a rebellion against the last Umayyad Marwān II, the walls of Jerusalem were pulled down and its inhabitants punished. Earthquakes aggravated the situation.⁴⁶⁹

Dr. Tāriq al-Suwaydān writes:

‘Abd al-Malik bin Marwān started the complete construction of the al-Aqṣā Mosque, and made this ‘Dome of the Rock’ a grand edifice. (...). But ‘Abd al-Malik died before the completion of the building. After him his son, al-Walīd completed it.⁴⁷⁰

The Mosque of ‘Umar still exists in the S.E. corner of the al-Aqṣā mosque. Sulaymān bin ‘Abd al-Malik, while he was still a crown prince, started construction of Ramla⁴⁷¹ as capital city of the province of Filasṭīn.

After the end of the Umayyad period, Jerusalem underwent the reign of ‘Abbāsīd dynasty for 750-969 AD. In 870 AD patriarch Theodosius praised the Muslims for permitting the Christians to build churches and to live in accordance with their religion without oppressing them. Jerusalem remained under the control of Fāṭimids, Turkomāns and Saljūks for 969-1099 AD.

The crusaders [laid siege on June 6, and] took Jerusalem

⁴⁶⁹ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New (1986) Edn., s.v. ‘al-Kuds’ by O. Grabar, Harvard Univ., 5:324,25,26.

⁴⁷⁰ *Falaṣṭīne, al-Tārīkh al-Muṣawwar*, (2004), 90.

⁴⁷¹ ‘Ramla’ is situated on the coastal plain 40 km/25 miles west-north-west of Jerusalem. In the reign of al-Walīd, his brother Sulaymān was governor of Filasṭīn. Stimulated by the example of ‘Abd al-Malik, the builder of the Qubbat al-Ṣakhrāh in Jerusalem (...), Sulaymān founded the town of al-Ramla and made it the seat of the provincial government.

in A.D. 1099, July 15th, and it remained in Christian possession 88 years, [until] Saladin retook it in 1187.⁴⁷²

Encyclopaedia of Islam has recorded:

The massacre of the Muslims and the Jews in the town was perpetrated out of military and religious considerations alike. (...). There was a gruesome bloodbath, no doubt. (...). Jerusalem became a Christian city, where no Muslim or Jewish cult was permitted and no non-Christian could take residence permanently. The mosques were turned into churches or used as secular buildings. The newly-founded kingdom was appropriately called the kingdom of Jerusalem, since the conversion of the Holy City into a Christian sanctuary had been the purpose of its erection. (...). Jerusalem remained closed to Muslims and Jews, but, in the course of time, they were permitted to come there for business and prayer. (...).

After the decisive victory of Ḥaṭṭīn (July 1187), Saladin advanced towards Jerusalem and laid siege on the city. After prolonged negotiations, in which the defenders threatened to kill the Muslim prisoners and all non-combatants, to burn all the valuables and to destroy the buildings on the Ḥaram al-Sharīf, an agreement was reached in November 1187, which permitted the inhabitants to ransom themselves after surrender. Only the Eastern Christians remained, and Jerusalem soon assumed the character of a predominantly Muslim city. (...). The influx of Learned Jews from France attested for the period *ca.* 1210-15 in both literary texts and Geniza letters proves that Ayyūbid rule at that time must have had a reputation of an orderly government able to guarantee the safety of foreigners. (...). The Khwarazmians over-ran Syria and Palestine, took Jerusalem in August 1244 and plundered and murdered in the town, desecrating the Holy Sepulchre and other churches.⁴⁷³

At the beginning of the period of Mamlūks (1250-1516),

⁴⁷² *Fausset's Bible Dic.*, 2000, 2 (G-M):438.

⁴⁷³ *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, s.v. 'al-Ḳuds', 5:330,31

Jerusalem was mostly in ruins and deserted. The Mamlūks undedrtook the rebuilding of the city. In those days the city was the seat of pious Şūfis. Jerusalem remained under Ottoman Turks for 1516-1831. *Fausset's Bible Dic.* has summarised it as follows:

In a dismantled state it was ceded to the Christians by the treaty with the [Roman] emperor Frederick II⁴⁷⁴, in 1219 [it should be 1229], and has ever since remained in the Mahometans' hands. From the first siege by the children of Judah (Judges 1:8), 1400 B.C. [?], to A.D. 1244 Jerusalem underwent 27 sieges, the last being by the Kharesmian hordes who slaughtered the priests and monks. There was the city before David, the second that of Solomon 1000 to 597 B.C., the third city that of Nehemiah which lasted for 300 years. A Grecised city under Herod (the fourth city) succeeded. This city, destroyed by Titus A.D. 70, was followed by a Roman city, the fifth, which lasted until the Mahometan time, the sixth city. Then followed the Christian city of Godfrey and the Baldwins, the seventh; lastly the eighth, the modern city of 600 years of Moslem rule. The Ottoman Suleiman in 1542 built the present walls. After a brief possession by the [Ibrāhīm] Pasha of Egypt from 1832 to 1840, Jerusalem was restored to the Sultan of Turkey, in whose hands it continues.⁴⁷⁵

By 1865 Jerusalem was connected with the outer world by telegraph. In 1868 the first road between Jerusalem and Jaffa usable by wheeled vehicles was completed. The railway followed in 1892.

⁴⁷⁴ Emperor Frederick II was born in 1194. He was crowned Emperor by the Pope in Rome on 22-11-1220. He set sail from Brindisi, a port of South Italy in the Adriatic Sea, for the Crusades in the Holy Land. Following complex negotiations he obtained Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nazareth from Sultan al-Kāmil of Egypt. He crowned himself king of Jerusalem in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on 18-3-1229. In the meantime papal troops had penetrated into his kingdom of Sicily. Frederick returned at once and reconquered the lost areas.

⁴⁷⁵ *Fausset's Bible Dic.*, 2000, 2 (G-M):438.

On 11 December 1917 the British general Allenby entered Jerusalem. The military government of the British army was replaced by civil administration on 1 July 1920. According to the census of 1931, the population comprised 90,503 persons: Jews were 51,222; Muslims 19,894; Christians 19,335. It became about 150,000 at the beginning of the World War II. The mayor of the municipal Corporation was always appointed from among the Muslims.⁴⁷⁶

In April 1920 there occurred first bloody clashes among Jews and Muslims in Jerusalem, in which many of them were killed and injured. Al-Hājj Amīn al-Ḥusaynī was appointed as Muftī of Jerusalem by the new British High Commissioner Sir Herbert Samuel. In 1921 he was elected head of the Muslim Supreme Council created by the government. He convened a conference of the Muslims in Jerusalem in 1931. Mawlānā Muḥammad ‘Ālī Jawhar was buried in the western portico⁴⁷⁷ of the Ḥaram in the same year. The mass immigration of Jewish refugees in 1933 and after caused fighting among Jews and the Arabs.

Nowadays Jerusalem is the capital of the modern state of Israel which was established on May 14, 1948, as a Jewish state on the land that had been given under the control of the British Government by the League of Nations after World War I.

Encyclopaedia Americana has recorded the history of this stage of the history of Jerusalem in a precise manner:

In the 19th century, Jerusalem and the rest of Palestine, then part of the Ottoman Empire, became the focus of international concern. For several centuries European countries had had political and commercial interests in Palestine because of its position at the crossroads to India and the Far East. Several of

⁴⁷⁶ In 1944, after the death of the Muslim mayor, the Jewish acting mayor demanded to be appointed officially. As a result the council was dissolved and a commission of British officials was appointed.

⁴⁷⁷ ‘Portico’ means: ‘roof supported by columns, esp. one forming an entrance to a large building’.

these countries had attempted to expand their influence there from the 16th century on by extending their protection and patronage over the Christian Holy Places and the Christian subjects of the Ottomans. They also sought certain privileges within the empire. It was such privileges that the Ottomans had granted to the French and the Russians that the British, Austrians, Prussians, and Italians attempted to have set aside in their favour in the 19th century.

The Ottoman Turks were defeated in World War I and evicted from Palestine by the British, to whom the League of Nations awarded the Palestine mandate. The mandate period witnessed an immense struggle between Arab and Jewish nationalist movements for control of Palestine, with Jerusalem as the chief prize and heart of the conflict. (...).

By the end of World War II the British had despaired of unrevealing the tangled issue, and it was turned over to United Nations. A UN resolution of November 29, 1947, recommended the partition of the country between Arabs and Jews and the internationalization of Jerusalem. The Palestinian Arabs and the Arab states rejected the plan. The day after its adoption a general attack was launched against the Jews throughout the area. As a result of the ensuing war, Jerusalem was divided by an armistice agreement in 1949 between Jordan and Israel, with the Old (Walled) City and East Jerusalem under Jordanian control and West Jerusalem (the New City) under Israeli rule.

Jordan ruled East Jerusalem for 19 years, until 1967. On June 5, 1967, after war broke out between Israel and Egypt, Jordan's King Hussein opened hostilities in the Jerusalem sector. The Israeli Army conquered and occupied East Jerusalem on June 7, and on June 27 the city was annexed to the state of Israel.⁴⁷⁸

Encyclopaedia of Islam narrates:

The Peel Royal Commission, sent out in 1936 to

⁴⁷⁸ *Enc. Americana* 1985, s.v. 'Jerusalem' by J. L. Kraemer, 16: 26f.

investigate the situation, for the first time recommended the creation of an Arab and a Jewish state and the conversion of Jerusalem, together with Bethlehem, into a separate unit remaining under British mandate. But neither this nor any other of the subsequent attempts of the mandatory government to find a solution led to results. On 29 November 1947, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted Resolution 189 (II) calling for the division of Palestine into two states, but united by economic union. Jerusalem was to be “internationalized”.

Immediately after this decision the country was in flames. Jerusalem in particular suffered great losses in life and property even before 15 May 1948, the official end of the British mandate. (...). The ceasefire divided Jerusalem by a line slightly west of the western wall of the old city. (...). On 13 December 1948 the Transjordanian parliament resolved the annexation of the areas of Palestine occupied by the Arab Legion. Israel followed suit by transferring its parliament from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in February 1949 and proclaiming Jerusalem its capital on 13 December 1949. Both actions were in contradiction of the UN resolution of November 1947, which had foreseen Jerusalem as a *corpus separatum*. The matter came up repeatedly in the UN until 1952, when it was left dormant, until the war of 1967 created an entirely new situation.⁴⁷⁹

Abba Eban had been Israeli minister of foreign affairs. He wrote a richly illustrated article on ‘Jerusalem’ in the Year Book 1973 of *Merit Students Enc.* Some excerpts are afforded below from this scholarly work:

Yet none of this would have brought Jerusalem into the war had King Hussein heeded a message from Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol on June 5, 1967. Fighting had broken out with Egypt as a result of President Gamal Abdel Nasser’s blockade of the Straits of Tiran [at the mouth of Khafj ‘Aqabah] on May 22 and his intimidatory troop

⁴⁷⁹ *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 5:337.

concentrations accompanied by threats to destroy Israel. Eshkol's message, conveyed through the United Nations chief of staff, General Odd Bull, said plainly that if Jordan kept out of the war, Israel would leave every-thing as it was. The reply was an all-out Jordanian assault on western Jerusalem. Indeed, the fighting in Jerusalem was the fiercest of that in any sector—and it took a heavy toll of Israeli lives. On June 5, Israel hastily improvised troop convoys for the Jerusalem front. By June 7 the laconic⁴⁸⁰ message of the brigade commander ("The Temple Mount is ours") conveyed the momentous news that Jerusalem was united. It had known many masters. Now, after 19 centuries, its original builders were back again. Soon the barriers were down—the barbed-wire fences, the tank traps, the Mandelbaum Gate, all the symptoms of ghetto-like separation—and Jews, Muslims, and Christians, with multitudes of pilgrims from all over the world, swarmed together, mingling, jostling, sometimes colliding, but always together in a single human destiny. Requests from United Nations organs that they get themselves divided again—back to their respective cages and compartments—evoked their good-humoured derision.⁴⁸¹

Abba Eban concludes his article with the following passage:

Jerusalem's population distribution (218,300 Jews, 62,300 Muslims, and 11,100 Christians) cannot fail to be determinant in its political status. But on a deeper and higher level of history, Jerusalem represents the confluence of many streams of memory and culture. Its sun has risen and set on a multitude of human longings, passions, agonies, and hopes. It is the capital of one nation and yet also the touchstone of the entire human condition.⁴⁸²

⁴⁸⁰ 'laconic' means: 'terse; using few words'.

⁴⁸¹ *Merit Students Enc.*, Year Book 1973, s.v. 'Jerusalem' by Abba Eban, the then Israeli minister of foreign affairs (p. 55).

⁴⁸² *Merit Students Enc.*, Year Book 1973, p. 55.

The 'Chronology of Jerusalem':

The following chronological table from *The Jewish Enc.* gives a list of the more important incidents that had a direct or indirect bearing on the history of the Jews of **Jerusalem**:

B.C.

- 1500. Earliest historical mention of **Jerusalem**, found in the El-Amarna tablets.
- 1048. David takes possession of **Jerusalem** from the Jebusites.
- 1007. Solomon's Temple completed after seven years' labor.
- 972. Shishak of Egypt takes the city from Rehoboam.
- 713. Sennacherib advances toward **Jerusalem**.
- 700. Hezekiah perfects the water-supply.
- 586. (Ab 9.) Captured by Nebuzar-adan [Nebuchadnezzar].
- 516. Rebuilt during reign of Darius.
- 350. Seized by the Persians [in 529 and not in 350].
- 332. Visited by Alexander the Great?
- 320 or 305. Seized by Ptolemy Soter.
- 170. Plundered by Antiochus Epiphanes.
- 165. Judas Maccabeus recaptures **Jerusalem** and reconsecrates the Temple. 166. Pompey enters **Jerusalem**. [It may be 66 and not 166].
- 37. Besieged and taken by Herod the Great.
- 20. Restoration of the Temple begun by Herod the Great.

Note: The first four entries are obviously doubtful.

C.E.

- 29. (April.) Jesus of Nazareth executed at **Jerusalem**.
- 70. (Nisan 14.) Siege commenced by Vespasian, lasting 134 days.
- 70. (Ab 9.) **Jerusalem** destroyed by Titus.
- 135. Hadrian rebuilds the city.
- 136. **Jerusalem** called Ælia Capitolina.
- 362. Restoration of the Temple undertaken by Julian the Apostate.
- 614. Jews aid the Persian Chosroes II. in attack on **Jerusalem**.
- 628. Retaken by Heraclius; Jews forbidden to enter the city.
- 637. Omar puts **Jerusalem** under Moslem power.
- 688. 'Abd al-Malik builds the Dome of the Rock.

1046. Solomon ben Judah head of the yeshibah at **Jerusalem**.
1077. Seljuk Turks capture **Jerusalem**.
1099. (July 15.) Crusaders put 70,000 infidels to the sword, and found a new Christian kingdom.
1100. "Assize of **Jerusalem**" established by Godfrey of Bouillon.
1140. Judah ha-Levi visits **Jerusalem**.
1173. Benjamin of Tudela visits **Jerusalem**.
1187. (Oct. 2.) Saladin defeats the Franks and takes **Jerusalem**.
1211. Several hundred English and French rabbis settle in **Jerusalem**.
1218. Al-Harizi visits **Jerusalem**.
1267. (Aug. 12.) Nahmanides visits **Jerusalem**.
1437. Elijah of Ferrara made chief rabbi.
1492. Jews expelled from Spain settle in **Jerusalem**.
1517. Capture by Ottoman Turks.
1580. Nahmanides synagogue closed by the Moslems, claiming that it had previously been a mosque.
1621. Isaiah Horowitz and a number of his friends settle in **Jerusalem**.
1627. Ibn Farukh, governor of **Jerusalem** and persecutor of the Jews, deposed.
1705. Jews subjected to certain vexatious restrictions in matters of attire.
1798. Napoleon visits Palestine; Jewish community of **Jerusalem** accused of assisting him and its members threatened with death.
1827. First visit of Moses Montefiore.
1838. Edward Robinson commences archeological research in **Jerusalem**.
1840. Crémieux, Montefiore, and Albert Cohn visit **Jerusalem**.
1841. (Nov. 7.) S. M. S. Alexander, convert to Christianity, consecrated first Anglican Bishop of **Jerusalem**.
1854. Albert Cohn establishes many charitable institutions.
1862. (Sept. 5.) Treaty to preserve the Holy Sepulcher signed by Russia, France, and Turkey.
1880. Siloam Inscription discovered.
1892. (Sep. 13) Railway from **Jerusalem** to Jaffa, built by a French Co opened.
1898. (Nov. 1.) William II. of Germany visits **Jerusalem** in state and receives a Jewish deputation.
1900. Abarbanel Library founded.⁴⁸³

⁴⁸³ *The Jewish Enc.* 7:146,48

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RECORDING OF THE VOWEL SIGNS TO THE TEXT OF THE OT

The alphabetical letters (consonants) are merely symbols of sound. No doubt the words are formed by placing the consonants together, but they cannot be pronounced until some proper vocalization/vowelization system (diacritical marks) be applied. Some scripts and languages have introduced vowels in their alphabet to meet this requirement, but they are not sufficient and their scope is limited. Subtle differences of pronunciation cannot be expressed through them. Therefore some languages had to evolve their own systems of vowel/diacritical signs and Arabic is almost the foremost instance of it. Hebrew was void of any vowel/diacritical signs until seventh century AD. Sir Frederic Kenyon writes:

(...) In its original state only the consonants were written, the vowels being left to be filled up by the reader's mind. (...). This ancient practice of omitting the vowels is one fertile cause of varieties in the text, for it will readily be understood that doubts might often occur as to the proper vowels to be supplied to a group of consonants. To take a parallel from English, the consonants 'M R' might be read as mare, mire, or more [or mur (as in murmur), or mere, or mar, etc], and it is quite possible that in some cases the sense of the passage would not show for certain which way was right.⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁸⁴ Sir Frederic Kenyon, *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, (NY:

Shemaryahu Talmon, Professor of Bible, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem writes:

The absence of vowels meant that many a Hebrew consonant group could be differently pronounced, and from this resulted the fact that a variety of meanings could be attached to one and the same word in the original. When ultimately vowels were introduced into the Hebrew text of the Bible, these pronunciation variants sometimes became the bases of *variae lectiones* (various readings).⁴⁸⁵

The language of the OT was mostly Hebrew. It cannot be determined of certain when its script came into existence. David Diringer, formerly Reader in Semitic Epigraphy, Cambridge University, says:

Through the results of excavation and research, the development of the early Hebrew alphabet can now be traced for more than a thousand years. We may assume that about 1000 BC, after the United Kingdom had been established and its centralized administration organized by King David with a staff of secretaries (see, for instance, 2Sam. 8:17 and 20:25), the early Hebrew alphabet had begun its autonomous development.⁴⁸⁶

It took early Hebrew alphabet almost one thousand years to evolve into the modern square Hebrew alphabet. The same writer explains:

The (square) Hebrew alphabet became standardized just before the Christian era and took the form which, with insignificant changes, we have now.⁴⁸⁷

For centuries the Hebrew script remained restricted to groups of letters placed together and vowel signs were not introduced to it. The same writer explains:

Harper & Brothers, 1951), 41.

⁴⁸⁵ *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, ed. P. R., Ackroyd, etc, (Cambridge: at the University Press, 1970), 1:160.

⁴⁸⁶ *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, 1:13.

⁴⁸⁷ *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, 1:16.

The Hebrew alphabet consists of the ancient 22 Semitic letters, which are all consonants, though four of them (aliph, he, waw and yod) are also used to represent long vowels, particularly at the end of a word. The absence of vowel letters was not very strongly felt in Hebrew any more than it was in the other Semitic languages (Indeed, it must be emphasized that the Semitic languages are mainly based on consonantal roots). On the other hand, as Hebrew speech passed out of daily use, and familiarity with Biblical Hebrew steadily declined, it became necessary to introduce some form of vocal distinction, so that the Torah could be read and explained correctly.⁴⁸⁸

When, in the second half of the sixth century (ca 529) BC, Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylonia and, terminating the exile of the Jewish people, allowed them to leave Babylonia and to go back to their homeland, Jerusalem; two separate centers of learning evolved among Jews: Babylonian and Palestinian. Vocalization/diacritical signs were developed there during the late fifth to ninth century AD. In the eighth century, refinements were introduced into the vocalization which ultimately produced the complicated scheme of supralineal pointing. Rev. Prof. B. J. Roberts, Prof. of Hebrew and Biblical Studies, Univ. College of North Wales explains it in his article 'The OT, MSS, Text and Versions' as follows:

The survival of the two main traditions of Massoretic activity in Babylon and Palestine is seen in the two divergent Massoroth, (...). Nowhere is the divergence more obvious or more relevant than in the systems of vocalization which were superimposed on the consonantal text and which were developed both in Palestine and Babylon between the late fifth century and the ninth century A.D. In Babylon sporadic use of vocalic consonants and dots was made to assist and to formalize the correct recitation of the *hitherto unvocalized, consonantal text* in synagogue worship. In the eighth century, (...), refinements were introduced into the

⁴⁸⁸ *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, 1:18.

vocalization which ultimately produced the complicated scheme of supralineal pointing which still survives in the so-called Babylonian vocalization. (...).

The earlier, primitive phases of the vocalization in both transmissions are almost wholly unknown, except for incidental and until recently incomprehensible references in late rabbinic works, (...).⁴⁸⁹

It requires a lengthy discussion. Only a brief background of the theme has been afforded here, which explains that the attempts of recording the exact pronunciation of some Hebrew word succeeded after the Islāmic era; hundreds and in some cases thousands of years after the claimed origin of those books. How is it possible that correct pronunciation of the words of the Bible could have been properly preserved without the existence of any system of diacritical signs or vocalization? The Biblical scholars could not fix the pronunciation of even the name of their God: 'YHWH'.

Geddes MacGregor writes:

Not even the most perfect copyist could ensure an unambiguous text, for Hebrew was written entirely without vowels, which the reader had to supply for himself. (...). Competent Hebraists, without as much difficulty as one might suppose, read manuscripts written in this way; but ambiguities were inevitable. To help in the elimination of these ambiguities, a school of Jewish scholars, the Massoretes, invented, probably about the sixth century A.D, a system of pointing —dots and dashes placed under the Hebrew letters to indicate the vowel sounds. The Massoretes naturally vocalized the text according to the practice of their own day. From this Massoretic text, in 'pointed' Hebrew, we can know fairly well how Hebrew sounded when it was solemnly chanted in a synagogue as long ago as, say, the time of Mohammed [pbAh]. But we have no such clear knowledge of how it may have been pronounced by David [pbAh] or Solomon [pbAh]. The Massoretes halted the corruption that the passage of centuries

⁴⁸⁹ *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, 1:7f.

had inevitably introduced; but they came on the scene much too late to preserve for us an entirely pure unambiguous Old Testament text. They also compiled a set of notes, called Massorah, and offered variant readings.

(...) about the end of the first century A.D., (...), there were considerable textual variations among the existing manuscripts. The problem of later determining what, in a doubtful case, was the original reading, is obviously a difficult and highly technical one demanding, for its solution, great learning and skill. (...). If we remember that besides such textual disparities there are also, in unpointed Hebrew, great possibilities of ambiguity, and that the Massoretes themselves frequently misled posterity by faulty vocalization that changed the meaning, we shall have some notion of the complexity of the task of trying to recover, as far as may be possible, the original Old Testament text.⁴⁹⁰

Unger has touched the subject briefly but lucidly in the following words:

Before A.D. 500 Hebrew manuscripts had no system of vowel indication, except certain consonants to indicate long vowels. Between A.D. 600 and 950 Jewish scholars, called Masoretes (Traditionalists), invented a full system of vowels and accents to punctuate the text. They also standardized the text, including marginal readings (called *keri*) and textual variants (called *kethiv*).⁴⁹¹

The *Jewish Enc.* has explained it in the following words:

All Semitic script, (...), is purely consonantal, the reader being left to supply the vowels. (...). To obviate such ambiguity the Semitic languages have developed three methods. The oldest method is to denote the vowels by the vowel-letters אֵ (a, o, y). (...). But since the vowel-letters

⁴⁹⁰ Geddes MacGregor, *The Bible in the Making*, (London: John Murray, 1961), 30ff.

⁴⁹¹ Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Bible Handbook* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1979), 883.

were not sufficient to mark the exact shades of the vowel-sounds, some of the Semitic languages (i.e. those which were in possession of sacred books in whose recitation exactness was imperative) developed systems of vowel-signs. (...). Elijah LEVITA had already pointed out that the Talmudim and Midrashim do not mention vowel-signs or vowel-names, in spite of there having been abundant opportunity to do so. From this fact he concluded that vocalization and accentuation are post-Talmudic. The earliest dated mention of vocalization is that of Saadia Gaon and his contemporaries. Between the dates 500 and 900 the following data are to be considered: Even Aaron ben Moses ben Asher, whose ancestor in the sixth generation flourished in the second half of the eighth century, was ignorant of the origin of the vowel-points. A still older authority than Ben Asher the elder, R. Phinehas, the head of the academy, is quoted as authority for T (Tiberian system of vocalization). (...). He (R. Phinehas) must have lived early in the eighth century, or must have been contemporary with Khalil Ibn Aḥmad (719-729[? 786]), to whom the introduction of the Arabic system is attributed. Assuming that A (Arabic system of vocalization) and T (Tiberian system) were introduced about 750, these being based on P (Palestinian system) and B (Babylonian), the date for P must be about 700, (...).⁴⁹²

John Frederick Stunning, Univ. Reader in Aramaic, Oxford, Writes in his article 'The Texts and Versions' [of the OT]:

The form in which the Hebrew text of the OT is presented to us in all mss. and printed editions is that of the Masoretic text, the date of which is usually placed somewhere between the 6th and 8th centuries [AD] (...). Their [Masoretes'] work may be said to culminate in the vocalized text which resulted from the labours of Rabbi Aaron ben Asher in the 10th century. (...). It is, however, certain that before the 2nd century AD the various mss of the OT differed very

⁴⁹² *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, ed. Isidore Singer, s.v. 'vocalization' by Caspar Levias, 12:446f.

materially from one another. (...). Indications are also not wanting in the Hebrew text to show that in earlier times the text was treated with considerable freedom. (...). At the same time it is clear both from internal and external evidence that the archetype⁴⁹³ from which our mss are descended was far from being a perfect representative of the original text. For a comparison of the different parallel passages which occur in the OT (e.g. I & II Sam., (...), etc.) reveals many variations which are obviously due to textual corruption.⁴⁹⁴

Enc Americana has also afforded an account of the vocalization of the Biblical text. It would be very useful to go through it because it has dealt with the theme in a brief and systematic manner. The writer of the article 'MSS and Versions of the OT', Arthur Jeffery of the Columbia University states:

As certain documents, however, came to be regarded as something apart, something of importance for the religious life of the community, there arose among the Jews, (...), those who devoted themselves in a particular way to the care of such writings. These later were called Sopherim, and although this is popularly translated 'scribes', they were not merely copyists, but keepers of records, interpreters, and 'bookmen' in widest sense. (...). It was by their labors that the text was standardized for transmission, and in that process of standardization, as reverence for Scripture increased, *they, from motive of piety, introduced little alterations* [what an interesting use of piety: to introduce changes in the divine revelation!], safeguarding the divine name, disfiguring the names of heathen deities, replacing indelicate or unseemly expressions by euphemisms⁴⁹⁵, emending passages likely to be misunderstood, and at times modernizing the language. The evidence of all this is in the

⁴⁹³ 'Archetype', i.e. original pattern or model; prototype.

⁴⁹⁴ *Enc. Britannica* (University of Chicago, 1962), 3:504-05.

⁴⁹⁵ 'Euphemism' means 'a polite word or expression that you use instead of a more direct one to avoid shocking or upsetting someone'.

text as they have transmitted it to us.

The period of the early Sopherim may be considered to have extended from about 500 B.C. to 100 A.D. From the closing of the Palestinian Canon about 100 A.D. to about 500 A.D. is the period of later Sopherim. Part of the activity associated with the closing of the canon was concerned with the question of a standard exemplar of the text. This would seem to have been settled by the labors of the School of Rabbi Akiba (died 135), (...).

The Sopherim were succeeded by the Masoretes, whose labors extended from about 500 A.D. to the invention of printing. The early text left by the Sopherim was for the most part a purely consonantal text with no pointing for vocalization or accentuation, no punctuation in our sense, and with little more to help the reader than some breaking up of the text into paragraphs. The Masoretes labored to supply the text with these elements that were lacking and in addition compiled a great body of annotations, some statistical, some text-critical, some exegetical, all with the twofold purpose of safeguarding the text and making it fully intelligible to the reader. They standardized a system of verse division, and broke up the text into pericopes⁴⁹⁶ of convenient size of liturgical cycles of public reading of the Scriptures. Three systems of vocalization worked out by them are known, a Babylonian, a Palestinian, and a Tiberian, the latter of which is found in most manuscripts and the printed texts. There are also three systems of accentuation. The vocalization consists of little signs written below, within, or above the consonants to indicate correct pronunciation. (...). There were schools of Masoretes, but it was the Tiberian School that finally came to dominate textual studies, so that most Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament derive from the famous tenth century Tiberian Codices of Ben Asher and Ben Naphtali.⁴⁹⁷

⁴⁹⁶ 'Pericope' means 'an extract, passage, esp. one selected for reading in church'.

⁴⁹⁷ *Enc. Americana*, 1986, s.v. 'Bible', 3:655,56.

Enc. Judaica has also recorded an article on this theme. Some of its excerpts are afforded below:

5. VOCALIZATION AND ACCENTUATION

There are three graphic systems of vocalization and accentuation for Hebrew: 'Palestinian', 'Babylonian', and 'Tiberian'⁴⁹⁸. (...).

The Tiberian system is the most sophisticated and complete in the items which it transmits; and it is the most recent. Most scholars tend to believe that the Palestinian is the older of the other two systems. However, since these two systems developed in different countries, Babylonia and Palestine, and since at the beginning of their development there was no contact between them, and since the signs differ in the two systems (letters and dots), it is impossible to arrive at a definite decision in this question

⁴⁹⁸ *Jewish Enc* 12:142-44 explains:

Tiberias was the city founded by Herod Antipas in the year 26 C. E., and named in honor of the emperor Tiberius; situated on the western shore of lake Gennesaret, near certain hot springs in the most beautiful region of Galilee. (...). Since Tiberias was the capital of Galilee, it was ruled by Herod until he was exiled to Lyons (France) in 39. It then came under Agrippa I, in whose possession it remained until his death in 44 after which it was subject directly to Rome. It was the capital of Galilee until 61, when Nero gave it to Agrippa II, and thus detached it from Galilee. (...). Even in the sixth century Tiberias was still the seat of religious learning; so that Bishop Simeon of Bet-Arsham urged the Christians of Palestine to seize the leaders of Judaism in Tiberias, to put them to the rack [suffering], and to compel them to command the Jewish king, Dhu Nuwas, to desist from persecuting the Christians in Najran. (...). In the ninth century the grammarians and Masorites Moses and Aaron ben Asher lived at Tiberias, which was then called Mu'izziyyah, in honor of the Fatimid caliph Mui'zz. The system of Hebrew punctuation still in use originated in Tiberias and is accordingly called the Tiberian system.

on the basis of the data available today. In line with the generally accepted opinion the Palestinian system is discussed first; however, this is not meant to indicate a view on the relative dating of the systems.

The Palestinian System

The State of Transmission

The Palestinian is not a crystallized system. Almost every one of the manuscripts has a number of individual and characteristic traits with regard to the use of signs. It is possible to point to the common and similar aspects but not to all the deviations of each manuscript. For what we find in the manuscripts is actually a system in development. Scholars endeavor to fix the date of a text on the basis of the degree of progress shown by the use of the signs in it: the oldest manuscripts (apparently from the eighth century) have generally very few signs, sometimes no more than one or two for a word and sometimes not even that; and even the latest of them never reach the stage of fully marking each vowel and its nuances⁴⁹⁹, as is the case in the Tiberian system. (...).

The Babylonian System

The Term

This system was called Babylonian in accordance with references by a number of early scholars.

The Tiberian System

The Vowel Signs

Unlike its predecessors, the Tiberian vocalization has reached us as a consolidated, uniform, and complete system, although in some isolated and exceptional manuscripts there are remnants of other systems.

⁴⁹⁹ 'Nuances' means 'a delicate degree or shade of difference'.

The Signs

There are seven vowels, for which there are eight signs, and it is clear that they do not indicate quantity in any way. This system, like its predecessors, was used by different communities and by people who had different traditions of pronunciation and who interpreted the signs and read them accordingly.

Dating

Despite the fact that actual evidence for the conditions necessary for the writing down of the Masorah is rather late, there is clear evidence from other sources that the Masorah was committed to writing prior to the eighth century. (...). The proofs point to a period of 200 years within which vocalization and accentuation signs were initiated: not before the sixth century nor later than the seventh. This terminus a quo is based on a number of facts:

(1) Jerome (end of the fourth century-beginning of the fifth) states explicitly (in his commentary on the Bible) that the Jews did not have signs to note the vowels (he does not speak of accents).

(2) In the Jerusalem Talmud (which was completed in the first half of the fifth century) and in the Babylonian Talmud (which was completed at the end of the fifth century) there is no mention of vowel and accentuation signs; similarly there is no mention of them in the earliest Midrashim⁵⁰⁰. Evidence from late Midrashim is obviously not reliable; for example in *Exodus Rabbah*, ch. 2:6 (to Ex. 3:4) *csp(paseq)* is actually mentioned, but this Midrash is later than the tenth century. It follows, therefore, that the use of the vowel and accentuation

⁵⁰⁰ Midrashim Smaller: a number of midrashim exist (18 major of them have been mentioned by the Jewish Enc, 8:572-80, under 'Midrashim') which are smaller in size, and generally later in date, than those dealt with in the articles Midrash Haggadah and Midrash Halakah. Midrash 'Aseret ha-Dibrot dates about the tenth century and Midrash Temurah was composed in the first half of the thirteenth century.

signs was not instituted before the sixth century. The *terminus ad quem* (the limit to which; destination) is established by a number of indirect proofs:

(1) Phinehas Rosh ha-Yeshivah is one of the early masoretes about whose work in Masorah and vocalization there is definite knowledge, and he lived in the first half of the ninth century at the latest. This suggests that vocalization and accentuation signs were already in use before then.

(2) Asher b. Nehemiah (the grandfather of Aaron Ben-Asher) lived apparently at the same time as Phinehas, and his grandfather Asher was the "great elder," the founder of the dynasty of famous masoretes who dealt with vocalization and accentuation signs like his descendants. This Asher the Elder must have lived in the second half of the eighth century at the latest, which means that the vowel and accentuation signs were fixed before that time.

(3) In the ninth century there was already no definite knowledge as to who invented the vowel and accentuation signs, and so we hear from Natronai Gaon of Babylonia (d. 858) in his prayer book, *Me'ah Berakhot*: "The vowel signs (*niqqud*) were not given at Sinai but the sages marked them by signs." Thus in the first half of the ninth century, although vowel and accent signs were known and accepted, the inventors were unknown. It can be assumed therefore that the institution of their use preceded that time by several centuries [This is mere 'assumption' and not a proven fact.].⁵⁰¹

From the above statement it can only be asserted that no vocalization system existed for the Hebrew of the OT. It does not show on sound basis that any vocalization system was in practice before the eighth century.

To recapitulate the whole of the above article, its salient features are being reproduced below (the word 'reproduced' has been used here, because in most of the

⁵⁰¹ *Enc. Judaica*, CD-Rom Edn. Ver 1.0. Judaica Multimedia (Israel) Ltd. 1997.

cases they have been copied ‘verbatim’):

a) The words are formed by placing the consonants together but they cannot be pronounced until some proper vocalization/diacritical signs be applied.

b) The vocalization consists of little signs written below, within, or above the consonants to indicate correct pronunciation.

c) Some languages had to evolve their own systems of vowel signs. As far as Hebrew is concerned it was void of any such vowel signs until seventh century AD.

d) In its original state only the consonants were written, the vowel signs being left to be filled up by the reader’s mind. (...). This ancient practice of omitting the vowels is one fertile cause of varieties in the text, for it will readily be understood that doubts might often occur as to the proper vowels to be supplied to a group of consonants.

e) The absence of vowels meant that many a Hebrew consonant group could be differently pronounced, and from this resulted the fact that a variety of meanings could be attached to one and the same word in the original. When ultimately vowels were introduced into the Hebrew text of the Bible, these pronunciation variants sometimes became the bases of *variae lectiones* (various readings)

f) Before about 1000 BC, the early Hebrew alphabet had begun its autonomous development.

It took early Hebrew alphabet almost one thousand years (i.e. about the start of the Common/Christian Era) to evolve into the modern square Hebrew alphabet.

h) As Hebrew speech passed out of daily use, and familiarity with Biblical Hebrew steadily declined, it became necessary to introduce some form of vocal distinction, so that the Torah could be read and explained correctly.

i) Not even the most perfect copyist could ensure an unambiguous text, for Hebrew was written entirely without vowels, which the reader had to supply for himself.

j) The Massoretes naturally vocalized the text according to the practice of their own day. From this Massoretic text, in ‘pointed’ Hebrew, we can know fairly well how Hebrew sounded when it was solemnly chanted in a synagogue as long ago as, say, the time of Mohammed. But we have no such clear knowledge of how it may have been pronounced by David or Solomon.

k) The Massoretes themselves frequently misled posterity by faulty vocalization that changed the meaning.

l) Vocalization and accentuation are post-Talmudic, because there is no mention of them in Talmud.

In the passage under discussion, Solomon (pbAh), after giving fairly detailed attributes of his beloved from his uncle ancestor (Ishmā‘el [pbAh])’s progeny, pronounces his actual proper name ‘Muḥammad’ (pbAh), which, according to the unvocalized consonantal alphabet was inevitably to be written as ‘M+Ḥ+M+D’. When there genuinely and physically exists an exact application of this word, it is misleading to translate this proper noun or to apply it to Jesus Christ (pbAh).

MUḤAMMAD (pbAh) FORETOLD BY MOSES (pbAh)
(A PROPHET LIKE UNTO ME)

It is stated by the Lord in the book of Deuteronomy of the Old Testament of the Bible that ‘I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words into his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.’ The passage from which these words have been noted is given below:

The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee [the Israelites] a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy Brethren, like unto me [Moses]; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well *spoken that* which they have spoken. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words into his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require⁵⁰² *it* of him.⁵⁰³

⁵⁰² The word ‘require’ looks to be confusing one. The original Hebrew word is ‘דרש’ (darash) which, according to *Strong’s Dic.* (entry 1875, p.31), means: ‘inquire, question’. According to L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner’s *The Heb. and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT* (Leiden, Brill: 2001), p.233, it means: ‘to enquire about, to investigate, to require account, to avenge upon, etc’. Some of the versions of the Bible have tried to remove the confusion and explain the word properly. NIV has

A study of the main themes of this prophecy shall be undertaken point by point in the following lines:

‘From the midst⁵⁰⁴ of thee’

‘From the midst of thee’ would (if it be a genuine phrase having not been interpolated by some later redactor of the Bible, which it seems to be), in this context, obviously mean that the promised prophet shall be a descendant of your main and joint ancestor, Abraham (pbAh). It is, however, noticeable that this prophecy has been noted at some other places of the New and Old Testaments of the Bible as well⁵⁰⁵, but this phrase does not appear there. It

translated the clause as: ‘I myself will call him to account.’ *Good News Bible* renders it as: ‘and I will punish anyone who refuses to obey him.’ *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* III Edn. Interprets it as: ‘I myself will hold accountable.’ *Knox Trans.* Says: ‘shall feel my vengeance.’ *The New Living Translation* (p. 116) notes: ‘I will personally deal with anyone who will not listen to the messages the prophet proclaims on my behalf.’ It means that the matter is not optional. It is rather a very important and sensitive matter. Whosoever does not listen to and obey this ‘Prophet’ when he comes, shall be called to account and inflicted proper punishment for his heedlessness. It shows that the matter is very serious and one is required to be very cautious, conscious and conscientious about it.

⁵⁰³ Deuteronomy, 18:15-19 KJV.

⁵⁰⁴ ‘Midst’, in Hebrew ‘קרֵב’ (Qareb) means; ‘from 7126; the nearest part’ (*Strong’s Dic.* Entry 7130, p. 105); and 7126 is: ‘Qarab’ which means: ‘a primary root; to approach or bring near, be near’. It shows that nearness is its basic theme, and as such ‘from the midst of thee’ would mean ‘from your near relatives’. It, thus, becomes clear that the ‘a prophet’ would be from among the near relations of the Israelites who could definitely be the only prophet from the line of Ishmā‘el, i.e. ‘Muhammad’ (pbAh)

⁵⁰⁵ (i) Deu. 18: 18 KJV asserts:

I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him,

makes the genuineness of this phrase doubtful. Some versions of the Bible take it in the sense of some place. A Jewish Commentary explains:

from the midst of thee. This implies that the endowment of prophecy can only be exercised in the holy land (N).⁵⁰⁶

There are some versions of the Bible that have dropped this phrase from verse 15 of the passage. *The New Oxford Annotated B*, in addition to dropping the phrase, has changed the word 'brethren' into 'people', and has translated it as:

(...) will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet.⁵⁰⁷

NIV, dropping the phrase from v. 15, translates it as:

(...) will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him.⁵⁰⁸

Good News Bible and *Today's English V*, both, have also dropped the phrase, but have changed the word 'brethren' into 'people':

(...), he will send you a prophet like me from among your own people, and you are to obey him.⁵⁰⁹

(ii) Acts 3: 22 KJV asserts:

For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you; and

(iii) Acts 7: 37 KJV asserts:

A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

⁵⁰⁶ Dr. A. Cohen, *Soncino Chumash* (Surrey: Hindhead, 1947), 1085.

⁵⁰⁷ *New Oxf Annotated Bible* (NY: Oxf Univ Press, 1989), 242: OT.

⁵⁰⁸ N I V (New Jersey: International Bible Society, 1984), 202 f.

⁵⁰⁹ *Good News Bible* (London: BFBS, 1982), 189; *Today's English Version* (NY: American Bible Society, 1978), 192. The writer has now obtained its revised edn (Minto 2566: The Bible Society in Australia, 1994). It has

The NJB has translated it as:

Yahweh your God will raise up a prophet like me; you will listen to him.⁵¹⁰

It can thus be seen that it has not only dropped the phrase under study, but has dropped the phrase ‘of thy brethren’ as well. But the phrase ‘from their own brothers’ exists there in v.18.

The Revised Berkeley Version has also dropped the phrase ‘from the midst of thee’ from its translation of v. 15. It writes:

He will raise up for you a prophet like me, one of your own brothers, and you shall listen to him.⁵¹¹

The same is the case with so many other Versions (e.g. *Contemporary English V*, 1995, p. 219, *The Reader’s Digest B*, 1983, p. 97, *The New American B*, p. 176, etc.). It looks to be sufficient to establish that many of the Bible authorities themselves do not feel comfortable with keeping the phrase as a genuine part of the passage in their works and take it to be an interpolation by some later redactor of the book.

It may also be noted here that the Hebrew Bible has preserved it, which shows that it should not be rejected outright. An objective lexical study should, therefore, be undertaken to thrash out the real condition.

The Hebrew word for ‘midst’ is ‘קרֶב’ (Qareb). According to *Strong’s Dic.*, it means ‘near’, as explained in the beginning of this section. The *Hebrew Lexicon* has explained it as:

(...); the basic meaning of the Semitic root is to be near,

retained this translation without any change at its page 211.

⁵¹⁰ *The New Jerusalem Bible*, Pocket Edn., (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 1990), 180.

⁵¹¹ *The Revised Berkeley Version*, which claims on its title page to be ‘A Completely New Translation from the Original Languages’ (The Gideons International, 1974), 157.

approach; to bring near. (...). (Jean-H. Dictionnaire 265; Hoftijzer-Jongeling Dic. 1031, *qrb* IX: a relative rather than a cousin); (...); in Babylonian it also means a relative.⁵¹²

It can thus be appreciated that ‘midst’ is not a suitable translation of the original Hebrew word. The suitable translation would have been ‘from among the near relatives’. Obviously they can be none other than the Ishmaelite Arabs.

All the above discussion makes it quite probable that the phrase ‘from the midst of thee’ is a later addition by someone and is not a genuine part of the passage. Even if it be a genuine phrase of the Bible, it signifies that the prophet shall not be a stranger to you. He would be a kinsman of yours, from the progeny of your own forefather Abraham (pbAh).

‘of thy brethren’

To ascertain the meaning of the phrase ‘of thy brethren’, there is a clue in the beginning of this very chapter 18 of the book of Deuteronomy. Verse 2 reads:

Therefore shall they [i.e. ‘The priests, the Levites’, as recorded in v. 1 of this ch.] have no inheritance among their brethren; the Lord is their inheritance.⁵¹³

Obviously the word ‘brethren’ here means ‘the other tribes from the line of their main ancestor, Jacob, and not the brothers related to their own tribe, the Levites, because they have been denied any inheritance.’ Because the addressees here are the Levites, their ‘brethren’ would mean none other than their brethren (cousins) from the other tribes of the line of Jacob and not the members of their own tribe. There are other examples in the Bible for this theme as well, e.g. Judges 20:13 (NKJV) notes:

⁵¹² The *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon*, Brill, 2001, 2:1132-34.

⁵¹³ Deu. 18:2 KJV (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Pub., 1989; p.179).

But the children of Benjamin would not listen to the voice of their brethren, the children of Israel. [Here the children of Benjamin have been named as the ‘brethren’ of their cousins who are the children of the other sons of Israel, who were actually the brothers of their forefather ‘Benjamin’]

Numbers 8:26 (NKJV) asserts:

They [the Levites] may minister with their brethren [the descendants of the brothers of Levi from his father Israel (Jacob pbAh)] in the tabernacle of meeting, to attend to needs, but they themselves shall do no work.

1 Kings 12:24 (NKJV):

You [Rehoboam son of Solomon (pbAh) and the tribe of Judah and Benjamin] shall not go up nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel.

It is, however, to be noted that the word brethren is a general term and implies the real brothers, first cousins, the remotest cousins, or anyone else. It is a form of the original Hebrew word ‘אָח’ (awkh or akh). *Strong’s Dic.* Explains:

A *brother* (used in the widest sense of literal relationship and metaphorical affinity or resemblance):— another, brother (-ly), kindred, like, other.⁵¹⁴

The Bible has also used this word in the same broad sense. In the context of the lengthy instructions being delivered to the Israelites, God orders regarding the Edomites, who are the descendants of Jacob’s elder brother Esau:

Thou shalt not abhor an edomite; for he is thy brother;⁵¹⁵

The word ‘brethren’ has also been used in the Bible for even the Ishmā‘elites as the brethren of the Israelites. It is recorded in the book of Genesis of the Bible as follows:

And the angel of the Lord said unto her [Hagar], I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered

⁵¹⁴ *Strong’s Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 251; p. 10.

⁵¹⁵ Deu. 23: 7 KJV.

for multitude. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou *art* with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand *will be* against every man, and every man's hand against him; *and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren* [stress added].⁵¹⁶

The word 'brethren' has once again been used in the Bible in the same sense. In the context, none other than Ishmā'el's (pbAh) step-brothers, Abraham's (pbAh) sons from Sarah and Keturah, can be implied:

These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations. And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years; and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people. And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur that is before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria; *and he died in the presence of all his brethren* [stress added].⁵¹⁷

From the above presentations, it can be safely concluded that the phrase 'of thy brethren' refers to the Ishmā'elites as the brothers (cousins) of Israelites etc. In clause 'Therefore shall they [i.e. the Levites'] have no inheritance among their brethren,' of this very chapter 18 of Deut. (v. 2), the word 'brethren' signifies the Jewish tribes other than the Levites, and the Levites stand plainly excluded from this 'brethren'. In the same way the Israelites stand excluded from this phrase. So the phrase 'of thy brethren' can only mean 'of the Ishmā'elites', and the 'a prophet' would obviously refer to the only prophet from the line of Ishmā'el (pbAh), i.e. 'Muhammad' (pbAh).

Here is an interesting observation. It is said that alterations, additions, deletions, and interpolations have been freely exercised in the Bible. No reasonable scholar of the Bible

⁵¹⁶ Gen. 16:10-12 KJV.

⁵¹⁷ Gen. 25:16-18 KJV.

denies this fact. An example to illustrate that this practice has not only been exercised in the past, but that it is being exercised till today without any hesitation, is afforded here. ‘*The Living Bible*’ seems to be a modern translation of the Bible. It is ‘Copyright © 1971 by Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois 60187. All rights reserved.’ It was first printed in July 1972 under the name of ‘*The Way*’, whereafter its sixteenth printing was published in March, 1976, claiming, ‘3,760,000 copies in print’. The writer of the present article has got this 16th printing. It translates the v. 15 as:

Instead, he will raise up for you a Prophet like me, *an Israeli* [stress added], a man to whom you must listen and whom you must obey.⁵¹⁸

Its revision was accomplished in 1996 by a group of ‘ninety evangelical scholars from various theological backgrounds and denominations (...) commissioned in 1989 to begin revising *The Living Bible*.’ It revised this translation as:

The LORD your God will raise up from you a prophet like me *from among your fellow Israelites* [stress added], and you must listen to that prophet.⁵¹⁹

How can one explain where the words ‘an Israeli’ or the ‘fellow Israelites’ have jumped in from?

The New English Bible (and it was prepared and approved by the Joint Committee of almost all the important churches of the Christian world) has dropped the most important phrase ‘from among your brothers’ from its translation of v. 15, which is a further example of such alterations. It writes:

(...) will raise up a prophet from among you like myself,

⁵¹⁸ ‘*The Way*’, An Illustrated Edn. of *The Living Bible*, (Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1976), 174.

⁵¹⁹ *Holy Bible, New Living Translation* (Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, USA, 1999), p. 116.

and you shall listen to him.⁵²⁰

Some other translators have also dropped this phrase of ‘your brothers’ from the translation of v.15. We wonder through what literary sorcery such translators have got the phrase ‘from among your brothers’ disappeared from the scene of the passage before the open eyes of the world of letters. Of course, this dexterity of the translators must be ‘appreciated’.

It is also to be noted that if the promised prophet was to come from among the Israelites, the wording of the prophecy should have been:

I will raise them up a prophet *from among themselves* [stress added], like unto thee, and will put my words into his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

It was essential to rule out all sorts of ambiguity, misunderstandings, and confusions. The word ‘brethren’ as already explained with reference to the *Strong’s Dic.*, is a multi-meaning word and is certainly liable to create ambiguity and confusions and the Lord is not supposed to create confusion Himself. He should have been clear-cut, pertinent, precise, scrupulous, fastidious, to the point, and exact. But the actual words of the Bible are not compatible with the claim of the Jews and the Christians that ‘the promised prophet shall be from among the Israelites themselves’. The actual words of the Bible read:

I will raise them up a prophet *from among their brethren* [stress added], like unto thee, and will put my words into his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.⁵²¹

In fact the Lord has not used these words thoughtlessly and unmindfully. He has used these words intentionally and

⁵²⁰ *The New English Bible* (Oxford: The Bible Societies in association with Oxford Univ. Press, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985), 136.

⁵²¹ Deu. 18: 18 KJV.

decisively. These words rule out every possibility of the claim of the Jews and the Christians that ‘the promised prophet shall be from among the Israelites themselves’.

There is another point with regard to ‘*from among their brethren*’. Like the earlier prophets, Jesus has also warned the Israelites:

Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to *a nation* [stress added. Please note the ‘singular form *a nation* and not the plural *the nations*’.] bringing forth the fruits thereof.⁵²²

It clearly shows that the kingdom of God or the prophethood is now to be taken away from the progeny of Israel and is to be transferred to their brethren. The context of this verse makes it quite clear that it relates none other than the ‘brethren of the Israelites’. Jesus has also explained it at another place in the same Gospel:

Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, (...), and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another⁵²³. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son⁵²⁴, saying,

⁵²² Matt. 21: 43 KJV.

⁵²³ The Jews had been treating the prophets in the similar way.

⁵²⁴ ‘His son’, here, implies Jesus; but not in the sense that it was of some spermatocidal seed of the Lord from some wife of His, which can by no means be claimed for Him. No ‘man’ (or any creature) in heaven or on earth has ever been begotten of Him through His going to some woman (or some female spouse, which he never had had). He is the only One and Unique of His kind. He is not a member of some species or some family of gods, any of which does not, and cannot, exist. Man is mortal, and the father of a man, a mortal being, is also bound to be a mortal. And who can imagine that the Lord is mortal? The Qur’ān asserts, ‘*All that lives on earth or in the*

They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.⁵²⁵ When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?⁵²⁶

The answer to this question is so simple and natural, that ‘they’ (the audience), like anybody else who happens to hear it, shall spontaneously ‘Say unto him,’:

He will miserably destroy those wicked men⁵²⁷, and will

heavens is bound to pass away; but for ever will abide thy Sustainer’s Self, full of majesty and glory’. (‘The Message of the Qur’ān’, tr. Muḥammad Asad, London: Dar al-Andalus, Gibraltar, Distributors, E. J. Brill, 1980, p. 825). The use of the words or the theme ‘son of God’ for the human beings is so common in the Bible that it has been recorded in it in this sense for so many times. The word ‘son’ has been used here, if it be not a later interpolation, in the sense that God had raised him up in a conspicuously extra-ordinary manner, with wonderful miracles, so that there may not remain any excuse with the Israelites to reject and refuse him. It may, however, be clearly borne in mind that the whole of the passage is merely a parable. It is not a statement of actual facts in all its details.

⁵²⁵ *The International Bible Com.* (Bangalore: TPI, 2004), p. 1379 explains this parable in the following words:

This is an updated version of the Song of the Vineyard in Isa. 5:1-7, where the owner is God and the vineyard is Israel that, in spite of care and cultivation by the owner, produces only wild grapes. In this version tenants are added who are to care for the vineyard and are responsible for producing the fruits for the owner. These tenants are the religious leaders whose responsibility is to nurture spiritual growth and fruitfulness among the people. This is the fruit the owner’s servants the prophets are sent to collect. The mistreatment of the prophets of the past by beating, killing, and stoning is well attested (Jer. 20:2; 26:21-23; 2Chr. 24:19-21) and was often referred to by Jesus (5:12; 22:6; 23:30-37). Now God has sent God’s son, Jesus.

⁵²⁶ Matt. 21:33-40 KJV.

⁵²⁷ It physically came true with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 at

let out his vineyard unto other⁵²⁸ husbandmen⁵²⁹, which shall render him the fruits in their season. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected⁵³⁰, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?⁵³¹ Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to *a nation* [stress added] bringing forth the fruits thereof.⁵³²

The words of Jesus (pbAh) are so clear and unequivocal that they need no comments at all. But if someone has already decided to favour some pre-assumed interpretation, what can anybody do!

'a' prophet

'a prophet' is another important feature to be cautiously

the hands of Roman General, Titus, who later became the Emperor of the Roman Empire in 79 AD and remained as such till his death in 81 AD. Jesus (pbAh) had foreseen the ruin of the temple and Jerusalem, as he said, 'Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.' (Mark 13:2 KJV).

⁵²⁸ The original Greek word for this 'other' is 'ἄλλος' (allos) which means: 'else,' i.e. different (in many applications) [*Strong's Dic. of the Greek Testament*, Entry 243; p. 10].

⁵²⁹ 'Other husbandmen' signifies 'a different tenant', which indicates the Ishmaelites, who are another 'nation', as recorded in v.43, 'Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to *a nation* bringing forth the fruits thereof.'

⁵³⁰ It obviously refers to the settling of Hagar and her son Ishmā'el (pbAh) in Makkah. This reference also makes it clear that this parable of Jesus (pbAh) relates to the transfer of the prophethood from the Israelites to the Ishmaelites. It is again a figurative statement.

⁵³¹ The Jews considered themselves the 'Chosen People'. If the 'Kingdom of God', i. e. the leadership of people goes outside their clan and be assigned to someone 'else' who be not an Israelite, which be 'the Lord's doing', It would obviously be marvellous in their eyes.

⁵³² Matt. 21:41-43 KJV.

noted to ascertain the exact application of the prophecy. Moses (pbAh) does not say that God will raise up 'prophets', he rather says, 'a prophet'. The forthcoming person will be 'a prophet' after Moses (pbAh). Now there have been so many prophets after Moses (pbAh) in the line of Israel. The important point is that the promised prophet should be only 'a prophet' which means a 'single' and 'singular' prophet (who is, moreover, required to be 'from among their brethren' and 'like unto Moses pbAh'). 'Singleness' and 'singularity' from among the brethren of the Jews can only be claimed for Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), who is from among the brethren of Israelites, i.e. the Ishmā'elite. As regards the Israelite prophets, 'Singleness' and 'singularity' cannot be claimed for any of them, because there had been almost scores of them in the line of Israel. 'Singleness' and 'singularity' demand that he should be distinguished from all the other prophets after Moses, all of whom belonged to the lineage of Israel amongst the descendants of Abraham (pbAh). And it is only Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), amongst the descendants of Abraham (pbAh), who came after Moses (pbAh) and who came from amongst the brethren of the Israelites and who is only one among the whole of the descendants of Ishmael.

'Like unto Moses'

It means that the promised prophet should have such a unique and specific prophetic peculiarity or characteristic in common with Moses (pbAh) which no other forthcoming prophet can claim. There is a most conspicuous singular peculiarity of Moses (pbAh), which no other prophet from among the Israelites can claim to possess and in which no other prophet after Moses (pbAh) can be 'like unto him'. What is that? It is only Moses (pbAh) who brought the 'LAW' of the Lord for the people. After him there had been no other prophet from among the descendants of Abraham (pbAh) in the whole of the history of the humankind who could claim to have brought a complete divine 'LAW' for the people, revealed to him by the Lord, except Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). Neither anyone ever claimed it, nor it is true about anyone. There did not even

exist any claimant or candidate of having been ‘a prophet from among the brethren of the Israelites with a ‘Fiery Law for them’⁵³³ ‘like unto Moses (pbAh)’, that could have been presented as a rival to the single and sole Prophet from among the Ishmā‘elites, who are the genuine ‘brethren of the Israelites’. Any impartial and unbiased scholar would endorse it. Here is an excerpt to illustrate the theme:

The Scriptural record of Moses [pbAh] is clear and precise, and he is the dominant character of the books from *Exodus* to *Deuteronomy*. (...). He (...) received the education and upbringing of an Egyptian prince. He (...) received from

⁵³³ Deu. 33:2 KJV writes,

The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints; from his right hand went a fiery law for them.

This prophecy was uttered by Moses (pbAh) soon before his death. The first clause, ‘The Lord came from Sinai’, refers to the assignment of the ‘call’ to Moses at Sinai. The second clause, ‘rose up from Seir unto them’, refers to the assignment of the ‘call’ to Jesus in the region of Seir. The third clause, ‘he shined forth from mount Paran’, refers to the assignment of the ‘call’ to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) at mount Paran (*A Cyclopedic Bible Concordance*, NY: Oxf. Univ. Press, n.d., p.217 noted the meaning of Paran as ‘cavernous’, which ‘Makkah’ physically is), which is the name of the mountainous and cavernous region where Abraham (pbAh) had settled his wife Hagar and his ‘first born’ and the ‘only’ son Ishmā‘el, as ordered to him by the Lord (Gen 21:21). The fourth clause, ‘he came with ten thousands of saints’, refers to the conquest of Makkah by Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) at the head of an army of ten thousand holy ones, which is a unique event in the whole of the history of the humankind in which exactly ten thousand holy ones took part. The original Hebrew word ‘atā’, for the word ‘came’ means ‘to come upon’ (*Strong’s Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry 857; 18), and ‘to come upon’ means ‘to attack by surprise’ (*The Oxford Dic. and Thesaurus*, 1997; 281), as Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) actually did, to avoid bloodshed in the holy city. The fifth clause, ‘from his right hand went a ‘fiery law’ for them’, refers to the revelation of the Qur’ān to Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), which is the final and definitive code of divine ‘Law’.

God the Decalogue or Ten Commandments. (...), and that he certainly performed a work which still affects the life and thought of the world. He stands right at the beginning of monotheism-(...), but he is the one who persuaded the Hebrews that there is but one God, and so made it possible for them to produce, and then to reject the Son of God. He is one of the shapers of world thought; he is a religious pioneer. (...). His leadership, and the conquest, are historic. It is worth noting that when the prophets railed⁵³⁴ against the twists and turns that religion had taken, their accusation was that the nation had fallen away from something old, simple and pure—namely, the faith that had been taught them by Moses [pbAh]. As a statesman and Lawgiver Moses [pbAh] is the creator of the Jewish people. He found a loose conglomeration⁵³⁵ of Semitic people, none of whom had ever been anything but a slave, and whose ideas of religion were a complete confusion. He held them out and he hammered them into a nation, with a law and a national pride, and a compelling sense of being chosen by a particular God who was supreme. *The only man of history who can be compared even remotely to him is Mahomet* [stress added].⁵³⁶ The Scripture account tends to elaborate for the sake of impression, but behind all the elaborations stands a man of tremendous worth and achievement, whose mark upon the life of the world is as important as it is incalculable.⁵³⁷

⁵³⁴ ‘rail’, i.e. to scoff; to use vigorously or mockingly reproachful language; to revile (*Chambers Eng. Dic.*, Cambridge: 1989, p. 1213).

⁵³⁵ ‘Conglomeration’, i.e. a heterogeneous combination, a cluster (*Encyclopedic World Dic.* Ed. Patrick Hanks [Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1974], 351).

⁵³⁶ It may be noted here that the writer has genuinely recorded his objective observaion. It can easily be appreciated that the whole package of the attributes of Moses can rightly be compared to none other than Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) in all the human history. It can by no means be applied to Jesus Christ; whereas most of the Christian scholars willingly apply it to him.

⁵³⁷ Revd. James L. Dow, *Collins Gem Dic. of the Bible*, Gen. Ed. J. B.

Jesus Christ (pbAh) is by no means

‘a Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’

From the very birth to his death Jesus is ‘unlike Moses’ rather than being ‘like unto Moses (pbAh)’ in most of the conspicuous features. On the other hand Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) is ‘like unto Moses (pbAh)’ in most of the conspicuous features. Some of them are common in most of the prophets including Moses (pbAh) and Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), but Jesus is an exception. The first of the conspicuous features is that Moses (pbAh) and Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) and all the other prophets were born in ordinary way whereas Jesus had an unusual and extraordinary birth of a virgin mother having no father. The second point is that Moses (pbAh) and Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) and almost all the other prophets had an ordinary death whereas the death of Jesus (pbAh) was of a quite different type. The third point is that Moses (pbAh) was appointed to the ‘call’ at Mount Sinai and Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) received the revelation for the purpose in the cave of Mount Ḥira which is now called Mount Nūr. Both of them received revelation outside the city life at some mountains. The case of Jesus Christ (pbAh), whatsoever, is different from it.

The other category deals with the most specific peculiarity of Moses (pbAh) and Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), which is not to be found in any other prophet including Jesus; and that is the revelation of the divine ‘Law’ only to Moses (pbAh) and Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), as noted above.

A probe into the theme reveals that ‘likeness unto Moses’ can exclusively be claimed about Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), whereas it can by no means be claimed about Jesus (pbAh). This writer has addressed only some specific and distinguishing features otherwise a lot of other features can also be presented, but it is uncalled for, keeping in view the limited scope of the present write up.

Foreman (London: Collins, 1974), s.v. ‘Moses’, p. 401-403.

The Claim of the Jews:

‘Joshua is that Promised Prophet’

There is another point which is being briefly discussed here. Some Jews assert that the prophecy relates to and is fulfilled in the person of Joshua⁵³⁸. But the wording of the prophecy and the context do not allow it. Joshua was the contemporary of and junior to Moses (pbAh). Moses (pbAh) himself had nominated him as his successor under the instructions of the Lord. He was a disciple, attendant, and successor of Moses (pbAh) and not an independent prophet himself. No ‘Law’ was revealed unto him. So he was in no way ‘like unto Moses (pbAh)’. The words of the prophecy, ‘The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy Brethren, like unto me;’ clearly denote that they relate to some future event, whereas Joshua physically existed there when this prophecy was uttered. The book of Malachi is the last of the Minor Prophets and of the OT. It records the prophecy uttered by the Lord in the following words [which shows that the messenger of the covenant was yet to come by his time, and, as such, Joshua could not have been this ‘a prophet’]:

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come⁵³⁹ to his temple⁵⁴⁰, *even the messenger of the*

⁵³⁸ *McKenzie’s DB* (p.457) explains about ‘Joshua’:

Lieutenant and successor of Moses and hero of the book of Joshua. (...); he appears as military leader and as an attendant of Moses who guarded the tabernacle. He was one of the men sent to scout Canaan before the entrance of the Israelites and with Caleb resisted the timidity of the other scouts. (...) Joshua was solemnly commissioned to succeed Moses.

⁵³⁹ The actual Hebrew word used for this ‘come’ is ‘בוא’, which can be pronounced as *bow*. According to *Strong’s Dic. of the Heb. Bible*, entry No. 935; p.19 it means: ‘to go or come (in a wide variety of applications);—abide, befall, besiege, go (down, in, to war), [in-]vade,

covenant [stress added] whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.⁵⁴¹

As to the date of Malachi, 'McKenzie' observes:

The book is dated by the critics after the rebuilding of the temple in 516 BC, during the Persian period and before the reforms of Nehemiah and Ezra, i.e., before 432 BC.⁵⁴²

The recording of the prophecy regarding 'the messenger of the covenant' in it shows that till 432 BC the Israelites were still waiting for him and he was yet to come.

Then there is the epilogue of the book of Deuteronomy which reads:

And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.⁵⁴³

It is probable that this epilogue might have been written by Ezra eight to nine hundred years after Moses (pbAh). So the prophecy remained unfulfilled till 8-9 centuries after Moses (pbAh). It is also probable that it might have been written by

lead.' It shows that 'the messenger of the covenant (it may be noted here that Jesus never claimed for himself to be *the messenger of the covenant*)' 'shall suddenly go down to war, besiege, and invade his temple'. It is a true and exact picture of Prophet Muhammad's conquest of Makkah. No other prophet ever 'came so triumphantly and suddenly to his temple' as did Prophet Muhammad (pbAh) come.

⁵⁴⁰ How clearly and unequivocally came this prophecy true in the person of Prophet Muhammad (pbAh)! He secretly came upon his Temple, Ka'bah, in the city of Makkah, at the time of its conquest, so that it be conquered without any battle and bloodshed. The Makkans came to know about the arrival of Muhammad [pbAh] at the head of an army of ten thousand holy ones only when he had reached the gate of the city and the city was taken without any bloodshed. This is what Malachi had said, 'shall suddenly come to his temple.'

⁵⁴¹ Malachi 3:1 KJV.

⁵⁴² J.L. McKenzie, *DB*, 537.

⁵⁴³ Deu. 34:10 KJV.

some other redactor of the book when the Torah and some other books of the Bible were first compiled in written form about five hundred years after Moses (pbAh). It means that the prophecy remained unfulfilled for not less than 500 years after Moses (pbAh). It does not mean that it was fulfilled after it. Nobody ever claimed to be ‘the messenger of the covenant’ or fulfilled its pre-requisites at any time after Moses (pbAh). Almost every scholar of the Bible understands that it stood unfulfilled even after the time of Jesus Christ (pbAh). The *Bible Knowledge Commentary* observes:

During the first century A.D. the official leaders of Judaism were still looking for the fulfillment of Moses’ [pbAh] prediction (cf. John I: 21).⁵⁴⁴

That it remained unfulfilled during the time of Jesus Christ (pbAh) and the Jews were still waiting for the coming of this prophet, can be ascertained from the following passage of the Gospel According to John:

And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. *Art thou that prophet* [stress added]? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. (...). And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?⁵⁴⁵

It has become clear from the study undertaken above that this ‘Prophet like unto Moses’ had not been raised up till the time of Jesus Christ (pbAh).

⁵⁴⁴ *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, ed. John F. Walvoord, & R. B. Zuck (Illinois: SP Publ., Inc., Wheaton, 3rd Edn., 1986), p. 297.

⁵⁴⁵ John I:19-25 KJV.

The Claim of the Christians:

‘Jesus (pbAh) is that Promised Prophet’

Now there remains the claim of the Christian scholars that this prophecy was fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ (pbAh). Setting aside the question of safe preservation and transfer of the NT, it is a fact that throughout the NT Jesus Christ (pbAh) has nowhere claimed to be or presented himself as this promised ‘Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh).’ As can be observed from the dialogue between John the Baptist (pbAh) and the Jewish representatives noted above, the Jews had been waiting for three personalities at that time: (1) Elias or Elijah, (2) Christ (pbAh), and (3) ‘That Prophet’. Elias was John the Baptist (pbAh) as clarified by Jesus (pbAh).⁵⁴⁶ The Christ, according to every Christian, was Jesus himself. There remains, now, only the third one, i.e. ‘That Promised Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’. Jesus (pbAh) should naturally have not claimed to be this third personality as he has already occupied the status of the ‘Christ’ (pbAh). The three personalities waited by the Jews were three separate entities, two of which have already been settled in the persons of John the Baptist (pbAh) and Jesus (pbAh). There, obviously, remains the third one to be ascertained. If somebody asserts that Jesus (pbAh) occupied both the entities in his person, i.e., of the ‘Christ’ and of ‘That Prophet’, he should offer, in unequivocal terms, some clear-cut assertion of Jesus Christ (pbAh) in favour of his claim. And no man on earth can ever do it. Rather, quite

⁵⁴⁶ Jesus Christ is reported to have said, ‘For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come [NKJV translates it as: ‘And if you are willing to receive *it*, he is Elijah who is to come’]. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.’ (Matt. 11:13-15 KJV). Again, in the same Gospel (Matt. 17:12), Jesus (pbAh) asserts, ‘But I say unto you that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, and have done unto him whatsoever they listed [NKJV: ‘wished’]. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.’

contrary to it, Jesus (pbAh) did not assert to be ‘That Promised and Waited for Prophet Like Unto Moses (pbAh)’ even when he was asked to clarify his position. The Bible reports:

Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, *Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?* [Stress added. ‘*or do we look for another?*’ shows that someone was yet to come by that time.] Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And the blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.⁵⁴⁷

It is not quite clear what does John the Baptist (pbAh) mean by the question, ‘Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?’ ‘He that should come’ may signify both (1) the ‘Christ’ or (2) ‘a Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’, because both had been waited for. Whom John (pbAh) had alluded to, is not clear. Jesus (pbAh) should have answered this ambiguous question in unequivocal terms and should have clarified his position once and for all. Instead of it Jesus (pbAh) is reported to have chosen a strange and non-specific style. He gives an ambiguous answer. He had nowhere claimed to be ‘That Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’ previously. But ‘Christ’ he was, of course, called by his disciples as has been mentioned in the NT for so many times. He, obviously, could have meant to say, “Neither have I ever claimed to be ‘That Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’ nor the works I have been performing are like unto Moses (pbAh). So how can you take me as ‘That Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’? As to my being ‘Christ (pbAh)’, everybody knows it and my works also verify this status of mine.”

There is another clear-cut passage in Acts 3, in which Peter

⁵⁴⁷ Matt. 11:2-6 KJV.

clarifies that Jesus (pbAh) is not 'That Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)'; he is yet to come. He says:

Now you must repent and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, and so that the Lord may send the time of comfort. Then he will send you the Christ [pbAh] he has predestined, that is Jesus, whom heaven must keep till the universal restoration come which God proclaimed, speaking through his holy prophets. Moses [pbAh], for example, said, '*From among your brothers the Lord God will raise up a prophet like me; you will listen to whatever he tells you. Anyone who refuses to listen to that prophet shall be cut off from the people.*' In fact, all the prophets that have ever spoken, from Samuel onwards, have predicted these days.⁵⁴⁸

The main features of this passage can be described as:

1. Peter advises the people that they must repent and turn to God, so that their sins may be wiped out, and so that the Lord may send the time of comfort.
2. From 'the time of comfort' Peter means 'when the Lord will send the Christ he has predestined, that is Jesus (pbAh)'.⁵⁴⁹
3. Heaven must keep the Christ till the universal restoration come which God proclaimed, speaking through his holy prophets.
4. One phenomenon of this 'universal restoration', for example, is, that 'From among your brothers the Lord God will raise up a prophet like Moses (pbAh).'
5. The people must 'listen to whatever he tells them.' Because 'Anyone who refuses to listen to that prophet shall be cut off from the people'; [just like the people, who did not listen to Prophet Muhammad (pbAh), were cut off, as enjoined in Sūrah Tawbah of the Holy Qur'ān].
6. In fact, all the prophets that have ever spoken, from Samuel onwards, have predicted the advent of 'That Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)' between the First and Second Coming of Jesus Christ (pbAh).

⁵⁴⁸ *The New Jerusalem Bible* (Bombay: The Bombay Saint Paul Society, 1993), Acts 3:19-23; pp. 1803f.

⁵⁴⁹ It may refer to the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Whatever the case may be, Jesus (pbAh) has never claimed to be ‘That Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’. It means that ‘The Promised Prophet’ was yet to come during the lifetime of Jesus Christ (pbAh). Now it is only Prophet Muhammad (pbAh), who fulfills all the requisite conditions of ‘That Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’. It is he who is the only prophet from among the brethren of Israel that has come after Jesus Christ (pbAh), and whom the Almighty Allah Himself has pronounced to be ‘like unto Moses (pbAh)’ as has been recorded in the Qur’ān,

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ رَسُولًا شَاهِدًا عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ رَسُولًا ۖ فَعَصَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ الرَّسُولَ
فَأَخَذْنَاهُ أَخَذًا وَبَيًّا ۖ فَكَيْفَ تَتَّقُونَ إِن كَفَرْتُمْ يَوْمًا يَجْعَلُ الْوِلْدَانَ شِيبًا ۚ السَّمَاءُ مَنفُطَةٌ بِهِ كَانَ
وَعْدُهُ مَفْعُولًا ۚ إِن هَذِهِ تَذَكُّرَةٌ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا⁵⁵⁰

Surely We have sent unto you a Messenger as a witness over you, even as We sent To Pharaoh a Messenger [‘Which Messenger had been sent to Pharaoh?’ Who doesn’t know that it was none other than Moses?], but Pharaoh rebelled against the Messenger, so We seized him remorselessly. If therefore you disbelieve, how will you guard yourselves against a day that shall make the children grey-headed?⁵⁵¹ Whereby heaven shall be split, and its promise shall be performed. Surely this is a reminder; so let him who will [,] take unto his Lord a way.⁵⁵²

The above dissertation affirms that ‘The Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’ had not come unto the time of John the Baptist (pbAh). Jewish scholars were waiting for him. Their inquiry from John the Baptist (pbAh) whether he was ‘that prophet’ testifies their wait for him. John the Baptist (pbAh) plainly explained that he was not ‘that prophet’. Jesus (pbAh)

⁵⁵⁰ al-Qurān, Sūrah al-Muzzammil 73:15-19.

⁵⁵¹ What an impressive and beautiful imagery! Had someone had an opportunity to listen to the sonorous wordings of this verse (while, at the same time, understanding its meaning), he should have appreciated and enjoyed its force and beauty more deeply, which can by no means be transmitted into its mere translation.

⁵⁵² A.J.Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (Oxf. Univ. Press, 1983), 614.

was the Christ and he never claimed or proclaimed to have been ‘That Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’. It means that there has not risen up ‘That Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’ among all the Jewish and Christian world until now. It is required that ‘The Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’ should have risen up in some reasonable span of time after Jesus Christ (pbAh). Ground reality is that:

1. Nobody has claimed to be ‘That Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’ so far except Prophet Muhammad (pbAh).
2. Nobody fulfills the prerequisite conditions and characteristics of ‘That Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’ except Prophet Muhammad (pbAh).
3. Prophet Muhammad (pbAh) rose up as that prophet and he has practically claimed to be ‘A Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’ as stated above.
4. He fulfills the entire prerequisite conditions and characteristics of ‘That Prophet like unto Moses (pbAh)’.

If the claim of Prophet Muhammad (pbAh), is not acknowledged and conceded to, then we shall have to affirm that the Bible is not true. It is now unto the reader to decide justly and carefully, because it has been warned by the Lord just after the very prophecy in the following words:

And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he [the Prophet Like unto Moses (pbAh)] shall speak in my name, I will require⁵⁵³ it of him.⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁵³ The word ‘*require*’ has been explained to some extent in the very first footnote of this article/Appendix.

⁵⁵⁴ Deu. 18:19 KJV.

A CLEAR-CUT PROPHECY
Regarding PROPHET MUḤAMMAD (PBAH)
IN ‘ASSUMPTION OF MOSES’

There is a strangely arranged prophecy regarding Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) in a pseudepigraphical book attributed to Moses (pbAh) named ‘*The Assumption of Moses*’.⁵⁵⁵ It was introduced to me by a worthy friend, Mr. Muḥammad Farooque Kemal.⁵⁵⁶ The book ‘*The Assumption of Moses*’ consisted originally of 1,100 stichoi [lines], about half of which had been discovered. This ‘*Assumption of Moses*’ has been included in R. H. Charles’ compilation, ‘*The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*’. According to the Introduction of this book by its editor, it was originally written in Hebrew, between AD 7 and 29. A Greek version of it appeared in the first century AD. The Greek version was translated into Latin not later than the fifth century. A large fragment of this version was

⁵⁵⁵ Included in ‘*The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*’, Vol. II, edited by R. H. Charles in conjunction with many scholars, (The Oxf. Univ. Press, 1979), pp. 414-24, with an Introduction to this ‘Assumption’, pp. 407-13. It was first published in 1913.

⁵⁵⁶ Mr. Muḥammad Farūque Kamāl is a renowned scholar. He is the author of a number of books. Some of his titles are: (i) *Vindication of the Crescent*, (ii) *Crescent Versus the Cross*, (iii) *Islām for the West*, (iv) *Muḥammad* (pbAh), *Rasūlullāh* (Urdū). These can be had from: ‘Defenders of Islām Trust, 28-Empress Road, Lahore.’ He has reproduced this prophecy in some of his works for the first time. As far as my study is concerned I did not find this prophecy quoted by any of the Muslim scholars, other than Mr. Muḥammad Farūque Kamāl.

discovered by Ceriani in the form of a sixth-century MS in the Ambrosian Library in Milan and published by him in his *Mon. sacr. Et prof.* I. i. 55-64 in 1861. This MS is a palimpsest⁵⁵⁷ of the sixth century.⁵⁵⁸ The editor has observed:

It is not, as scholars have supposed, the actual work of the original Latin translator, but only a fragmentary copy of that version; for our text contains duplicate renderings and attempts at a better translation, which were primarily marginal glosses, but afterwards introduced by a copyist into the text.⁵⁵⁹

The present book is the English translation of the Latin Version, which was translated from the Greek Version. But the Greek Version is not its original form. It may have been translated from the Hebrew original. That's why the editor has observed:

In some cases we must translate, not the Latin, but the Hebrew presupposed by it; (...). Frequently it is only through retranslation that we can understand the source of the corruptions in the text.⁵⁶⁰

The author was not a Sadducee, or a Zealot, or an Essene; but was a Pharisaic Quietist⁵⁶¹.

The present treatise, '*The Assumption of Moses*', consists of 12 chapters, rather paragraphs, of an average of more or less twenty lines each. At the very outset, in chapter 1, Moses (pbAh) calls Joshua the son of Nun to him, and tells

⁵⁵⁷ 'Palimpsest' means 'a piece of writing-material or manuscript on which the original writing has been effaced to make room for other writing.' (*Oxf. Dic & Thesaurus*, ed. Sara Tulloch, Oxf. Univ. Press, 1997, 1096).

⁵⁵⁸ Please see '*The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the OT*', ed. R. H. Charles (Oxford Univ. Press, 1979), 407,8.

⁵⁵⁹ *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the OT*, 409.

⁵⁶⁰ *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the OT*, 410.

⁵⁶¹ 'Quietism' is a religious system which teaches that one should give up all desires, and gain peace by thinking quietly about God and His things.

him:

That the time of the years of my life is fulfilled and I am passing away to sleep with my fathers even in the presence of all the people. And receive thou this writing that thou mayst know how to preserve the books which I shall deliver unto thee.⁵⁶²

He also tells him:

that he might be the minister of the people (...), and that he might bring the people into the land given to their fathers, that it should be given to them according to the covenant and the oath.⁵⁶³

It is evident from these lines that this treatise consists of some information which is very important according to Moses (pbAh). That's why he is putting it forward at the end of his 'years of life' as his last will or 'testament'.⁵⁶⁴ It would be pertinent to study very briefly the outlines of the contents of each chapter to understand the development of the theme.

In chapter 2 Moses (pbAh) tells Joshua:

Thou shalt bless and give to them individually and confirm unto them their inheritance in me.⁵⁶⁵

He also informs him briefly about the salient features of the history of Israel till the conquest of Nebuchadnezzar⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁶² *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the OT*, 415.

⁵⁶³ *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the OT*, 414.

⁵⁶⁴ The name of this treatise, in fact, is '*Testament of Moses*', and not '*The Assumption of Moses*'. The editor points it out in his introduction under § 2 as its caption, 'The present book in reality a Testament of Moses—not the Assumption, which is preserved only in a few Greek quotations.'

⁵⁶⁵ *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the OT*, 415 f.

⁵⁶⁶ Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylonia for 605-562 BC. His father was Nabopolassar, who was a Chaldean chieftain appointed by

in a symbolic manner. In chapter 3 Moses (pbAh) gives a brief account of the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. In chapter 4 Moses (pbAh) informs about the coming of Daniel and his praying for the Jews and their deliverance from the captivity and return from the exile of Babylon to their homeland, Jerusalem.⁵⁶⁷ Chapter 5 states the occupation of the Seleucidae and the Greek kings and generals. Later, in the person of Antiochus, they punished the apostate Jewish nation. Chapter 6 relates to the Maccabees without mentioning their names.

With the end of chapter 6 the author's own lifetime starts. He can now no more state the events of the past as well as the predictions of the future. He can now state only some obscure predictions and enigmatical symbols. The treacherous men, self-pleasers, gluttons, and deceitful people of chapter 7 can be interpreted in terms of the Sadducees. According to the editor the 'second visitation is too accurate an account of Antiochus Epiphanes'⁵⁶⁸ persecution.'⁵⁶⁹ As regards chapter 9, Moses (pbAh), or whosoever of the inspired saints or scribes be the author, foretells the incident of taking refuge of the 'Seven Sleepers' in a cave to spare themselves from the

the Assyrians the governor of 'the Sea lands,' the extreme S of Mesopotamia. The weakness of Assyria, then in its decline, made it possible for Nabopolassar to revolt and proclaim himself king of Babylon in 626 BC. His son, Nebuchadnezzar, conquered and destroyed Jerusalem after a bitter siege in 587-6 BC.

⁵⁶⁷ *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the OT*, 417.

⁵⁶⁸ King of Syria from 175 to 163 BC. 'Epiphanes' means great or distinguished. His policy of attaining political unity by propagating Greek culture met with violent resistance from the Jews. In 169 BC he attacked Jerusalem and spoiled the Temple, and in 167 BC made a renewed and fiercer onslaught in a determination to exterminate Judaism. Jewish customs were forbidden under penalty of death, the Temple defiled and pagan cults instituted. This led to the Maccabean Revolt, after which Antiochus retired to Persia, where he died.

⁵⁶⁹ *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the OT*, 420.

persecution of the Roman Emperor, Decius.⁵⁷⁰ The incident has been recorded in the Qu'ān in chapter 18 (al-Kahf, i.e., The Cave). Although the editor attaches chapter 9 to some other irrelevant person Eleazar of 2 Macc. vi. 18 (whose name has been mentioned here as 'Taxo'), who was one of the chief scribes, and, according to 4 Macc. v. 3, a priest; its application to the event of the 'Seven Sleepers' of Ephesus is more significant. Some of its excerpts would

⁵⁷⁰ C. Messius Quintus Decius had been the Roman Emperor for 249-251. F. L. Cross describes in *The Oxf. Dic. of the Christian Church*, 2nd edn., (London: Oxf. Univ. Press, 1974), p. 384:

After Emp. Philip's defeat and death near Verona, Decius was accepted by the Senate. In the next year he undertook the first systematic persecution of the Christians, beginning with the execution of Fabian, Bp. of Rome, in Jan. 250. In June all citizens were required to furnish proof of having offered sacrifice to the Emperor; and, though many gave way or escaped through bribery, thousands were put to death. (...) The persecution, which was probably initiated to combat the allegedly fissiparous [reproducing with fission] influence of Christianity, was ended by the death of Decius in June 251.

The event of 'Seven Sleepers' (Aṣḥāb al-Kahf of the Qur'ān) relates to ca. 250 AD to 447 AD. They had embraced Christian faith. Roman Emperor of the time, Dacius, was deadly against Christianity and the Christians. When they were brought before him, he allowed them a respite for three days to reconsider their stance and to return to their previous faith of idol worship; otherwise they would be put to death. They ran away and hid in a cave outside the city of Ephesus. There they went into the miraculous sleep in this mysterious cave ca. 250 AD during the reign of the Roman Emperor Decius. They got up in 447 AD in the days of the Roman Emperor Theodosius II. The Roman Empire had already accepted and adopted the Christian faith.

It was an important event spread over the span of the third to fifth centuries AD. The '*Assumption*' was written in the Hebrew language not later than the first to third decades of the first century AD. Its factual account of an event which was to occur centuries after its compilation testifies its veracity.

illustrate it:

Then in that day there shall be a man of the tribe of Levi, whose name shall be Taxo, who having seven sons shall speak to them exhorting (them): 'Observe, my sons, behold a second ruthless (and) unclean visitation [trouble or disaster considered as a punishment from God (*Oxf. Adv. Learner's Encyclopedic Dic.*, p. 1010)] has come upon the people, and a punishment merciless and far exceeding the first. (...). Now, therefore, my sons, hear me (...). Let us fast for the space of three days and on the fourth let us go into a cave which is in the field, and let us die rather than transgress the commands of the Lord of Lords, the God of our fathers. For if we do this and die, our blood shall be avenged before the Lord.⁵⁷¹

It may be noted here that the event of the 'Seven Sleepers of Ephesus' is the main and significant event of the domain of religion between the period of Jesus Christ (pbAh) and Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). That's why Moses (pbAh) has told it to Joshua.

It may also be noted here that the book 'Assumption of Moses' was written in the first quarter of the first century AD. It is, as such, foretelling the event more than two hundred years before its occurrence. It is an obvious testimony of the veracity of the event and the very book.

Now comes the most conspicuous chapter 10 of the 'Testament', which indicates its main and central theme. It relates the advent of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh). Some of its lines are reproduced below:

And then His kingdom⁵⁷² shall appear throughout all His creation,⁵⁷³

⁵⁷¹ *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the OT*, 421.

⁵⁷² 'His kingdom' obviously means the Law of God, revealed through His Messenger.

⁵⁷³ As far as the Israelites are concerned, the 'Kingdom of God' has never 'appeared throughout all His creation' at their hands. They had never been able to establish the 'Law of God', in whatsoever form,

(...)

And He will appear to punish the Gentiles,⁵⁷⁴

And He will destroy all their idols.⁵⁷⁵

outside Canaan, and upon the people other than the Israelites (i.e. upon the Gentiles), throughout their history. It is only through Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) that the Kingdom of God '*appeared throughout all His creation*', i.e. the world known by the people of that time irrespective of Geographic or ethnic identity.

It may be noted here that it is common in the Bible to use the word of 'all' in the sense of 'magnitude'. Exaggeration is very common in the Bible. Every body knows that although the Flood of Noah (pbAh) covered a huge area, yet it was not a universal one. But the Bible has depicted it as universal phenomenon. It records:

And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. (Gen. 7:19 KJV)

There are other instances as well where 'all' has freely been used to describe some big amount or quantity. Similarly, 'throughout all His creation' here means a huge portion.

⁵⁷⁴ This prediction of Moses (pbAh) is also true of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) that only through him '*He [God] will appear to punish the Gentiles*', which the Jews could never do.

⁵⁷⁵ It is also true of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) only that '*He will destroy all their idols.*' A. Guillaume has recorded in '*The Life of Muhammad*', (Karachi-2: Oxford University Press, 1974), 552:

The apostle entered Mecca on the day of the conquest and it contained 360 idols which Ibīs had strengthened with lead. The apostle was standing by them with a stick in his hand, saying, 'The truth has come and falsehood has passed away; verily falsehood is sure to pass away' (al-Isrā 17.82). Then he pointed at them with his stick and they collapsed on their backs one after the other.

When the apostle prayed the noon prayer on the day of the conquest he ordered that all the idols which were round the Ka'ba should be collected and burned with fire and broken up. Faḍāla b. al-Mulawwih al-Laythī, a poet commemorating the day of the

(...).⁵⁷⁶

conquest, said:

Had you seen Muhammad [pbAh] and his troops
The day the idols were smashed when he entered,
You would have seen God's light become manifest
And darkness covering the face of idolatry.

Sir William Muir, in *'The Life of Muhammad'*, (Edinburgh: John Grant
31 George IV Bridge, 1923), 408, records the event in the following
words:

The abused, rejected, exiled Prophet now had the rebellious city at
his feet. Moḥammad [pbAh] was Lord of Mecca. (...). Then,
pointing with his staff to the idols one by one that stood around, he
commanded them to be hewn down. *'Truth hath come,'* he cried in
the words of the Kor'ān, as the great image of Hubal, reared in
front of the Ka'ba, fell with a crash;—*'Truth hath come, and
falsehood gone; for falsehood verily vanisheth away.'*

As regards the Israelites, not to say of *'destroying all their idols'*, they
themselves started to worship the idols for a number of times during
their history, which has even been recorded in the Bible for many a
time in so many words regretfully.

⁵⁷⁶ The author, or some later redactor, has inserted some lines regarding
the Israelites; but they are so glaringly irrelevant to the text that every
unprejudiced reader will appreciate that they have nothing to do with
the theme and must have been interpolated. They are, however, being
reproduced hereunder for reference:

Then thou, O Israel, shalt be happy,
And thou shalt mount upon the necks and wings of the eagle,
And they shall be ended.
And God will exalt thee,
And He will cause thee to approach to the heaven of the stars,
In the place of their habitation.
And thou shalt look upon from on high and shalt see thy enemies
in Ge[henna],
And thou shalt recognize them and rejoice,

And do thou, Joshua (the son of) Nun, keep these words and this book;

For from my death [assumption] until His advent⁵⁷⁷ there shall be CCL times.⁵⁷⁸

And this is the course of the times which they shall pursue till they are consummated.

And I shall go to sleep with my fathers.

And thou shalt give thanks and confess thy Creator.

⁵⁷⁷ The words, '*from my death [assumption] until His advent*', make it clear that all the events indicated here are related to the person whose advent has been described here.

⁵⁷⁸ In the sentence, '*For from my death [assumption] until His advent there shall be CCL times*', the key words are the '*CCL times*'. The editor of the '*Assumption of Moses*' has explained in his footnote:

CCL times, i.e. 250 year weeks, or 1,750 years. (...), which gives the same date for the Messiah's coming.

But, *firstly*, there is no mention of any Messiah's coming in this chapter of the "Assumption", there is rather 'the kingdom of God', and, *secondly*, if the Messiah be Jesus Christ (pbAh), the calculations are quite wrong. Jesus (pbAh) came some twelve centuries after Moses (pbAh), whereas Moses (pbAh) has remarked that between his (Moses' pbAh) death and His (whosoever is to come; be it Jesus (pbAh) or someone else) advent there shall be 1750 years. Now it is an historical fact that it is only Prophet Moḥammad (pbAh) who happened to come about the *CCL times* after the death of Moses (pbAh). Now the *CCL times*, according to the editor, mean 250 year weeks i.e., 1750 years. We know that according to the Roman numerals 'C' stands for one hundred and 'CC' would stand for two times a hundred, i.e. 200. Similarly 'L' stands for fifty. If 'L' be inserted after a letter of larger value, it is added to it. Thus 'CCL' becomes 100+100+50, which obviously makes 250. The meanings of the original Hebrew word (according to its idiomatic usage in that context), which has been translated here in English as '*times*', are 'year weeks' as explained by the editor. The 'year week' stands for 'seven years', in the same way as the 'day week' stands for 'seven days'. Consequently '250 year weeks' will mean '250 x 7 years, i.e. 1750 years'.

Wherefore, Joshua thou (son of) Nun, (be strong and) be of good courage; (for) God hath chosen (thee) to be minister in the same covenant.⁵⁷⁹

In chapter 11 Moses (pbAh) reminds Joshua his assignments emphatically. Joshua is aggrieved upon and afraid of the heavy task before him. Finally, in chapter 12 Moses (pbAh) consoles and encourages Joshua. He affirms that the will of God shall be fulfilled and shall prevail and He shall help him in the accomplishment of his assignment. And with this our present treatise comes to the end.

As can be easily appreciated, chapter 10 is the most conspicuous part of the book, because it foretells the advent of the 'kingdom of God', which is to be established 1750 years after the death of Moses (pbAh). To appreciate the exact personality that was to establish the foretold 'kingdom of God', first of all we have to find out the point of time in the world history that falls 1750 years after the death of Moses (pbAh). Although the time of Moses' (pbAh) death cannot be exactly pinpointed, the scholars have made all out efforts to reach as near to the exact point of time of the event as possible with the help of the available data of the annals of the world history.

Oxford Bible Atlas asserts that the Exodus of the Israelites under Moses (pbAh) from Egypt took place during the period of Egyptian Pharaoh Rameses II of the 19th dynasty, who ruled Egypt from 1290 to 1224 BC:

The oppression of Israel and the exodus from Egypt took place most probably under Rameses II (1290-24),⁵⁸⁰

Bernhard W. Anderson⁵⁸¹ and John Bright⁵⁸² have also

⁵⁷⁹ *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the OT*, 421-3.

⁵⁸⁰ *Oxford Bible Atlas*, 3rd Edn, ed Herbert G. May (NY: Oxford University Press, 1984), 16.

⁵⁸¹ Bernhard W. Anderson, *Understanding the OT*, 3rd Edn. (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, 1975), in the Comprehensive Chronological Chart, 602.

assigned the same dates (1290-24) to Ramses II.

J. A. Wilson has noted in the *Interpreter's Dic. of the Bible* that the period of Ramses II's reign was 1290-24 BCE:

The long reign of Ramses II (1290-24) left an indelible mark upon Egypt. (...), he is the traditional Pharaoh of Oppression. (...). Ramses II was succeeded by his son Merneptah.⁵⁸³

Paul Johnson asserts:

Indeed there is pretty convincing evidence that the period of Egyptian oppression, which finally drove the Israelites to revolt and escape, occurred towards the last quarter of the second millennium BC, and almost certainly in the reign of the famous Rameses II (...). This [the victory stele of Pharaoh Merneptah, who was the son and successor of Rameses II, which has been dated 1220 BC] is the first non-Biblical reference to Israel. Taken in conjunction with other evidence, such as calculations based on I Kings 6:1 and Judges 11:26, we can reasonably be sure that the Exodus occurred in the thirteenth century BC and had been completed by about 1225 BC.⁵⁸⁴

New Bible Atlas concludes on the basis of archaeological research that the event of exodus related to ca. 1230/20 BC:

Among the L. B. [Late Bronze Age: 1550-1200 BC] towns destroyed at the end of the period are some listed among Israel's conquest: Lachish (Tell ed-Duweir), Eglon (Tell el-Hesi), Debir (Tell el-Beit Mirsim) and Hazor. Many scholars have therefore interpreted these destructions as the archaeological evidence for Israel's entry into Canaan, dating the event c. 1230/20 BC. The relatively poor Iron Age I [1200-330 BC] culture which followed has therefore been labelled

⁵⁸² John Bright, *A History of Israel* (London: SCM Press Ltd, Bloomsbury Street, 1967), Chronological Charts, 465.

⁵⁸³ *The Interpreter's Dic. of the Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (NY: Abingdon Press, 1962), 4:11.

⁵⁸⁴ Paul, Johnson, *A Hist. of the Jews* (NY: HarperPerennial, 1988), 25f.

'Israelite'. (...). It appears from the latest evidence that Lachish was also destroyed c. 1175 BC rather than 1230/20 BC.⁵⁸⁵

Pictorial Biblical Enc. asserts:

The work was begun by Seti I (1312-1289 BCE) and continued by his son, Ramses II (1289-1224 BCE), using the forced labour of the Delta's nomadic population.⁵⁸⁶

The New Jerusalem Bible writes:

The reference indicates Rameses II (1290-1224) as the oppressive Pharaoh and gives an approximate date for the Exodus.⁵⁸⁷

The New Jerusalem Bible Pocket Edn. (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1990), p.1450, says in its Chronological Table: '1290-1224 Rameses II'.

K.A.Kitchen and T.C.Mitchell in their article, 'Chronology of the OT' in the *New Bible Dic.* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2nd Edn. 1982, p. 195) have assigned 1290-1224 BC as the period of Ramses II. They have also mentioned 1279-1213 BC as an alternative probability.

It can thus be noted that the reign of Ramses II has been recorded 1290-24 BCE by the following authorities, which makes it clear that the date of the advent of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) is exactly CCL Times after the death of Moses (pbAh):

Understanding the OT by Bernard W. Anderson.

A History of Israel by John Bright.

New Bible Dic. 2nd Edition.

Interpreter's Dic. of the Bible, Vol. IV.

The New Jerusalem Bible.

The New Jerusalem Bible Pocket Edn., 1990.

⁵⁸⁵ *New Bible Atlas*, Ed. Bimson, J.J. (Leicester: Trinity College, Bristol; Kane, J.P., Univ. of Manchester, Inter-Varsity Press, 1985), 38.

⁵⁸⁶ *Pictorial Biblical Enc.*, ed. Gaalyahu, Cornfeld (NY: The Macmillan Co., 1964), 301.

⁵⁸⁷ *The New Jerusalem Bible*, ed. Jones, Alexander (Bombay: Bombay Saint Paul Society, 1993), 81.

Pictorial Biblical Enc.
Oxford Bible Atlas.
New Bible Dic.

Now if this Pharaoh Rameses II (1290-24 BC) be, as is generally accepted by the scholars of the Bible, the same Pharaoh, during whose reign the Israelites migrated from Egypt with Moses (pbAh), he must have drowned in the sea while chasing Israelites. The Bible has recorded the event fairly in detail:

When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds about them and said, "What have we done? We have let the Israelites go and have lost their services!" So he [this 'he', obviously, here means none other than 'Pharaoh'] had his chariot made ready and took his army with him. He took six hundred of the best chariots, along with all the other chariots of Egypt, with officers over all of them. The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, so that he pursued the Israelites, who were marching out boldly. The Egyptians—all Pharaoh's horses and chariots, horsemen and troops—pursued the Israelites and overtook them as they camped by the sea near Pi Hahiroth, opposite Baal Zephon.

As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the Lord. They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians'? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!"

Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that

the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground. I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them. And I will gain glory through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. The Egyptians will know that I am the Lord when I gain glory through Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen.” (....).

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.

The Egyptians pursued them, and all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots and horsemen followed them into the sea.

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen.” Moses stretched his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the sea went back to its place. The Egyptians were fleeing toward it and the Lord swept them into the sea. The water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen—the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them survived.⁵⁸⁸

It shows that the Pharaoh, who followed the Israelites in the dried seabed, had been drowned and was not spared. Consequently the Israelites entered into Sinai. Thus the Exodus took place in 1224 BC, which is also the same year in which Pharaoh Rameses II died of drowning in his hot pursuit of the fleeing Israelites.

Now the Israelites along with Moses (pbAh) wandered for forty years in Sinai before entering into the land of Canaan. Moses (pbAh) died at the end of this forty-year wandering in the wilderness before the entry of the Israelites into the Promised Land of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua son of Nun. It shows that Moses (pbAh) died in the year 1184 BC (1224-40=1184). That the Israelites had wandered in Sinai

⁵⁸⁸ Exodus 14:5-18,21-3,26-8 in *The NIV Study Bible*, ed. Barker, Kenneth (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing. House, 1995), 105,07.

for forty years after the announcement of this punishment for their misbehavior in Sinai and before their entry into the Promised Land of Canaan, can be appreciated from the following excerpt of the Bible:

In this desert your bodies will fall — every one of you twenty years old or more who was counted in the census and who has grumbled against me. Not one of you will enter the land I swore with uplifted hand to make your home except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun. As for your children that you said would be taken as plunder, I will bring them in to enjoy the land you have rejected. But you — your bodies will fall in this desert. Your children will be shepherds here for forty years, suffering for your unfaithfulness, until the last of your bodies lies in the desert. For forty years — one year for each of the forty days you explored the land — you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have me against you. I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will surely do these things to this whole wicked community, which has banded together against me. They will meet their end in this desert; here they will die.⁵⁸⁹

The punishment of forty years wandering in the wilderness had not started just after the entrance of the Israelites into Sinai. There had elapsed a number of events and misdeeds of the Israelites stretching on a long time that justified this heavy punishment. The description of this period is stretched in the Bible on 26 chapters of the book of Exodus, complete book of Leviticus (27 chapters), and fourteen chapters of the book of Numbers; which make a total of 67 chapters. It would have definitely taken at least four years of the sinful activities of the Israelites to justify the pronouncement of the punishment of forty years wandering into the wilderness of Sinai.

It means that Moses (pbAh) would have died almost forty-four years after the death of Rameses II who died of drowning in the sea in the year 1224 BC. As such the year of

⁵⁸⁹ Numbers 14:29-35, in the *NIV Study Bible*, 209.

the death of Moses (pbAh) becomes 1180 BC (1224-44=1180). It can thus be affirmed that the gap between the death of Moses (pbAh) and the birth of Jesus Christ (pbAh) is 1180 years.

It is almost unanimously held that Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) was born in AD 570. Geo. W. Gilmore observes in his article 'Mohammed, Mohammedanism':

Mohammed, 'The Praised,' the posthumous son of Abdu Allah, a member of the Koraish tribe, by Aminah, was born at Mecca Aug. 20, 570, and died at Medina June 8, 632.⁵⁹⁰

Michael H. Hart writes:

The majority of the persons in this book had the advantage of being born and raised in centers of civilization, highly cultured or politically pivotal nations. Muhammad [pbAh], however, was born in the year 570, in the city of Mecca, in southern Arabia, at that time a backward area of the world, far from the centers of trade, art, and learning.⁵⁹¹

It can thus be appreciated that the number of years from the death of Moses (pbAh) till the birth of Jesus (pbAh) is 1180 years; and the number of years from the birth of Jesus (pbAh) till the birth of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) is 570. Now 1180+570 make nothing else than 1750 years. It reveals that Moses (pbAh) foretold about none other than Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) in his prophecy recorded in the '*Assumption of Moses*'. It should also be borne in mind that there is only one prominent figure in the annals of history that fulfils this prophecy of the '*Assumption of Moses*' in letter and spirit. It is only the person of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh), and none other than he. He came exactly after 1750 years from the death of Moses (pbAh). As such, there remains no justifiable reason to denying the

⁵⁹⁰ *The New Schaff-Herzog Enc.* (12 volumes), ed. Samuel Jackson Macauley (NY: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1910), 436.

⁵⁹¹ Michael H. Hart, *The 100, A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History* (NY: Hart Publishing Co, Inc.), 34.

sincerity of the claim to the apostolate of Prophet Muḥammad (pbAh) for an honest, impartial, and unbiased person.

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