

ADDENDA TO THE
THE QUR'AN
A COMPLETE REVELATION

SAM GERRANS

Addenda To The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation

Third Edition

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PREFACE

The components which make up *Addenda to The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation* formerly comprised parts of the appendix to the hardback and pdf versions of *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation*.

As of May 2022, they are available in pdf only.

A copy for private use may be printed.

S.G.

PUBLICATIONS OVERVIEW

Books treating of the Qur'an published to date comprise the following:

- *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation*
- *The Mysterious Letters of the Qur'an: A Complete Solution*
- *The God Protocol*

These books may be downloaded in pdf free or hardback editions purchased at quranite.com.

The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation

This comprises:

- *Background*
- *Translation* (parallel text)
- *Notes & Commentary*

The Mysterious Letters of the Qur'an: A Complete Solution

This comprises:

- *Framework for Qur'anic Methods of Exegesis*
- *Solution to the Mysterious Letters of the Qur'an* (marked *Article MLQ* in *Notes & Commentary*)

The God Protocol

This book forms the point and purpose of the works above.

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Addenda to The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation

This publication comprises:

- *Notepads*
- *Al Ṣalāt and Al Zakāt Considered* (marked *Article SZC* in *Notes & Commentary*)
- *Shayṭān, Jinn, and Related Terms Considered* (marked *Article SJC* in *Notes & Commentary*)

This document may be downloaded in pdf free at quranite.com

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The *Translation* (parallel text) and *Notes & Commentary* are found also at reader.quranite.com.

Quranite Reader provides fast navigation across the body of the work, text-based searches, root searches, lexical information, and much besides. It was kindly contributed by Said Mirza.

Notepads

NOTEPAD I

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

rahmān — almighty

Almost all translations of the Qur'an render *rahmān* as *beneficent* or most *merciful* or synonyms thereof.

While *rahmān* and *rahīm* (*merciful*) do, it is true, come from the same root (*r-h-m*) it would be surprising if the Qur'an — a scripture characterized by economy of words — opened with and repeated a tautologous statement.

There is objective historical support for the value of *almighty* for *rahmān*. The term is found in a eulogy carved in rock to a Nabataean king who had successfully destroyed his enemies. In it he is described as *rahmān* — hardly the adjective of choice if *beneficent* or *merciful* were its value.

Since I connect Muḥammad with the city of Petra (at least in the sense that it was the location of the pilgrimage — an event he was expected to attend in order to witness to the truth of the One God — until such time as it was annulled for believers at 9:28) on the basis of both the Qur'anic narrative and historical data — and since Petra is in Northern Arabia and was occupied by the Nabataeans — this linguistic point supports the broader case for the Nabataean locus of at least part of the Qur'anic revelation also.

By reviewing all instances of *rahmān* one sees that concepts of *mercy* cannot be sustained in a number of cases (for example 36:23), whereas *almighty* fits every context perfectly.

On this basis, I conclude that *almighty* is the correct value.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

1:1, 1:3, 2:163, 13:30, 17:110, 19:18, 19:26, 19:44, 19:45, 19:58, 19:61, 19:69, 19:75, 19:78, 19:85, 19:87, 19:88, 19:91, 19:92, 19:93, 19:96, 20:5, 20:90, 20:108, 20:109, 21:26, 21:36, 21:42, 21:112, 25:26, 25:59, 25:60, 25:60, 25:63, 26:5, 27:30, 36:11, 36:15, 36:23, 36:52, 41:2, 43:17, 43:19, 43:20, 43:33, 43:36, 43:45, 43:81, 50:33, 55:1, 59:22, 67:3, 67:19, 67:20, 67:29, 78:37, 78:38.

NOTEPAD II

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

Specific Qur'anic usage of *k-f-r* and *a-m-n* roots II.i

***allahīna kafarū* — those who ignore warning**

The Traditionalist renders *allahīna kafarū* as *those who disbelieve* and synonyms thereof. The subtext accompanying this definition is: *those who reject the religion of Islam as defined by one of the various accepted schools of thought and who does not submit to the tenets, doctrines and dogmas of said schools of thought*. It is true that *kafara* means *to reject* or *to deny* (and I render it accordingly those cases where such a reading is not overridden, or clarified by a Qur'anic definition). I also admit that *allahīna kafarū* in a true, pre-dogmatic sense means what the Traditionalist claims for it now — i.e. *those who deny* or *those who disbelieve*. The point I am making is that this collocation has a specific connotation which has been polluted, wearied or compromised by time, tradition and usage, and that the Qur'an contains within it the means to access that original connotation.

The Qur'anic definition then of *allahīna kafarū* is clear and found at 2:6:

[*allahīna kafarū*:] it is the same to them whether thou hast warned them or thou hast not warned them; [...]¹
(2:6)

On this basis, I render *allahīna kafarū* as *those who ignore warning* throughout.

The discrete compound *allahīna āmanū* is identified as the opposite of *allahīna kafarū* at 2:257 and is treated as such throughout (see II.iv below).

This rendering applies only to this collocation, i.e. those instances where *allahīna kafarū* does not take an object (which is the form in which it occurs in the Qur'anic definition above). Where it takes an object, I assume the Qur'anic definition no longer to prevail over the default standard lexicon definition.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:6, 2:26, 2:39, 2:89, 2:105, 2:161, 2:171, 2:212, 2:257, 2:258, 3:10, 3:12, 3:55, 3:55, 3:56, 3:90, 3:91, 3:116, 3:127, 3:149, 3:151, 3:156, 3:178, 3:196, 4:42, 4:51, 4:76, 4:84, 4:101, 4:102, 4:167, 4:168, 5:3, 5:10, 5:36, 5:73, 5:78, 5:80, 5:86, 5:103, 5:110, 6:1, 6:7, 6:25, 7:66, 7:90, 8:12, 8:15, 8:30, 8:36, 8:36, 8:38, 8:50, 8:55, 8:59, 8:65, 8:73, 9:3, 9:26, 9:30, 9:37, 9:40, 9:40, 9:90, 10:4, 11:7, 11:27, 13:7, 13:27, 13:31, 13:32, 13:33, 13:43, 14:13, 15:2, 16:39, 16:84, 16:88, 18:56, 18:102, 19:37, 19:73, 21:30, 21:36, 21:39, 21:97, 22:19, 22:25, 22:55, 22:57, 22:72, 22:72, 23:24, 23:33, 24:39, 24:57, 25:4, 25:32, 27:67, 29:12, 30:16, 30:58, 32:29, 33:25, 34:3, 34:7, 34:31, 34:33, 34:43, 35:7, 35:26, 35:36,

¹ Qur'anic verses not in italics are from *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation*.

36:47, 38:2, 38:27, 38:27, 39:71, 40:4, 40:6, 40:10, 41:26, 41:27, 41:29, 41:50, 45:31, 46:3, 46:7, 46:11, 46:20, 46:34, 47:1, 47:3, 47:4, 47:8, 47:12, 47:32, 47:34, 48:22, 48:25, 48:25, 48:26, 51:60, 52:42, 57:15, 57:19, 59:2, 59:11, 60:5, 64:5, 64:7, 64:10, 66:7, 66:10, 67:27, 68:51, 70:36, 74:31, 84:22, 85:19, 98:1, 98:6.

II.ii

***lā yu'minūn* — they are lost in darkness**

The Traditionalist renders this collocation as *they do not believe* or similar. The subtext to his reading is comparable to that for *alladhīna kafarū* above, namely: *they reject the religion of Islam as defined by one of the various accepted schools of thought and do not submit to the tenets, doctrines and dogmas of said schools of thought.*

As with *kafara* above, *lā yu'minūn* in a true, pre-dogmatic sense means what the Traditionalist claims for it now — i.e. *they do not believe*. Again, this collocation has a specific connotation and that this meaning has been likewise polluted, wearied or compromised by time, tradition and usage, and the Qur'an contains within it the means to access that original connotation.

The Qur'anic definition is clear and is found at 2:6-7.

[lā yu'minūn:] God has sealed their hearts, and over their hearing and over their sight is a covering; and they have a great punishment.
(2:6-7)

The sense central to the clause is that *they are lost in darkness*, which rightly describes those whose hearing, heart (intellect) and sight have been covered.

Again, the Traditionalist's reading of *they do not believe* is not incorrect exactly, but the attendant subtext he infers (i.e. *they do not embrace the religion of Islam and observe all its nuances as defined by a man with a long beard*) is entirely absent.

The reasoning here applies only to those instances above where *lā yu'minūn* does not take an object (which is the form in which it occurs in the Qur'anic definition). Where it takes an object, I assume the Qur'anic definition no longer to prevail over the default standard lexicon definition.

While I render after the accepted formula (i.e. as *they do not believe*) I include the Qur'anic usage discussed here in the notes. All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:6, 2:100, 4:46, 4:65, 4:155, 6:12, 6:20, 6:109, 6:125, 7:27, 8:55, 10:33, 10:88, 10:96, 10:101, 11:17, 11:121, 13:1, 19:39, 21:30, 23:44, 36:7, 36:10, 40:59, 41:44, 43:88, 52:33, 84:20.

II.iii

***(al) kāfirūn* — those who spurn guidance**

The Traditionalist's reading here is *disbelievers* or *infidels* or similar. The subtext to his reading is the same as it is for *alladhīna kafarū* above, namely: *those who reject the religion of*

Islam as defined by one of the various accepted schools of thought and who does not submit to the tenets, doctrines and dogmas of said schools of thought.

I repeat what I say about *kafara* (from which *kāfirūn* derives as the active participle) and agree that it means *to reject* or *to deny*. The point is that this particular formula has a specific connotation which has been polluted, wearied or compromised by time, tradition and usage, and that the Qur'an contains within it the means to access that original connotation.

Of the terms defined in the first pages of *al baqarah* it is *al kāfirūn* which receives most extensive treatment. In my opinion, this is because this category of persons is the most pernicious and destructive.

Defining *(al) kāfirūn* as *unbelievers*, *rejecters* and *infidels* (in the connotation identified above) has helped maintain the cult known today as Islam, but it is patently wrong from the Qur'anic point of view.

Verses 2:8-20 together serve to define *(al) kāfirūn* — a point utterly missed by the Traditionalist. According to these verses *al kāfirūn* have the following characteristics:

- they claim to believe in God when they are not among those who truly believe
- they try to deceive both God and those who believe
- they are themselves deceived
- they are diseased in heart
- they create corruption in the earth while failing to see that they do so
- they have contempt for the faith of the generality of mankind
- they claim to believe and side with those who believe in God but in fact side with the satans
- they sell guidance for error
- they are in darkness (the result of the failure of the 'light' of their own making)
- the full power and majesty of true light puts them in fear of death
- they are permitted to operate only by the grace of God, but fail to acknowledge their own dependence and vulnerability

We should bear in mind that such people are not ignorant of God's laws; they have access to guidance and claim to follow it. Moreover, they are active in the world and create corruption, convinced that they are doing good. This is a far cry from *unbelievers* in the typical sense.

A full definition then of such people would be: *those deceived and deceiving, who are diseased in heart and oblivious to the fact that what they create is corrupt, and who have contempt for the faith of the generality of mankind; while they claim to believe in God and do good works they side with the satans which fact blinds them to the full power and majesty of God; while they wander lost having traded guidance to buy error, they are ultimately powerless and dependent on God's grace and utterly compassed about by God and His knowledge.*

I have pruned this unwieldy definition down to: *those who spurn guidance* and render accordingly throughout.

This rendering applies only to those instances above where *(al) kāfirūn* or *(al) kāfir* occur in the form in the definition. Where it takes an object I revert to a standard lexical definition.

This definition of *(al) kāfirūn* makes full sense in contexts where the Traditionalist's assumed value either falls flat or is at odds with the sense, the context, or both.

The Traditionalist conflates his understanding of *(al) kāfirūn* with his understanding of *alladhīna kafarū* (for which he is likewise unaware of the Qur'anic value).

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:19, 2:24, 2:34, 2:89, 2:90, 2:98, 2:104, 2:191, 2:217, 2:250, 2:254, 2:264, 2:286, 3:28, 3:32, 3:100, 3:131, 3:141, 3:147, 4:37, 4:101, 4:102, 4:139, 4:140, 4:141, 4:141, 4:144, 4:151, 4:151, 4:161, 5:44, 5:54, 5:67, 5:68, 6:122, 6:130, 7:37, 7:50, 7:93, 7:101, 8:7, 8:14, 8:18, 9:2, 9:26, 9:32, 9:37, 9:49, 9:55, 9:85, 9:125, 10:2, 10:86, 11:42, 12:87, 13:14, 13:35, 14:2, 16:27, 16:83, 16:107, 17:8, 18:100, 18:102, 19:83, 22:44, 23:117, 25:26, 25:52, 26:19, 27:43, 28:82, 28:86, 29:47, 29:54, 29:68, 30:45, 33:1, 33:8, 33:48, 33:64, 35:39, 35:39, 36:70, 38:4, 38:74, 39:32, 39:59, 39:71, 40:14, 40:25, 40:50, 40:74, 40:85, 42:26, 47:10, 47:11, 48:13, 50:2, 54:8, 58:4, 58:5, 61:8, 64:2, 67:20, 67:28, 69:50, 70:2, 71:26, 74:10, 74:31, 76:4, 86:17, 109:1.

II.iv

***alladhīna āmanū* — those who heed warning**

This term is rendered by the Traditionalist as *those who believe* and synonyms. As with its antonym (see II.i above) what he means by this is those who have believed in the religion which he calls Islam. However, this is not what the Qur'an indicates by this term.

As the Traditionalist correctly says, *alladhīna āmanū* does in fact mean — at least in a wan sense — *those who believe*. The point I am again making is that this particular formula has a specific connotation which has been polluted, wearied or compromised by time, tradition and usage, and that the Qur'an contains within it the means to access that original connotation.

The definition of *alladhīna āmanū* is derived from comparison with its antonym. We know from the Qur'anic definition at 2:6 that *alladhīna kafarū* means *those who ignore warning*. At 2:257 this known value is set in unambiguous contradistinction with *alladhīna āmanū*. This Qur'anic value for *alladhīna āmanū*, then, is *those who heed warning*.

All messengers warn their people to submit to God. Those who heed that warning are *alladhīna āmanū*. No particular religion is mentioned.

This rendering applies only to those instances where *alladhīna āmanū* does not take an object (which is the form in which it occurs in the Qur'anic definition). Where it takes an object, I assume the Qur'anic definition to have been waived and default to a standard lexical definition.

All instances in the text are footnoted.

References

2:9, 2:14, 2:25, 2:26, 2:62, 2:76, 2:82, 2:104, 2:153, 2:165, 2:172, 2:178, 2:183, 2:208, 2:212, 2:213, 2:214, 2:218, 2:249, 2:254, 2:257, 2:264, 2:267, 2:277, 2:278, 2:282, 3:57, 3:68, 3:72, 3:100, 3:102, 3:118, 3:130, 3:140, 3:141, 3:149, 3:156, 3:200, 4:19, 4:29, 4:43, 4:51, 4:57, 4:59, 4:71, 4:76, 4:94, 4:122, 4:135, 4:136, 4:137, 4:144, 4:173, 5:1, 5:2, 5:6, 5:8, 5:9, 5:11, 5:35, 5:51, 5:53, 5:54, 5:55, 5:56, 5:57, 5:69, 5:82, 5:82, 5:87, 5:90, 5:93, 5:94, 5:95, 5:101, 5:105, 5:106, 6:82, 7:32, 7:42, 7:88, 8:12, 8:15, 8:20, 8:24, 8:27, 8:29, 8:45, 8:72, 8:72, 8:74, 8:75, 9:20, 9:23, 9:28, 9:34, 9:38, 9:61, 9:113, 9:119, 9:123, 9:124, 10:2, 10:4, 10:9, 10:63, 10:103, 11:23, 11:29, 11:58, 11:66, 11:94, 12:57, 13:28, 13:29, 13:31, 14:23, 14:27, 14:31, 16:99, 16:102, 18:30, 18:107, 19:73, 19:96, 22:14, 22:17, 22:23, 22:38, 22:50, 22:54, 22:56, 22:77, 24:19, 24:21, 24:27, 24:55, 24:58, 26:227, 27:53, 29:7, 29:9, 29:11, 29:12, 29:56, 29:58, 30:15, 30:45, 31:8, 32:19, 33:9, 33:41, 33:49, 33:53, 33:56, 33:69, 33:70, 34:4, 35:7, 36:47, 38:24, 38:28, 39:10, 40:7, 40:25, 40:30, 40:35, 40:38, 40:51, 40:58, 41:8, 41:18, 41:44, 42:18, 42:22, 42:23, 42:26, 42:36, 42:45, 45:14, 45:21, 45:30, 46:11, 47:2, 47:3, 47:7, 47:11, 47:12, 47:20, 47:33, 48:29, 49:1, 49:2, 49:6, 49:11, 49:12, 52:21, 57:7, 57:13, 57:16, 57:27, 57:28, 58:9, 58:10, 58:11, 58:11, 58:12, 59:10, 59:18, 60:1, 60:10, 60:13, 61:2, 61:10, 61:14, 61:14, 62:9, 63:9, 64:14, 65:10, 65:11, 66:6, 66:8, 66:8, 66:11, 74:31, 83:29, 83:34, 84:25, 85:11, 90:17, 95:6, 98:7, 103:3.

NOTEPAD III

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

raka'a — to be lowly

The word *raka'a* is associated by the Traditionalist with *bow* or *bowing* (specifically, to bow as part of the ritual prayer which he insists God has in mind but which cannot be found, by his own admission, within the pages of the Qur'an).

Besides the religious meaning ascribed to *raka'a* of *ritual bowing*, Arabic lexicons furnish other meanings such as *to become lowered or abased* (such as becoming poor after being rich), and *to humble oneself before God*. Admittedly, the latter could, conceivably mean to bow physically. I have no pre-existing allegiance to one view or the other. I simply want to know what the Qur'an means by the term.

As with so many of the Qur'anic terms to which the Traditionalist has riveted his pre-existing religious concepts, the contexts in which *raka'a* occurs are predominantly open-ended and non-specific. We only have the Traditionalist's word for it that *raka'a* means ritual bowing. Certainly, nowhere in the Qur'an could one derive that precise meaning had one not been primed to expect it.

Our only course of action is to review such evidence as we have. Happily, the Qur'an furnishes evidence at 38:24 which allows us reasonably to conclude that *raka'a* in the Qur'anic context indicates inner humility and not ritual bowing. Here is that verse from a Traditionalist translation (Saheeh International):

[David] said, "He has certainly wronged you in demanding your ewe [in addition] to his ewes. And indeed, many associates oppress one another, except for those who believe and do righteous deeds - and few are they." And David became certain that We had tried him, and he asked forgiveness of his Lord and fell down bowing [in prostration] and turned in repentance [to Allah].¹ (38:24)

The Traditionalist appears to be clear what his object is: he wants to indicate that David was a 'Muslim', that he had a form of ritual worship materially like what the Traditionalist claims for his cult. He has duly rendered the adverbial object based on *raka'a* as *bowing*. However, he has two problems.

Firstly, this object is preceded by *kharra* which everywhere means *to fall down* and the word *prostration* (which he would dearly like to be present for the same reason as he wants *raka'a* to mean *bowing*) is irritatingly not there. So he has added it. The second problem he has is purely practical. How can one, in reality, fall down bowing in prostration without serious physical injury? One can fall down. One can bow. One can prostrate. But all three at once?

To begin with what we know:

¹ Qur'anic verses in italics are from *The Qur'an - Arabic Text with Corresponding English Meanings* by Saheeh International.

We know that *kharra* means *to fall down* in every single instance: 7:143, 12:100, 16:26, 17:107, 17:109, 19:58, 19:90, 22:31, 25:73, 32:15, 34:14, 38:24. It is used of Moses falling down unconscious and Solomon falling down dead. This is not bowing, or even any kind of controlled prostration. Perhaps *collapse* is a good way of summarising the action in such contexts.

We know also that the context of David's *falling down* is that of asking forgiveness and turning in repentance (38:24). In such a case, is *bowing* a likely value in a situation where someone is falling to the floor entirely? Of course not. That would serve only to trip up a full measure by a half measure.

Given what we know about the possible meanings for *raka'a* and the context in the one case where a form of the word is given with factual, contextual parameters around it, the most logical claim for *raka'a* is *lowliness* in the sense of *humility before God*.

Moreover, this value fits in all cases. And on this basis I render *raka'a* as *to be lowly*. Now, could this sense include within it — in particular contexts — the act of bowing to God? Certainly, it could. So then, am I saying that men should not bow to God? No, I am not. I am pointing out that the highly specific meaning which the Traditionalist affixes to this term — one which is intended to create in the mind of the reader an exact equivalence between *raka'a* and his externally derived prayer method — is not there.

The Traditionalist is welcome to pray as he likes. I don't have a particular aversion to joining him in that prayer. I do object to his imposition of definitions upon terms within the Qur'an to imply that his prayer regime is overtly, consistently, and explicitly required by the Qur'an, when proper analysis of the Qur'anic text shows that claim to be false.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

verb

2:43, 3:43, 22:77, 77:48, 77:48.

participle

2:43, 2:125, 3:43, 5:55, 9:112, 22:26, 38:24, 48:29.

NOTEPAD IV

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

sajada — to submit

It is true that in standard Arabic *sajada* can denote the lowering of one's body towards the ground. For example, it can be used to describe a camel lowering itself to allow a rider to mount. However, the salient point is that of *submission* to an authority or directive, a condition for which the physical process is a mere expression.

To illustrate the distinction, let's say a camel were to lower itself not on command prior to a race but for some reason of its own during a race. This would be the same physical action as before the race, but it would not be *sajada* because the context would show it to be an act of rebellion or defiance, or one arising from some other motivation known to the camel and not originating with the rider.

The question, then, is in what sense the Qur'an uses the verb *sajada*.

It is easy to demonstrate that the Qur'an employs the *s-j-d* root in contexts where physical prostration is impossible as a value; for example where the adverb *sujadan* is used with regard to entering a city (2:58, 4:154, 7:161). It is not possible to enter a city with one's forehead on the ground, or at any rate, extremely impractical, especially if one is expected to fight a battle — which is the case in the instances cited here.

The broader question now extends to the verb proper.

At 12:4 Yūsuf has a dream in which eleven stars and the sun and the moon are *sājidīn* to him. The items named are spherical in the modern conception — and at the least round in the ancient conception — and suspended in space. It is physically impossible for a round thing suspended in space to prostrate in any meaningful sense for at least two reasons: firstly, it has no head, so the best it could manage is to roll around and, secondly, because in space there is no ground.

It can submit or obey, however.

The corollary to the point above is found at 12:100 where the dream is fulfilled. A typical Traditionalist rendering of the beginning of 12:100 reads:

And he raised his parents upon the throne, and they bowed to him in prostration. And he said, "O my father, this is the explanation of my vision of before. My Lord has made it reality[...]"¹

The operative verb in this case (rendered above *bowed*) does not mean *to bow* at all; it means *to fall down* (Arabic — *kharra*) and it is used in that sense in every instance: 7:143, 12:100, 16:26, 17:107, 17:109, 19:58, 19:90, 22:31, 25:73, 32:15, 34:14, 38:24.

¹ Qur'anic verses in italics are from *The Qur'an - Arabic Text with Corresponding English Meanings* by Saheeh International.

It is used of Mūsā falling down unconscious and Sulaymān falling down dead. This is not bowing, or even any kind of controlled prostration. Perhaps *collapse* is a good way of summarising the action in such contexts.

The core features of the verse in question are these:

- Yūsuf raised his two parents (the object is in the dual) upon the throne
- They (plural) fell down (i.e. collapsed) *sājidūn* (rendered by the Traditionalist as *in prostration*)
- Yūsuf converses with his father

Aged parents raised on thrones are not given to falling prostrate. That which falls is in the masculine plural and indicates the brothers, who had every reason to seek Yūsuf's forgiveness and good graces. And it is while they are so placed that Yūsuf turns to his father and speaks to him.

That is the plain reading of the text.

Even if we wink at the fact that *kharra* means *fall down* and not *prostrate* or *bow* the scene still does not place Yūsuf's aged parents on the floor — they have been raised upon the throne and Yūsuf is speaking with his father (unless we are to say that Yūsuf placed his aged parents on the throne then quickly threw them on the floor so he could speak to them).

More dramatically, if *sajada* really meant *prostrate* at 12:4, we would have a scenario at 12:100 in which not only has Yūsuf's famous dream *not* been fulfilled (since Ya'qūb is conversing with his son rather than lying prostrate on the floor), but in which two great prophets of God, both knowing that *sajada* in fact means *to physically prostrate* — are colluding together in a bare-faced lie at the culmination of perhaps the greatest historical drama of all time (namely, pretending together that the dream has been factually fulfilled when they both know that it has not). However, if *sajada* indicates *submit (to the will of another)* there is no conflict since Ya'qūb has complied with his son's wishes: he has come to the land from which his son called him and is placed where his son put him.

For the reasons I have summarised above, I am fully satisfied in my own mind that *sajada* does not — and cannot — denote purely physical prostration in the Qur'an, and that its sense can only be that of the subjection or submission of the will to the authority of another.

The *s-j-d* root is also found in combination with *alqā* (*to fall*). But, again, the significance, albeit physical as with the brothers at 12:100, is primarily an act of submission or of admitting defeat. It is not an act of worship (7:120, 20:70, 26:46) and nor is it controlled prostration in the sense which the Traditionalist wishes to ascribe to it.

I translate *sajada* across the entire text as *to submit*.

The meaning and use of *masjid* (which is based on the *s-j-d* root) is discussed in Notepad VII.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:34, 2:34, 2:58, 2:125, 3:43, 3:113, 4:102, 4:154, 7:11, 7:11, 7:11, 7:12, 7:120, 7:161, 7:206, 9:112, 12:4, 12:100, 13:15, 15:29, 15:30, 15:31,15:32, 15:33, 15:98, 16:48, 16:49, 17:61, 17:61, 17:61, 17:107, 18:50, 18:50, 19:58, 20:70, 20:116, 20:116, 22:18, 22:26, 22:77, 25:60, 25:60, 25:64, 26:46, 26:219, 27:24, 27:25, 32:15, 38:72, 38:73, 38:75, 39:9, 41:37, 41:37, 48:29, 50:40, 53:62, 55:6, 68:42, 68:43, 76:26, 84:21, 96:19.

NOTEPAD V

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

dīn — doctrine

My treatment of this word is not radically different to how the Traditionalist treats it beyond the fact that I can provide a rational explanation for what it means which is consistent with the Qur'anic usage, and thereafter render it thus throughout.

The Arabic root of *dīn* is *d-y-n*. The common meanings arising from this root relate to *duty*, *loans*, *debt*, and *obligation*. Traditionalist translations commonly duck and weave with regard to *dīn* depending on their requirements. At times they understand it to mean *religion* (under which rubric they assume the Islamic religion replete with its precepts and dogmas); at other times something different.

In a very specific sense the meaning of *dīn* is that of *religion* — but only in the sense of *that which a man truly believes, that from which his actions follow*.

Islam is a *dīn* as is fundamentalist Christianity a *dīn*. But equally, so is Communism a *dīn*, Earth-worshipping environmentalism a *dīn*, and scientific materialism a *dīn*. Belief that if you buy enough, own enough or gain enough fame you will be happy is a *dīn*. A *dīn* is the totality of the precepts upon which you base your life. Every sentient person has a *dīn*. Claiming one has no *dīn* or that no such thing exists is itself a *dīn*. A man's *dīn* is that narrative which informs his decisions.

The point that the Qur'an is making with regard to *dīn* is not that the *dīn* of the Islamic religion is superior to other *dīns*, but that the moral law found in the Qur'an (and previously in other scriptures) is superior to other *dīns*.

Every sentient being adheres to one *dīn* or another and all else follows from that. Foolish people have been trained to parrot the view that it does not matter what you believe. It matters very much what you believe and, as G.K. Chesterton observed, it is perhaps the only thing that matters. Beliefs are the DNA of the soul.

While the Islamic *dīn* claims an origin in the Qur'an, even a cursory acquaintance with it will disabuse the enquirer of any genuine relationship between it and the Qur'an, and the honest investigator will be unable to ignore the conclusion that any small areas of correspondence between the two are either vestigial or coincidental.

In conclusion, the sense behind *dīn* is not that there exists one *dīn* and God chose this unique thing and gave it to 'Muslims' and it constitutes the Islamic religion. Rather, there are many *dīns* and God chose that *dīn* — that code of ethics or moral law or doctrine — he wanted for Ibrāhīm, Ya'qūb and their line. The righteous of all times have had it. 'Isā, son of Maryam adhered to it. His early disciples adhered to it. His true disciples today — those who follow him rather than worship him — certainly have it. And by following the Qur'an one can participate in it also. It is a life transaction, a moral law based on *taqwā* (prudent fear of

God) and good works. It is not an *ism* and it certainly does not correspond with sectarian membership of any kind.

I translate *dīn* as a free-standing concept across the entire text as *doctrine*.

In addition, there is the use of *dīn* as part of the collocation *yawm al dīn*. This could be rendered *Day of Doctrine* (in the sense that God's power will uncover the true doctrine by which each man lived on the Final Day), but that would sound too odd in English, and I have kept to the commonly accepted *Day of Judgment* which carries the same sentiment but by a different route.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

1:4, 2:132, 2:193, 2:217, 2:217, 2:256, 3:19, 3:24, 3:73, 3:83, 3:85, 4:46, 4:125, 4:146, 4:171, 5:3, 5:3, 5:3, 5:54, 5:57, 5:77, 6:70, 6:137, 6:159, 6:161, 7:29, 7:51, 8:39, 8:49, 8:72, 9:11, 9:12, 9:29, 9:33, 9:33, 9:36, 9:122, 10:22, 10:104, 10:105, 12:40, 12:76, 15:35, 16:52, 22:78, 24:2, 24:25, 24:55, 26:82, 29:65, 30:30, 30:30, 30:32, 30:43, 31:32, 33:5, 37:20, 38:78, 39:2, 39:3, 39:11, 39:14, 40:14, 40:26, 40:65, 42:13, 42:13, 42:21, 48:28, 48:28, 49:16, 51:6, 51:12, 56:56, 60:8, 60:9, 61:9, 61:9, 70:26, 74:46, 82:9, 82:15, 82:17, 82:18, 83:11, 95:7, 98:5, 98:5, 107:1, 109:6, 109:6, 110:2.

NOTEPAD VI

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

sh-r-k — to ascribe partnership

The Traditionalist renders the *sh-r-k* root as *to ascribe partners* (to God), *to associate something* (with God) *polytheism*, *idolatry* and the like. This is correct but it needs some unpacking since without proper analysis we simply end up with a new idol, albeit one with a monopoly.

The prophet who most strongly personifies rejection of *shirk* is Ibrāhīm. Therefore, a summary of his philosophical pathway is in order.

At 6:74 we see Ibrāhīm's rejection of what his people made as objects of worship. At 6:75 God shows Ibrāhīm His creation. Through recognising its transient nature (6:76-78), Ibrāhīm understands that creation — even impressive creation — is not God. Having rejected both what man makes and what God makes as potentially being God what he is left with is God himself. God is neither contained by nor defined by what God himself makes or what man makes.

Holding to anything of a created nature as God (be it a statue or a mental representation or conception) is *shirk*.

When the atheist says there is no God, he is half right. Nothing we can conceive of — nothing we can point to within ourselves or outside ourselves — is God. When the atheist looks to his imagination for God and says he cannot find Him there, he potentially speaks more honestly than do many who claim to have faith.

We can know something about the infinite God by means of what He tells us in revelation or by what we see in the world about us in the same way we can tell something, let's say, about a person in whose house we are currently living (but whom we have not met) by virtue of the things we find in that house. But those things are indications only; signposts, clues. While they may offer us insights into his character and status, they are never rightly confused with the man himself. When we begin to speak on behalf of the owner of the house we overstep a line. The fact is that we are house guests, not representatives of the owner.

There is a subtle difference between what I am describing here and what the Traditionalist means (or, at least what one understands him to mean from what he says and does) by the term *shirk*. From his treatment of *shirk* one is given to understand that his particular conception of God is the correct one and anything added to that conception represents an idol.

The Qur'anic position is that adherence to anything created as God (even if it be a conception of God and there be just one such conception and everyone is agreed upon it) is itself an idol and therefore an instance of *shirk*. An idol — even an incorporeal one with a monopoly — is still an idol.

As the Traditionalist correctly notes, the Qur'an does not contain instructions on the religion he follows. A man is welcome to

serve God as he sees fit — including the Traditionalist. But when a man ascribes divine origin to his chosen methods where no such evidence exists in what God sends by way of revelation, he makes his religion a god and thereby ascribes a partnership to God.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:96, 2:105, 2:135, 2:221, 2:221, 2:221, 2:221, 3:64, 3:67, 3:95, 3:151, 3:186, 4:12, 4:36, 4:48, 4:48, 4:116, 4:116, 5:72, 5:82, 6:14, 6:19, 6:22, 6:22, 6:23, 6:41, 6:64, 6:78, 6:79, 6:80, 6:81, 6:81, 6:88, 6:94, 6:100, 6:106, 6:107, 6:121, 6:136, 6:136, 6:136, 6:137, 6:137, 6:139, 6:148, 6:148, 6:151, 6:161, 6:163, 7:33, 7:173, 7:190, 7:190, 7:191, 7:195, 9:1, 9:3, 9:4, 9:5, 9:6, 9:7, 9:17, 9:28, 9:31, 9:33, 9:36, 9:113, 10:18, 10:28, 10:28, 10:28, 10:34, 10:35, 10:66, 10:71, 10:105, 11:54, 12:38, 12:106, 12:108, 13:16, 13:33, 13:36, 14:22, 15:94, 16:1, 16:3, 16:27, 16:35, 16:54, 16:86, 16:86, 16:86, 16:100, 16:120, 16:123, 17:64, 17:111, 18:26, 18:38, 18:42, 18:52, 18:110, 20:32, 22:17, 22:26, 22:31, 22:31, 23:59, 23:92, 24:3, 24:3, 24:55, 25:2, 27:59, 27:63, 28:62, 28:64, 28:68, 28:74, 28:87, 29:8, 29:65, 30:13, 30:13, 30:28, 30:31, 30:33, 30:35, 30:40, 30:40, 30:42, 31:13, 31:13, 31:15, 33:73, 33:73, 34:22, 34:27, 35:14, 35:40, 35:40, 39:29, 39:65, 39:67, 40:12, 40:42, 40:73, 40:84, 41:6, 41:47, 42:13, 42:21, 46:4, 48:6, 48:6, 52:43, 59:23, 60:12, 61:9, 68:41, 68:41, 72:2, 72:20, 98:1, 98:6.

NOTEPAD VII

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

VII.i

masjid / masājid — place of worship

The word *masjid* comes from the *s-j-d* root.

To summarise:

- There is no Qur'anic basis to the notion that the *s-j-d* root denotes *physical prostration*; rather, it means *submission or subjection* (see Notepad IV)
- The Arabic noun pattern *maf'id / mafā'id* (the noun pattern which *masjid* follows) denotes place and / or occasion of the root concept

On the basis of the above, we can reasonably surmise that *masjid* means *a place and / or occasion characterised by submission or subjection* (to something — in this case God); or, in other words, *a time or place of worship or service.*

The Traditionalist has it (at least some of the time because certain Qur'anic contexts force him to abandon his preference) that *masjid* denotes *mosque*. If by *mosque* we mean a place where a man is in subjection to and worships God, then that meaning is acceptable. But that is not the sense the Traditionalist wishes us to derive.

He means, firstly, a place in which a man physically prostrates and, secondly, where a man prostrates according to the non-Qur'anic concept of *ṣalāt* as practiced within the religion he calls Islam. However, this reading of the word *masjid* is precluded by the context in the Qur'an in certain places, a point which the Traditionalist is forced to concede in his translations.

For example:

[And said], "If you do good, you do good for yourselves; and if you do evil, [you do it] to them [i.e., yourselves]." Then when the final [i.e., second] promise came, [We sent your enemies] to sadden your faces and to enter the masjid [i.e., the temple in Jerusalem], as they entered it the first time, and to destroy what they had taken over with [total] destruction.¹
(17:7)

All interpolations in the verse belong to the Traditionalist. He knows that there was no Islamic place of worship in Jerusalem at the time in question and is forced to replace his default meaning for *masjid* by means of another.

The Traditionalist's aim at all times is the same: to impress upon the mind of the reader that a direct and natural correlation exists between the Qur'an and his religion.

The value I claim for *masjid* is *time or place of worship* (but not

¹ Qur'anic verses in italics are from *The Qur'an – Arabic Text with Corresponding English Meanings* by Saheeh International.

specifically of an 'Islamic' nature). But does it fit? And if so, what ramifications does it have for our understanding of the text? Here is the Traditionalist's translation of 2:113-116.

The Jews say, "The Christians have nothing [true] to stand on," and the Christians say, "The Jews have nothing to stand on," although they [both] recite the Scripture. Thus do those who know not [i.e., the polytheists] speak the same as their words. But Allāh will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that over which they used to differ.
(2:113)

And who are more unjust than those who prevent the name of Allāh from being mentioned [i.e., praised] in His mosques and strive toward their destruction. It is not for them to enter them except in fear. For them in this world is disgrace, and they will have in the Hereafter a great punishment.
(2:114)

And to Allāh belongs the east and the west. So wherever you [might] turn, there is the Face of Allāh. Indeed, Allāh is all-Encompassing and Knowing.
(2:115)

They say, "Allāh has taken a son." Exalted is He! Rather, to Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. All are devoutly obedient to Him
(2:116)

Because the Traditionalist requires *masjid* to reference his religion, his reading of 2:114 pulls the topic in an awkward direction. However, the natural reading of this passage (including the word translated *mosques*) treats only of the Jews and Christians — including 2:114 — and has nothing to say about the so-called Islamic religion.

Here is another example:

O children of Adam, take your adornment at every masjid, and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess.
(7:31)

The Traditionalist has switched here to *masjid* again. (His entire presentation depends upon the reader never doing due diligence on his claims.) But no matter, the obvious question one would ask the Traditionalist at this juncture is: how can the Qur'anic value for *masjid* be what he claims for it (i.e. the mosque of the Islamic religion) when the verse is directed toward all humanity? It doesn't make sense. It would need to address the *mu'minūn* or the *muslimūn* for his value to make sense.

The fact is that *place of worship* fits every context where *masjid* occurs in the text, and is demonstrated by usage to be a generic term with no affiliation with any religion. Certainly, the Muslim's religious buildings are places of worship, but they do not exhaust the possibilities of the word *masjid* in the same way that while soccer stadiums are sports arenas they do not exhaust the possibilities of what a sports arena is. There exist many sports arenas in which soccer is not played.

In summary, the Qur'anic usage of the term thwarts any claim that *masjid* and *mosque* are exclusively synonymous since there are instances where the fit is openly suspect and ones where the Traditionalist is forced to abandon his preferred value in order to complete the verse with a straight face.

On that basis, we can say that the Qur'anic value for *masjid* has some overlap with the Traditionalist's default claim for it, but is in no way synonymous with it.

References

2:114, 2:187, 7:29, 7:31, 9:17, 9:18, 9:107, 9:108, 17:7, 18:21, 22:40, 72:18.

VII.ii

al masjid al ḥarām — the inviolable place of worship.

To the Traditionalist the meaning of *al masjid al ḥarām* is more or less clear and uncontested: it comprises the environs of the box-like structure in the city of Makkah which he calls the *ka'aba*. I will not concentrate here on the obvious problem he has with this definition such as the fact that said environs have expanded multiple times. I will also leave the question that if *al masjid al ḥarām* (not what he takes to be the *ka'aba*) were truly the direction of prayer (which is a claim the Traditionalist assumes the Qur'an makes although that is not what the text says) how would one know where to face for prayer when one is within what he takes to be *al masjid al ḥarām*? While these are fair questions, they are a distraction from the broader picture, and it is on this broader picture that I will concentrate.

According to the Traditionalist the narrative pertaining to *al masjid al ḥarām* is summarised by the following points:

- Built by Ibrāhīm (or even Ādam) in the city today called Makkah
- Ibrāhīm founded the place of pilgrimage at *al masjid al ḥarām*
- Muḥammad was told to pray towards it
- It had become filled with idols by Muḥammad's time
- Muḥammad focused on that place and performed pilgrimage to it
- Muḥammad was later prevented from going there
- Muḥammad had trials and tribulations after which he reclaimed *al masjid al ḥarām* for 'Islam'
- All Muslims are meant to visit this place and perform pilgrimage there

I question both the historical verity and the remaining imperatives attached to this narrative, and can come to no other conclusion than that *al masjid al ḥarām* was abandoned at the direction of God. The reasons for this are fully developed in my notes to 9:28 and in my book *The God Protocol*.

I will close this section with a few comments from a slightly different angle, drawing not upon what *al masjid al ḥarām* was geographically — since that episode is firmly closed — but, rather, its value and purpose symbolically both in the past and today.

One must not forget that the area where I place *al masjid al*

ḥarām at Petra is peppered with cave tombs. Right burial was important in the ancient Middle East. The obligation to bury and visit the dead at family or tribal tombs was an integral part of the functioning of the site. In searching my mind for equivalents closer to home I can best suggest Westminster Abbey which is where England's noblest sons are interred. When I, as an Englishman, visit Westminster Abbey I am not simply entering a house of God. I am entering upon a precinct imbued with the presence of my forefathers. I am made aware of their lives, of their achievements, of the fact of their deaths and of the inevitability of my crossing that threshold which they have crossed before me. It holds, however, a decidedly tribal and racial aspect for me. By virtue of my history and genetics in combination with the locale of this particular building I hold a greater connection to the place than any Chinaman or even any Texan ever could. And I think that this phenomenon, at least in part, is why *al masjid al ḥarām* had to be decommissioned in the lifetime of the Prophet: to preclude any influence of that racial and cultural pride which is normal in human groups from colouring and defining men's relationship with God.

Therefore, despite the fact that *al masjid al ḥarām* is now closed to us in geographical terms, the power of its symbology remains. In terms of archetype, due to its historical connotations *al masjid al ḥarām* contains within it an implicit connection with death — both that of our forefathers in faith, and our own.

When today we turn our faces — our countenances, our inner selves — towards *al masjid al ḥarām* we direct our inner vision towards the tomb. By so doing we transcend the mundane, the vain, the futile, the pointless and the temporal, and bind ourselves to — and renew our communality with — the faithful of all ages. This act realigns us with what matters and places us mentally in the Day when we, like they, will stand before God and give account.

A final point in this regard is that the *ḥajj* which took place at *al masjid al ḥarām* provided Muḥammad and those with him a platform from which to call people to give up their idols and commit themselves to God alone and to seek His protection from the judgments to come. The imperative to call people to turn to God alone remains today.

In summary:

- Ibrāhīm founded the place of pilgrimage at *al masjid al ḥarām* at Petra
- Muḥammad focused on that place and performed pilgrimage there as the best place and time to witness to the Arabian tribes
- Muḥammad fulfilled that mission
- The *mushrikūn* took possession of *al masjid al ḥarām*, after which the site was abandoned
- At a later date there was a battle and the site at Petra was destroyed by the Muslims
- The key takeaways of the Qur'an's coverage of *al masjid al ḥarām* are a general imperative to witness the truth of the Qur'an to the people of our time, some key arguments to use in debate, and moral and practical lessons arising in the narrative of this Qur'anic history — itself one history among many

References

2:144, 2:149, 2:150, 2:191, 2:196, 2:217, 5:2, 8:34, 9:7, 9:19, 9:28, 17:1, 22:25, 48:25, 48:27.

VII.iii

al masjid al aqṣā — the furthest place of worship

The phrase *al masjid al aqṣā* occurs once, at 17:1. This verse is taken by the Traditionalist — on the basis of no Qur'anic evidence — to denote a journey by Muḥammad into the heavens to negotiate with God the number of prayers members of the new religion should pray. The episode is central to the religion of Islam and reads like an excerpt from the Talmud. I repeat: there are no Qur'anic grounds for accepting this story.

A natural reading of the opening of the chapter does not readily admit Muḥammad as the subject since he is not mentioned. The first person named is Mūsā (17:2). On this basis I assume Mūsā to be the subject of 17:1 also — a reading which fits perfectly.

A journey from *al masjid al ḥarām* in Petra to a likely location for the true Sinai (Jabal al Lawz in Midian) is feasible in one day and night on horse or camel if undertaken at a trot.

Mūsā's meetings with God on Sinai represent the pinnacle of Man's interaction with God and the place where this happened readily merits the title *al masjid al aqṣā* or the furthest place of worship.

References

17:1.

NOTEPAD VIII

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

āya / āyāt — proof / proofs

The Traditionalist translates *āya* and *āyāt* generally as either the singular or plural of *miracle, sign or verse of the Qur'an*. He has no method — it all depends on what value he wants to achieve.

Having reviewed every instance of this word in context, my conclusion is that *proof* is the operative meaning (in the sense of *evidence capable of providing grounds for a rational decision*).

While it can apply to some portion of the Qur'an there is no one-to-one correspondence of any kind with individual verses despite the fact that the Traditionalist uses the terms interchangeably in general conversation and writing. The term also applies to physical proofs or evidence of God's existence and authority.

This value falls within the scope of what the Traditionalist allows, the difference being that I apply it consistently throughout.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

āya (sg. and dual)

2:106, 2:118, 2:145, 2:211, 2:248, 2:248, 2:259, 3:13, 3:41, 3:41, 3:49, 3:49, 3:50, 5:114, 6:4, 6:25, 6:35, 6:37, 6:37, 6:109, 6:124, 7:73, 7:106, 7:132, 7:146, 7:203, 10:20, 10:92, 10:97, 11:64, 11:103, 12:105, 13:7, 13:27, 13:38, 15:77, 16:11, 16:13, 16:65, 16:67, 16:69, 16:101, 16:101, 17:12, 17:12, 17:12, 19:10, 19:10, 19:21, 20:22, 20:47, 20:133, 21:5, 21:91, 23:50, 25:37, 26:4, 26:8, 26:67, 26:103, 26:121, 26:128, 26:139, 26:154, 26:158, 26:174, 26:190, 26:197, 27:52, 29:15, 29:35, 29:44, 30:58, 34:9, 34:15, 36:33, 36:37, 36:41, 36:46, 37:14, 40:78, 43:48, 48:20, 51:37, 54:2, 54:15, 79:20.

āyāt (plural)

2:39, 2:41, 2:61, 2:73, 2:99, 2:118, 2:129, 2:151, 2:164, 2:187, 2:219, 2:221, 2:231, 2:242, 2:252, 2:266, 3:4, 3:7, 3:11, 3:19, 3:21, 3:58, 3:70, 3:97, 3:98, 3:101, 3:103, 3:108, 3:112, 3:113, 3:118, 3:164, 3:190, 3:199, 4:56, 4:140, 4:155, 5:10, 5:44, 5:75, 5:86, 5:89, 6:4, 6:21, 6:27, 6:33, 6:39, 6:46, 6:49, 6:54, 6:55, 6:65, 6:68, 6:93, 6:97, 6:98, 6:99, 6:105, 6:109, 6:118, 6:126, 6:130, 6:150, 6:157, 6:157, 6:158, 6:158, 7:9, 7:26, 7:32, 7:35, 7:36, 7:37, 7:40, 7:51, 7:58, 7:64, 7:72, 7:103, 7:126, 7:133, 7:136, 7:146, 7:146, 7:147, 7:156, 7:174, 7:175, 7:176, 7:177, 7:182, 8:2, 8:31, 8:52, 8:54, 9:9, 9:11, 9:65, 10:1, 10:5, 10:6, 10:7, 10:15, 10:17, 10:21, 10:24, 10:67, 10:71, 10:73, 10:75, 10:92, 10:95, 10:101, 11:1, 11:59, 11:96, 12:1, 12:7, 12:35, 13:1, 13:2, 13:3, 13:4, 14:5, 14:5, 15:1, 15:75, 15:81, 16:12, 16:79, 16:104, 16:105, 17:1, 17:59, 17:59, 17:98, 17:101, 18:9, 18:17, 18:56, 18:57, 18:105, 18:106, 19:58, 19:73, 19:77, 20:23, 20:42, 20:54, 20:56, 20:126, 20:127, 20:128, 20:134, 21:32, 21:37, 21:77, 22:16, 22:51, 22:52, 22:57, 22:72, 22:72, 23:30, 23:45, 23:58, 23:66, 23:105, 24:1, 24:18, 24:34, 24:46, 24:58, 24:59, 24:61, 25:36, 25:73, 26:2, 26:15, 27:1, 27:12, 27:13, 27:81, 27:82, 27:83, 27:84, 27:86, 27:93, 28:2, 28:35, 28:36, 28:45, 28:47, 28:59, 28:87, 29:23, 29:24, 29:47, 29:49, 29:49, 29:50, 29:50, 30:10, 30:16, 30:20, 30:21,

NOTEPAD IX

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

In this edition of *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation*, I render *kitāb* almost universally *writ*. The notes below supply further information, and are the result of my own investigative processes.

kitāb

According to the Traditionalist, *kitāb* in the Qur'an means something like *book* or *scripture*. At least, this is his default position. He is vague about the exact meaning, but it can be understood to be along the lines of a pre-existing scripture which the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur'an either comprise in total, or form some part of.

He shifts this position on an *ad hoc* basis to encompass a range of other meanings including — but not limited to — *letter*, *decree*, *record* and *contract* as required based on the circumstances created by his *a priori* adherence to non-Qur'anic teachings.

I accept that *kitāb* can, and should, indicate different values in different contexts and as a part of different word collocations. I have, however, looked for a Qur'anic basis for these values to see if they may be applied consistently.

I will not list some small examples of the problems the Traditionalist has in regard to *kitāb*.

The translation I generally use to present the Traditionalist position renders 3:48 thus:

And He will teach him writing and wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel¹

The word underlined — *writing* — corresponds in the Arabic text to *al kitāb*. However, *al kitāb* does not mean *writing*. But the translators felt they had to do something. To see why, we need only look at another translation. Here is how Pickthall renders the same verse:

And He will teach him the Scripture and wisdom, and the Torah and the Gospel
(3:48)

By being more consistent in his rendering, Pickthall has painted himself into an obvious corner; it was obvious to the Saheeh International translators, and will be obvious to the reflective reader. The problem is that — while they are unclear about to what degree and in what way specifically — the Traditionalists are generally agreed that, by default, *al kitāb* denotes a *written revelation in the form of a book*. They are also agreed that — leaving aside what exactly we mean by these terms for now — the Torah and the Gospel comprise that written revelation (that is: *scripture*), to some (probably substantial) extent.

And this is why they got stuck.

¹ Qur'anic verses in italics are from *The Qur'an – Arabic Text with Corresponding English Meanings* by Saheeh International.

If I say that I will teach you French Cuisine and then go on to say that I will also teach you Haute Cuisine and Cuisine Nouvelle, I am making a superfluous statement because Haute Cuisine and Cuisine Nouvelle are both parts of the larger institution of cooking known as French Cuisine. This is the problem which Saheeh International is trying to circumvent at 3:48.

The Traditionalist is locked in to a particular understanding of the Qur'an by his non-Qur'anic *ḥadīth* literature which tells him that *al kitāb* means a *generalised pre-existing scripture* (except for when it means something else). In such a case, the best he can do is fudge the issue and hope no one notices.

This is, of course, unsatisfactory. But the Traditionalist's problems are only beginning. This is the Saheeh International translation of 46:30:

They said, "O our people, indeed we have heard a [recited] Book revealed after Moses confirming what was before it which guides to the truth and to a straight path.
(46:30)

Here it is the *jinn* speaking. The word underlined is *kitāb* and is said by the Traditionalist to refer to the Qur'an. However, logically, it cannot refer to the Qur'an if by Qur'an we mean the totality of that revelation found between chapters *al fātiḥah* and *al nās* since this verse itself forms part of the totality of that revelation. One could argue that it means something other than the complete Qur'an, for example a portion of it, but that would mean applying to *kitāb* in this instance a value it does not receive in other circumstances.

The Traditionalist has further problems at 29:51:

And is it not sufficient for them that We revealed to you the Book [i.e., the Qur'ān] which is recited to them? Indeed in that is a mercy and reminder for a people who believe.

The translation (the underlined portion of which represents the rendering of *al kitāb*) and the words in brackets all belong to the Traditionalist. The text speaks of a finished thing — *al kitāb* — which is recited '*to them*'.

While this may be extreme pedantry, I have to state facts as I see them: we have the same problem here as above. Whatever *al kitāb* means, it simply cannot indicate the book we call the Qur'an (if by *the Qur'an* we mean the Qur'an as a finished thing — everything from the first verse of *al fātiḥah* to the last verse of *al nās*) since 29:51 itself forms a part of that entity which we call the Qur'an. If I write a book on a subject and call that book *My Book* and I send that book to you, and then send you a note telling you about the book I sent you, can my note be rightly said to constitute a part of that book? No, it cannot. In addition — whatever the Qur'an means by *kitāb* — the Torah and Gospel cannot, on the basis of Qur'anic statements such as this one, comprise constituent parts of it.

I am not impugning the integrity of the Qur'an. I am saying that the Traditionalist has not done his homework, and that what the Qur'an means by *kitāb* is something other than what he assumes it to mean — at least in some cases.

I refer the reader to Article II, which comprises my work on *the mysterious letters* (Arabic: *al ḥurūf al muqatta'āt*). There, the inference is that *the Qur'an* refers finally to that part of the total revelation given to Muḥammad found between *sūrahs* 50 and 114.

Below, I work through each of the collocations in the Qur'an in which *kitāb* features. I have reviewed every context and list all instances with conclusions stated in each section.

IX.i

***al kitābu lā rayba fī hi* — the Writ about which there is no doubt**

My understanding of *al fātiḥah* is a contract which reflects to a striking extent the conventions of the ancient Hittite suzerainty treaty.

Such treaties, under which vassals and lords came to terms, fell into the following sections: preamble where both the contract owner and vassal are identified, (here: 1:1, and 1:5), prologue which listed deeds done by the suzerain for the vassal (here: God's universal credentials at 1:2-4), stipulations (terms to be upheld for the life of the treaty) by the vassal and the lord (here: 1:5 and 1:6-7), provision for regular public reading (here: chapter *al fātiḥah* is read multiple times daily by longstanding convention and given its position at the head of the Qur'anic text is a natural prelude to reading any of the rest of it), and divine witness to the treaty (which in this context is implicit as well as stated explicitly at 1:1). Finally, blessings on those who upheld the treaty and curses upon those who failed to do so (here: 2:2-5 and 2:6-21) were evoked after the contract proper.

The opening statement of *al baqarah* (2:2) reads: *That is al kitābu lā rayba fī hi*. By use of this demonstrative pronoun the text identifies that which precedes (*i.e.* *alif lām mīm* which are themselves symbolic of *al fātiḥah* as demonstrated in Article II) as *al kitābu lā rayba fī hi*.

The Qur'an states at 10:37 that the Qur'an itself serves two purposes: to confirm what is within its scope, and to give a detailed exposition of *al kitābu lā rayba fī hi*.

All three instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:2, 10:37, 32:2.

IX.ii

***al kitāb* — (the) Writ (writ)**
***kutub* — Writs (writs)**

I refer the reader first to my comments on 3:48 in the introductory portion of this Notepad.

In previous editions of this work, I rendered *law* (*laws*) in all cases. A blunt application of this position became problematical in places (since there is some crossover between the applications), and I have taken a different approach here. In this edition, I use *Writ* (outside of very specific collocations) where

the subject is God's written communication to men, or that law which God applies to His Creation, an instance of application by men of the law of God, or God's record giving man his account. While this approach is not without its own disadvantages (being an archaic term), it has certain advantages: firstly, it emphasises the *written* nature of the subject (which *kitāb* certainly conveys in Arabic); secondly, it conveys a nuance of *law* or *written command*; thirdly, it allows a nuance which covers aspects of *written record*. It also allows that some part of what is called *scripture* by men does not comprise *law* in the prosaic sense of the word. Thus, it both conveys some of the same ambiguities which exist in the Arabic, and allows the reader in English the opportunity to see past the specificity which the Traditionalist imposes upon him in favour of his own conclusions. In those few cases where the agent is clearly other than God, I render without capitalisation.

Instances where the definite article is lost due to combination with a following genitive noun (the *iḍāfa* construction) are treated as *per al kitāb* (for example *al kitāb + allah = kitāb allah* or *the Writ of God*).

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:44, 2:53, 2:78, 2:78, 2:79, 2:85, 2:87, 2:101, 2:101, 2:113, 2:121, 2:129, 2:144, 2:145, 2:146, 2:151, 2:159, 2:174, 2:176, 2:176, 2:177, 2:213, 2:231, 2:235, 2:285, 3:3, 3:7, 3:7, 3:19, 3:20, 3:23, 3:23, 3:48, 3:78, 3:78, 3:78, 3:79, 3:79, 3:100, 3:119, 3:164, 3:184, 3:186, 3:187, 4:24, 4:44, 4:47, 4:51, 4:54, 4:105, 4:113, 4:127, 4:131, 4:136, 4:136, 4:136, 4:140, 5:5, 5:5, 5:15, 5:44, 5:48, 5:48, 5:57, 5:110, 6:20, 6:38, 6:89, 6:91, 6:114, 6:114, 6:154, 6:156, 6:157, 7:37, 7:169, 7:169, 7:170, 7:196, 8:75, 9:29, 9:36, 10:1, 10:94, 11:17, 11:110, 12:1, 13:1, 13:36, 13:39, 13:43, 15:1, 16:64, 16:89, 17:2, 17:4, 17:58, 18:1, 18:27, 18:49, 18:49, 19:12, 19:16, 19:30, 19:41, 19:51, 19:54, 19:56, 21:104, 23:49, 24:33, 25:35, 26:2, 27:40, 28:2, 28:43, 28:52, 28:86, 29:27, 29:45, 29:47, 29:47, 29:51, 30:56, 31:2, 32:23, 33:6, 34:44, 35:25, 35:29, 35:31, 35:32, 37:117, 39:1, 39:2, 39:41, 39:69, 40:2, 40:53, 40:70, 41:45, 42:14, 42:17, 42:52, 43:2, 43:4, 44:2, 45:2, 45:16, 46:2, 46:12, 57:16, 57:25, 57:26, 62:2, 66:12, 74:31, 74:31, 83:7, 83:18, 98:4.

IX.iii

***kitāb* — Writ (writ)** (when not part of definite composite)

See notes to IX.ii above.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:89, 3:81, 3:145, 4:103, 4:153, 5:15, 6:7, 6:59, 6:92, 6:155, 7:2, 7:52, 8:68, 10:61, 11:1, 11:6, 13:38, 14:1, 15:4, 17:13, 17:14, 17:71, 17:71, 17:93, 20:52, 21:10, 22:8, 22:70, 23:62, 27:1, 27:28, 27:29, 27:75, 28:49, 29:48, 31:20, 34:3, 35:11, 35:40, 37:157, 38:29, 39:23, 41:3, 41:41, 42:15, 43:21, 45:28, 45:29, 46:4, 46:12, 46:30, 50:4, 52:2, 56:78, 57:22, 68:37, 69:19, 69:19, 69:25, 69:25, 78:29, 83:9, 83:20, 84:7, 84:10.

IX.iv

ahl kitāb — *doctors of the Law*

The Traditionalist regards *ahl kitāb* as the *people of the book*, which for him means Jews and the Christians.

The opinion I have come to after reviewing all instances of this category in the Qur'an is that while *ahl kitāb* does reference a particular subset of the aforementioned groups in part, when we are more specific about what we mean by the term, we find that it identifies a range of humanity which is at once broader and also more shallow.

It is broader in the sense that it is not limited only to Jews or Christians. It is more shallow in the sense that it cannot mean *all* Jews or Christians. Rather, *ahl kitāb* indicates an archetype which is instantly recognisable within any religious confession.

I will look first at what the Traditionalist makes of 4:153 where *ahl kitāb* is rendered by him *The People of the Scripture*.

The People of the Scripture ask you to bring down to them a book from the heaven. But they had asked of Moses [even] greater than that and said, "Show us Allah outright," so the thunderbolt struck them for their wrongdoing. Then they took the calf [for worship] after clear evidences had come to them, and We pardoned that. And We gave Moses a clear authority.
(4:153)

If *The People of the Scripture* is what is meant by *ahl kitāb*, and if by *kitāb* we mean *Torah plus something else*, then this is an incorrect statement since, properly speaking, there was no scripture for *ahl kitāb* to be the people of at the time they asked Mūsā to show them God; at the least, *ahl kitāb* — are shown at 4:153 to turn instantly to idol worship (surely of the sort practiced by the people of Fir'awn) as soon as Mūsā is gone, and in order for *ahl kitāb* to perform idolatrous rites, they needed to know what those rites were.

Knowledge of religious rites — especially those performed in public — in any society is held and controlled by a subset of that society, namely the priestly class. As we have seen, a certain subset of the Children of Israel did know, and did perform such rites; and according to 4:153 there are Qur'anic grounds for identifying the people who did so as *ahl kitāb*.

This, then, is the first plank of my argument that *ahl kitāb* denotes a priestly, religious class in a general sense, (although I accept that typically within the Qur'an it indicates the priestly class attached to monotheistic revelation).

Here is another example in the Traditionalist's hand featuring *ahl kitāb*:

O People of the Scripture, why do you argue about Abraham while the Torah and the Gospel were not revealed until after him? Then will you not reason?
(3:65)

This verse references a point of theology. The fact is that the

common people of any religious community are unlikely to understand finer theological points let alone argue about them. It is the educated, priestly class which argues about such things.

Again:

O People of the Scripture, why do you mix [i.e., confuse] the truth with falsehood and conceal the truth while you know [it]?
(3:71)

Whom does this best describe: the lay believer or the priestly class? Clearly, the latter. And having reviewed all verses in which *ahl kitāb* occurs, the thesis that it denotes the priestly, scholarly religious class fits.

Nowhere does *ahl kitāb* refer to those ignorant of revelation — and we know that such a category exists among the recipients of previous revelations; rather the Qur'an chides *ahl kitāb* for having revelation and not following it, while at the same time acknowledging that there are righteous people among them (see 3:75 and 3:113, for example).

In a broader perspective, at the level of archetype, there are correlations between *ahl kitāb* and the Islamic priesthood also.

I render *ahl kitāb* as *doctors of the Law* throughout.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:105, 2:109, 3:64, 3:65, 3:69, 3:70, 3:71, 3:72, 3:75, 3:98, 3:99, 3:110, 3:113, 3:199, 4:123, 4:153, 4:159, 4:171, 5:15, 5:19, 5:59, 5:65, 5:68, 5:77, 29:46, 33:26, 57:29, 59:2, 59:11, 98:1, 98:6.

IX.v

kitāb mutashābih mathāniya — *a Writ of paired comparison*

See notes to IX.ii above.

This convention occurs once only. The broad array of translators, frankly, have no idea what it means and their attempts to render it in English differ wildly. Most of their problems stem from their assumption that *kitāb* (at least by default) means *book*.

Here is our staple Traditionalist's attempt at 39:23 with the operative phrase underlined:

Allāh has sent down the best statement: a consistent Book wherein is reiteration. The skins shiver therefrom of those who fear their Lord; then their skins and their hearts relax at the remembrance [i.e., mention] of Allāh. That is the guidance of Allāh by which He guides whom He wills. And one whom Allāh leaves astray — for him there is no guide.
(39:23)

We know the following:

- *kitāb* is a writ
- *mathāniya* is something twofold, paired

- *mutashābih* means *known by analogy, allegory or comparison*

With these points in mind it makes sense to look in the immediate vicinity for anything which bears any of the characteristics listed.

A summary of 39:23-35 follows:

- 39:23. Statement of *kitāb mutashābih mathāniya*. Such is God's guidance. God sends astray whom He wills (*writ* in sense of *decree*; paired: guidance and straying)
- 39:24. Implied contradistinction between one who finds himself on the wrong side of the Day of Resurrection and one who is on the right side of it, along with payment for wrongdoing (paired)
- 39:25. Those who denied: overtaken by retribution whence they knew not (*writ* in sense of *decree*)
- 39:26. Some made to taste degradation in this world while the retribution in the life to come is greater (paired; two sides in eternity)
- 39:27. Qur'an given so we should receive admonition; and 39:28: so that we should be in prudent fear (together forming a pair)
- 39:29. Parable: two types of men (pair)
- 39:30. *Thou wilt die and they will die* (*writ* in sense of *decree*, twofold / paired)
- 39:31. Dispute to happen on the Day of Resurrection (*writ* in sense of *decree*)
- 39:32. One who lies against God and one who denies the truth compared (twofold / paired)
- 39:32. Home of rejecters in Hell (*writ* in sense of *decree*)
- 39:33. *Whoso comes with the truth and confirms it, it is they who are those of prudent fear* (twofold / paired)
- 39:34. *For them is what they will with their Lord; that is the reward of the doers of good* (*writ* in sense of *decree*; twofold)
- 39:35. *That God might remove from them the worst of what they did, and reward them with their reward for the best of what they did* (twofold / paired; decree)

Additionally, see Article II, which comprises my work on *the mysterious letters* (Arabic: *al ḥurūf al muqatta'āt*) for detail on dual and doubling in the Qur'an.

The instance in the text appears in the notes.

References

39:23

IX.vi

kitāb allāh — *the Writ of God*

See notes to IX.ii above.

In general discourse the Traditionalist has it that *kitāb allāh* means *the book of God* and that this signifies the Quran.

This claim does not survive review of a complete list of the verses in which *kitāb allāh* occurs in his translation. Here, *kitāb allāh* underlined.

And when a messenger from Allāh came to them confirming that which was with them, a party of those who had been given the Scripture threw the Scripture of Allāh [i.e., the Torah] behind their backs as if they did not know [what it contained]
(2:101)

Do you not consider, [O Muḥammad], those who were given a portion of the Scripture? They are invited to the Scripture of Allāh that it should arbitrate between them; then a party of them turns away, and they are refusing.
(3:23)

And [also prohibited to you are all] married women except those your right hands possess. [This is] the decree of Allāh upon you. And lawful to you are [all others] beyond these, [provided] that you seek them [in marriage] with [gifts from] your property, desiring chastity, not unlawful sexual intercourse. So for whatever you enjoy [of marriage] from them, give them their due compensation as an obligation. And there is no blame upon you for what you mutually agree to beyond the obligation. Indeed, Allāh is ever Knowing and Wise.
(4:24)

Indeed, We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light. The prophets who submitted [to Allāh] judged by it for the Jews, as did the rabbis and scholars by that with which they were entrusted of the Scripture of Allāh, and they were witnesses thereto. So do not fear the people but fear Me, and do not exchange My verses for a small price [i.e., worldly gain]. And whoever does not judge by what Allāh has revealed — then it is those who are the disbelievers.
(5:44)

And those who believed after [the initial emigration] and emigrated and fought with you — they are of you. But those of [blood] relationship are more entitled [to inheritance] in the decree of Allāh. Indeed, Allāh is Knowing of all things.
(8:75)

Indeed, the number of months with Allāh is twelve [lunar] months in the register of Allāh [from] the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred. That is the correct religion [i.e., way], so do not wrong yourselves during them. And fight against the disbelievers collectively as they fight against you collectively. And know that Allāh is with the righteous [who fear Him].
(9:36)

But those who were given knowledge and faith will say, "You remained the extent of Allāh's decree until the Day of Resurrection, and this is the Day of Resurrection, but you did not used to know."
(30:56)

The Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves, and his wives are [in the position of] their mothers. And those of [blood] relationship are more entitled [to inheritance] in the decree of Allāh than the [other] believers and the emigrants, except that you may do to your

close associates a kindness [through bequest]. That was in the Book inscribed. (33:6)

Indeed, those who recite the Book of Allāh and establish prayer and spend [in His cause] out of what We have provided them, secretly and publicly, [can] expect a transaction [i.e., profit] that will never perish – (35:29)

Nine instances of *kitāb allāh* in the Qur'an are understood by him as follows:

- the scripture of Allah (by which he means the Torah) x 1
- the scripture of Allah (by which he means something but we don't know exactly what) x 2
- the decree of Allah (by which he means something specifically binding upon 'Muslims') x 1
- the decree of Allah (by which he means something other than something specifically binding upon 'Muslims') x 2
- the register of Allah (whatever that is) x 1
- Allah's decree x 1

We will assume that *the decree of Allah* and *Allah's decree* are substantively the same thing. Even so, we still have five meanings for one set phrase and no Qur'anically-based reason for choosing one over another.

Based, then, on the analysis in the preceding part of this Notepad, *kitāb allāh* should mean *the Writ of God*.

If we now adjust the Traditionalist's sprawling concept accordingly we have:

And when a messenger from Allāh came to them confirming that which was with them, a party of those who had been given the Scripture threw the Writ of God behind their backs as if they did not know [what it contained] (2:101)

Do you not consider, [O Muḥammad], those who were given a portion of the Scripture? They are invited to the Writ of God that it should arbitrate between them; then a party of them turns away, and they are refusing. (3:23)

And [also prohibited to you are all] married women except those your right hands possess. The Writ of God is upon you. And lawful to you are [all others] beyond these, [provided] that you seek them [in marriage] with [gifts from] your property, desiring chastity, not unlawful sexual intercourse. So for whatever you enjoy [of marriage] from them, give them their due compensation as an obligation. And there is no blame upon you for what you mutually agree to beyond the obligation. Indeed, Allāh is ever Knowing and Wise. (4:24)

Indeed, We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light. The prophets who submitted [to Allāh] judged by it for the Jews, as did the rabbis and scholars by that with which they were entrusted of the Writ of God and they

were witnesses thereto. So do not fear the people but fear Me, and do not exchange My verses for a small price [i.e., worldly gain]. And whoever does not judge by what Allāh has revealed — then it is those who are the disbelievers. (5:44)

And those who believed after [the initial emigration] and emigrated and fought with you — they are of you. But those of [blood] relationship are more entitled [to inheritance] in the Writ of God. Indeed, Allāh is Knowing of all things. (8:75)

Indeed, the number of months with Allāh is twelve [lunar] months in the Writ of God [from] the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred. That is the correct religion [i.e., way], so do not wrong yourselves during them. And fight against the disbelievers collectively as they fight against you collectively. And know that Allāh is with the righteous [who fear Him]. (9:36)

The Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves, and his wives are [in the position of] their mothers. And those of [blood] relationship are more entitled [to inheritance] in the Writ of God than the [other] believers and the emigrants, except that you may do to your close associates a kindness [through bequest]. That was in the Book inscribed. (33:6)

Indeed, those who recite the Writ of God and establish prayer and spend [in His cause] out of what We have provided them, secretly and publicly, [can] expect a transaction [i.e., profit] that will never perish — (35:29)

While I don't think anyone has trouble understanding why the verses above now make sense, the verse at 30:56 still requires a little extra attention.

But those who were given knowledge and faith will say, "You remained the extent of the Writ of God until the Day of Resurrection, and this is the Day of Resurrection, but you did not used to know." (30:56)

The words *you remained* are from the verb *labathā* in Arabic which means *to tarry, to hold back, to wait*. The words he has rendered *the extent* of simply do not exist in the Arabic, and these Traditionalist translators should have put them in the square brackets by which they usually indicate their interpolations.

In addition, we have the preposition *fi* which has a range of meanings including: *in* or *concerning* or *regarding*.

With the dead wood cleared, what we now have is:

But those who were given knowledge and faith will say, "You waited concerning the Writ of God until the Day of

Resurrection, and this is the Day of Resurrection, but you did not used to know." (30:56)

Does this not make sense? Those who were given knowledge and faith say to those who were not, in effect: *you waited concerning the Writ of God* (that is, in obeying the laws God had given you) *till the Day of Judgment, well, here it is*.

Where *the Writ of God* treats only of those things which pertain to God and have no direct bearing on man, it indicates that law by which He implements government of the physical universe.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:101, 3:23, 4:24, 5:44, 8:75, 9:36, 30:56, 33:6, 35:29.

IX.vii

kitābun anzalnāhu ilayka mubārakun — a Writ We have sent down, one blessed

See notes to IX.ii above.

Again, the Traditionalist's renditions of the operative phrase are found below:

And this is a Book which We have sent down, blessed and confirming what was before it, that you may warn the Mother of Cities [i.e., Makkah] and those around it. Those who believe in the Hereafter believe in it, and they are maintaining their prayers. (6:92)

And this [Qur'ān] is a Book We have revealed [which is] blessed, so follow it and fear Allāh that you may receive mercy. (6:155)

Based on what we have established above we render this phrase as: *a Writ We have sent down, one blessed*.

Both instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

6:92, 6:155

IX.viii

kitābun anzalnāhu ilayka — a Writ We have sent down to thee

See notes to IX.ii above.

This formula occurs once only. Here is the Traditionalist's rendering:

Alif, Lām, Rā. [This is] a Book which We have revealed to you, [O Muḥammad], that you might bring mankind out of

darknesses into the light by permission of their Lord — to the path of the Exalted in Might, the Praiseworthy (14:1)

Based on what we have established above we render this phrase as: *a Writ we have sent down to thee*.

This portion forms part of the analysis in Article II.

The instance in the text appears in the notes.

References

14:1

IX.ix

kitābun anzalnāhu ilayka mubārakun — a Writ We have sent down to thee, one blessed

See notes to IX.ii above.

This formula occurs once. Here is the Traditionalist's rendering:

[This is] a blessed Book which We have revealed to you, [O Muḥammad], that they might reflect upon its verses and that those of understanding would be reminded. (38:29)

The instance in the text appears in the notes.

References

38:29

IX.x

allahīna ātānāhum al kitāb — those to whom We gave the Writ

See notes to IX.ii above.

Below are all the verses in which this formula occurs as the Traditionalist understands them, with the operative clause underlined.

Those to whom We have given the Book recite it with its true recital. They [are the ones who] believe in it. And whoever disbelieves in it — it is they who are the losers. (2:121)

Those to whom We gave the Scripture know him [i.e., Prophet Muḥammad (s)] as they know their own sons. But indeed, a party of them conceal the truth while they know [it]. (2:146)

Those to whom We have given the Scripture recognize it as they recognize their [own] sons. Those who will lose themselves [in the Hereafter] do not believe. (6:20)

Those are the ones to whom We gave the Scripture and

authority and prophethood. But if they [i.e., the disbelievers] deny it, then We have entrusted it to a people who are not therein disbelievers. (6:89)

[Say], "Then is it other than Allāh I should seek as judge while it is He who has revealed to you the Book [i.e., the Qur'an] explained in detail?" And those to whom We [previously] gave the Scripture know that it is sent down from your Lord in truth, so never be among the doubters. (6:114)

And [the believers among] those to whom We have given the [previous] Scripture rejoice at what has been revealed to you, [O Muhammad], but among the [opposing] factions are those who deny part of it [i.e., the Qur'an]. Say, "I have only been commanded to worship Allah and not associate [anything] with Him. To Him I invite, and to Him is my return." (13:36)

Those to whom We gave the Scripture before it — they are believers in it. (28:52)

And thus We have sent down to you the Book [i.e., the Qur'an]. And those to whom We [previously] gave the Scripture believe in it. And among these [people of Makkah] are those who believe in it. And none reject Our verses except the disbelievers. (29:47)

On the basis of what we have already looked at in this Notepad we know this should be translated as *those whom We gave the Writ*. The remaining question is what it signifies.

What the Traditionalist understands by this is confused, and there is no obvious starting point. But we have to begin somewhere and it may as well be with 29:47.

And thus We have sent down to you the Book [i.e., the Qur'an]. And those to whom We [previously] gave the Scripture believe in it. And among these [people of Makkah] are those who believe in it. And none reject Our verses except the disbelievers. (29:47)

The primary problem with this statement is that it is not true; rather, it would not be true if *al kitāb* did in fact signify the Qur'an (lots of people who were given scripture before did not and do not believe in the Qur'an).

My position is that the value we have here is verbatim correct as per the analysis in previous sections of this Notepad — i.e. *those whom we gave the Writ* (in the sense of the law) — but that its force is emphatically on *We*, meaning *those for whom God specifically intended the Writ*. With this reading the statement is true.

Let us look now at 28:52.

Those to whom We gave the Scripture before it — they are believers in it. (28:52)

The Traditionalist thinks that *it* at the end of the sentence refers to the Qur'an. Such a reading again gives us a verse which is patently not true. Plenty of people possessed of scripture before the Qur'an do not believe in the Qur'an. However, given our reading here, it makes perfect sense. Here is the Traditionalist's rendering again with slight modifications:

Those to whom We gave the Writ before it — they are believers in it. (28:52)

What is being said here is that those whom God (specifically) gave the Writ before it (i.e. before this revelation) are believers in it (i.e. the Writ). The Writ (Law) of Moses or of any other prophet is fundamentally one with the Writ (Law) in the Qur'an. The law is not the same thing as the Qur'an; it is a subset of it.

The phrase in question is underlined:

And [the believers among] those to whom We have given the [previous] Scripture rejoice at what has been revealed to you, [O Muhammad], but among the [opposing] factions are those who deny part of it [i.e., the Qur'an]. Say, "I have only been commanded to worship Allah and not associate [anything] with Him. To Him I invite, and to Him is my return." (13:36)

The Traditionalist has been forced to add parenthesis. Mentally remove the parenthesis in the underlined portion and we have a statement which falls over in the slightest breeze: the 'believers' among those to whom God gave previous scriptures (that is — given the Traditionalist's reading — the Jews and the Christians) far from rejoice at what was revealed to the Messenger. More typically, they are ignorant of it, indifferent towards it, or actively against it.

Here is the Traditionalist's verse again, though modified in the light of what we now know:

And those whom We gave the Writ rejoice at what has been revealed to you, [O Muhammad], but among the factions are those who deny part of it. Say, "I have only been commanded to worship Allah and not associate [anything] with Him. To Him I invite, and to Him is my return." (13:36)

Again, what is being discussed here is that those whom God (specifically) gave the Writ rejoice in what was revealed to Muḥammad. The distinction is again between those whom God specifically gave the Writ (and therefore believe in it) and those who received the Writ by some other means. Time and again the Qur'an tells us that without God's will no one can grasp anything of His knowledge.

Here, for instance, I reproduce the Traditionalist's rendering of the famous verse at 2:255 with an example of what I mean

underlined.

Allāh — there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of [all] existence. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. Who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows what is [presently] before them and what will be after them, and they encompass not a thing of His knowledge except for what He wills. His Kursī extends over the heavens and the earth, and their preservation tires Him not. And He is the Most High, the Most Great. (2:255)

In the verses we are studying under the current rubric, in all cases it is overtly stated that God gave the recipients the Writ. This is why they understood, embraced or rejoiced at that same Writ when they saw it in the Qur'an.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:121, 2:146, 6:20, 6:89, 6:114, 13:36, 28:52, 29:47.

IX.xi

allahīna ūtū al kitāb — those given the Writ

See notes to IX.ii above.

I begin with a Traditionalist rendering of those cases where this collocation occurs.

And when a messenger from Allāh came to them confirming that which was with them, a party of those who had been given the Scripture threw the Scripture of Allāh [i.e., the Torah] behind their backs as if they did not know [what it contained]. (2:101)

We have certainly seen the turning of your face, [O Muḥammad], toward the heaven, and We will surely turn you to a qiblah with which you will be pleased. So turn your face [i.e., yourself] toward al-Masjid al-Ḥarām. And wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces [i.e., yourselves] toward it [in prayer]. Indeed, those who have been given the Scripture [i.e., the Jews and the Christians] well know that it is the truth from their Lord. And Allāh is not unaware of what they do. (2:144)

And if you brought to those who were given the Scripture every sign, they would not follow your qiblah. Nor will you be a follower of their qiblah. Nor would they be followers of one another's qiblah. So if you were to follow their desires after what has come to you of knowledge, indeed, you would then be among the wrongdoers. (2:145)

Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allāh is Islām. And those who were given the Scripture did not differ except after

knowledge had come to them — out of jealous animosity between themselves. And whoever disbelieves in the verses of Allāh, then indeed, Allāh is swift in [taking] account. (3:19)

So if they argue with you, say, "I have submitted myself to Allāh [in Islām], and [so have] those who follow me." And say to those who were given the Scripture and [to] the unlearned, "Have you submitted yourselves?" And if they submit [in Islām], they are rightly guided; but if they turn away — then upon you is only the [duty of] notification. And Allāh is Seeing of [His] servants. (3:20)

O you who have believed, if you obey a party of those who were given the Scripture, they would turn you back, after your belief, [to being] unbelievers. (3:100)

You will surely be tested in your possessions and in yourselves. And you will surely hear from those who were given the Scripture before you and from those who associate others with Allāh much abuse. But if you are patient and fear Allāh — indeed, that is of the matters [worthy] of resolve. (3:186)

And [mention, O Muḥammad], when Allāh took a covenant from those who were given the Scripture, [saying], "You must make it clear [i.e., explain it] to the people and not conceal it." But they threw it away behind their backs and exchanged it for a small price. And wretched is that which they purchased. (3:187)

O you who were given the Scripture, believe in what We have sent down [to Muḥammad (s)], confirming that which is with you, before We obliterate faces and turn them toward their backs or curse them as We cursed the sabbath-breakers. And ever is the matter [i.e., decree] of Allāh accomplished. (4:47)

And to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And We have instructed those who were given the Scripture before you and yourselves to fear Allāh. But if you disbelieve — then to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And ever is Allāh Free of need and Praiseworthy. (4:131)

This day [all] good foods have been made lawful, and the food of those who were given the Scripture is lawful for you and your food is lawful for them. And [lawful in marriage are] chaste women from among the believers and chaste women from among those who were given the Scripture before you, when you have given them their due compensation, desiring chastity, not unlawful sexual intercourse or taking [secret] lovers. And whoever denies

the faith — his work has become worthless, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers.
(5:5)

Fight those who do not believe in Allāh or in the Last Day and who do not consider unlawful what Allāh and His Messenger have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth [i.e., Islām] from those who were given the Scripture — [fight] until they give the jizyah willingly while they are humbled.
(9:29)

Has the time not come for those who have believed that their hearts should become humbly submissive at the remembrance of Allāh and what has come down of the truth? And let them not be like those who were given the Scripture before, and a long period passed over them, so their hearts hardened; and many of them are defiantly disobedient.
(57:16)

And We have not made the keepers of the Fire except angels. And We have not made their number except as a trial for those who disbelieve — that those who were given the Scripture will be convinced and those who have believed will increase in faith and those who were given the Scripture and the believers will not doubt and that those in whose hearts is disease [i.e., hypocrisy] and the disbelievers will say, "What does Allāh intend by this as an example?" Thus does Allāh leave astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills. And none knows the soldiers of your Lord except Him. And it [i.e., mention of the Fire] is not but a reminder to humanity.
(74:31)

Nor did those who were given the Scripture become divided until after there had come to them clear evidence.
(98:4)

The Traditionalist has a high degree of consistency in this case.

The extent to which this category is distinct from *those to whom We gave the Writ* (IX.x) is not explored here.

The value *those given the Writ* has been applied consistently throughout the text.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:101, 2:144, 2:145, 3:19, 3:20, 3:100, 3:186, 3:187, 4:47, 4:131, 5:5, 5:5, 5:57, 9:29, 57:16, 74:31, 74:31, 98:4.

NOTEPAD X

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

The meaning of ‘*dh*-y

The Traditionalist renders the verb and noun based on the ‘*dh*-y root eclectically, beetling between such values as *punish, torture, abuse, harm, hurt* and *annoy* as his requirements dictate.

Such arbitrary treatment of the meaning of words in scripture is not acceptable. A car alarm going off outside one's window is an *annoyance*; what the ruling elite does with impunity to the children of the slave class is *abuse*; waterboarding by the CIA is *torture*. There is a difference between such categories.

A dispassionate reading of all instances indicates a value which can be summarised as: a *temporary hardship impeding a desirable course*, or to put it more simply: a *hindrance*.

Such a value is made clear at 2:222 which treats of a woman's monthly courses, fits perfectly all other cases, and is applied consistently throughout.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

IV verb
3:195, 4:16, 7:129, 9:61, 9:61, 14:12, 29:10, 33:53, 33:53, 33:57, 33:58, 33:59, 33:69, 61:5.
noun
2:196, 2:222, 2:262, 2:263, 2:264, 3:111, 3:186, 4:102, 33:48.

NOTEPAD XI

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

What follows is not highly systematised, and comprises part of my working notes at an early stage in my engagement with the text. While these points generally hold true and are borne out in my translation, I include them primarily as an additional study resource for the interested student.

Nomenclature of wrongdoing

There is a range of words which indicates wrongdoing in the Qur'an. The Traditionalist has no discernible method for identifying the meaning of such words and nor, typically, does he exercise much consistency in his translation of them.

However, the meaning of the words which denote wrongdoing can be established in most cases either by Qur'anic definition or contextual evidence.

XI.i

‘*th*-m — *falsehood, falsity*

Translated generically by the Traditionalist as *sin, crime, misdeed* though without much consistency, it is possible to understand the meaning of this root by comparison of all contexts:

- 2:85 Assisting against people in it (i.e. in *ithm*) and enmity is it
- 2:173 Eating unlawful food wilfully is it
- 2:181 Changing a will when there are no grounds to fear partiality on the part of the testator is it
- 2:182, 2:182 Making a false statement regarding a will (under oath) is it
- 2:188 Those who take a portion of the property of the people knowingly are guilty of it
- 2:203, 2:203: Leaving the site during *hajj* in less than two days is it
- 2:206 (A desire for or sense of) greatness takes a man into it
- 2:219, 2:219 Intoxicants and gambling contain it
- 3:178 Those indifferent to warning are reprieved so that they might increase in it
- 4:20 To take substance given to a wife as dowry by means of false accusation of infidelity is it
- 4:48 To confer lordship beyond God is it
- 4:50 To fabricate a lie about God is it
- 4:111 Whoso commits one does so against himself
- 4:112, 4:112 To cast the blame upon another for something one has done is it
- 5:2 We are not to assist one another in it
- 5:3 Whoso is compelled by hunger to eat forbidden food does not commit it
- 5:29, 5:29 Referred to by Abel
- 5:62 People compete in it
- 5:63 The rabbis and the priests should have forbidden the speaking of it
- 5:107 Witnesses can be guilty of it
- 6:120 We are to leave the outwardness and inwardness of it

- 6:120 Those who produce it will be rewarded in kind
- 7:33 It is made unlawful by God
- 24:11 It results from impugning the reputation for chastity of believing women
- 33:58 It results from impugning the honour of believing men or women
- 42:37 Abstaining from large ones recommended
- 49:12 It is found in some types of suspicion
- 53:32 Abstaining from large ones recommended
- 58:8 Can be conversed in
- 58:9 Can be conversed in confidentially

While not all contexts can immediately be correlated with a particular facet of wrongdoing, those that can, connect to *falsity, false-dealing* or *untruth*, and we find that if such a value is assumed it fits the remaining contexts. Lane in his *Arabic-English Lexicon* also notes the noun *athmim* (which is from the same root) as a *great, habitual liar*. On the basis of these facts, I understand the Qur'anic sense of *ithm* as *sin* with a component of *falsity* (in the sense of *proving false*) and regard other values ascribed to the term as vestiges of that original value. For reasons of style, I render as *sin* throughout, and include a note to this Notepad.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:85, 2:173, 2:181, 2:182, 2:182, 2:188, 2:203, 2:203, 2:206, 2:219, 2:219, 2:276, 2:283, 3:178, 4:20, 4:48, 4:50, 4:107, 4:111, 4:112, 4:112, 5:2, 5:3, 5:29, 5:29, 5:62, 5:63, 5:106, 5:107, 6:120, 6:120, 7:33, 24:11, 26:222, 33:58, 42:37, 44:44, 45:7, 49:12, 52:23, 53:32, 56:25, 58:8, 58:9, 68:12, 76:24, 83:12.

Meanwhile, *athām* means *recompense* or *requital* (Lane p.22) and occurs at 25:68.

XI.ii

junāh — *conditional absence of wrongdoing*

Translated generically by the Traditionalist as *sin, crime, misdeed*, an attentive analysis of this word in all contexts reveals a constant function. In all cases, it indicates a condition: if condition *x* is (is not) met then *y* is (is not) wrong. It operates with words such as *if, when, after*. When such as word is not explicit, it is implied.

I render throughout as [*you, he, they*] *do no wrong* [*if, when, after, etc.*].

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:158, 2:198, 2:229, 2:230, 2:233, 2:233, 2:234, 2:235, 2:236, 2:240, 2:282, 4:23, 4:24, 4:101, 4:102, 4:128, 5:93, 24:29, 24:58, 24:60, 24:61, 33:5, 33:51, 33:55, 60:10.

XI.iii**fāhīshat** — sexual immorality**fahshā** — sexual immorality

While this is translated variously by the Traditionalist, we do not have to guess as to the meaning. The Qur'an applies *fāhīsh* (sg.) to three scenarios only: sex outside of marriage (17:32); marrying the wife of one's father (4:22); and male homosexuality (7:80-81, 27:54-55).

Why there are two versions of this word I do not know. However, the fact that they are synonyms is established at 7:28, and I render them identically.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References**fāhīshat** — sexual immorality

3:135, 4:15, 4:19, 4:22, 4:25, 6:151, 7:28, 7:33, 7:80, 17:32, 24:19, 27:54, 29:28, 33:30, 42:37, 53:32, 65:1.

fahshā — sexual immorality

2:169, 2:268, 7:28, 12:24, 16:90, 24:21, 29:45.

XI.iv**dhanb** — transgression**dhunüb** — transgressions

The present translation renders this value as *transgressions* since the contexts at 3:11 and 8:50-54 make it clear that *dhunüb* signifies that denial or rejection of the proofs of God which can take a man to Hell if not repented of or forgiven.

11 Like the case of the house of Pharaoh and those before them: they denied Our proofs, so God seized them for their transgressions; and God is severe in retribution. (3:11)

This value does not contradict those values which the Traditionalist typically uses, but is here consistently applied throughout.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

3:11, 3:16, 3:31, 3:135, 3:135, 3:147, 3:193, 5:18, 5:49, 6:6, 7:100, 8:52, 8:54, 9:102, 12:29, 12:97, 14:10, 17:17, 25:58, 26:14, 28:78, 29:40, 33:71, 39:53, 40:3, 40:11, 40:21, 40:55, 46:31, 47:19, 48:2, 55:39, 61:12, 67:11, 71:4, 81:9, 91:14.

XI.v**s-w-'** — evil

This root is rendered generally by the Traditionalist as *evil* or synonyms. I do the same, rendering as *evil* throughout.

Instances in the text do not appear in the notes.

XI.vi**kh-t'** — to offend, offence; the offenders; error.

The Traditionalist's definition for this concept has no firm root. He uses *sin*, *mistake*, *error* and other meanings on an *ad hoc* basis. A core meaning is clearly *err* (in the sense of potentially *unintentional wrongdoing*) a fact which is demonstrated in the Traditionalist's translation at 33:5:

Call them by [the names of] their fathers; it is more just in the sight of Allāh. But if you do not know their fathers — then they are [still] your brothers in religion and those entrusted to you. And there is no blame upon you for that in which you have **erred** but [only for] what your hearts intended. And ever is Allāh Forgiving and Merciful. (33:5)

The verse at 4:92 also provides support for this position.

However, in a number of other cases, the core sense is clearly that of *offence* (as the result). I default to this, and resort to *error* only where unavoidable by dint of context.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:58, 2:81, 2:286, 4:92, 4:92, 4:112, 7:161, 12:29, 12:91, 12:97, 17:31, 20:73, 26:51, 26:82, 28:8, 29:12, 29:12, 33:5, 69:9, 69:37, 71:25, 96:16.

XI.vii**f-s-q** — perfidiousness

The Traditionalist renders this root *defiantly disobedient* and synonyms. The Qur'anic definition of *fusūq* is given at 2:27 and I follow its meaning (*perfidious*) throughout. This meaning is simply a Qur'anically-based definition or clarification of what is the received value and I apply this value across the verb forms.

Who break the covenant of Allāh after contracting it and sever that which Allāh has ordered to be joined and cause corruption on earth[...] (2:27)

I have no way of definitively establishing the difference between *fiṣq* and *fusūq*. The Traditionalist has none that I have seen based in Qur'anic principles, and he renders the two terms as the same thing without discernible principles.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

Referencesverb
2:59, 6:49, 7:163, 7:165, 10:33, 17:16, 18:50, 29:34, 32:20, 46:20.

noun

2:197, 2:282, 5:3, 6:121, 6:145, 49:7, 49:11.

active participle (noun)

2:26, 2:99, 3:82, 3:110, 5:47, 5:49, 5:59, 5:81, 7:102, 7:145, 9:8, 9:24, 9:67, 9:84, 24:4, 24:55, 32:18, 46:35, 49:6, 57:16, 57:26, 57:27, 59:5, 59:19.

NOTEPAD XII

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

baghy — sectarian zealotry

The Traditionalist renders this word variously — and not incorrectly — as *tyranny*, *oppression*, *outrage*, *envy* and synonyms thereof.

The context at 2:90 seems to indicate that *baghy* is a reprehensible act based on sectarian distinction or pride:

Evil is that for which they sold themselves, denying what God sent down, through sectarian zealotry [*baghy*], that God should send down of His bounty upon whom He wills of His servants. So they incurred wrath upon wrath; and for the false claimers of guidance is a humiliating punishment.¹ (2:90).

It is true that the values the Traditionalist uses convey the result. However, by rendering as *sectarian zealotry* the connection with the cause of such acts is maintained.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:90, 2:213, 3:19, 6:146, 7:33, 10:23, 10:90, 16:90, 42:14, 42:39, 45:17.

active participle (adjective)

5:25, 5:26, 5:108, 9:53, 9:80, 9:96, 21:74, 27:12, 28:32, 43:54, 51:46, 61:5, 63:6.

XI.viii**h-n-th** — perjury

The meaning of this root in Arabic is *to perjure oneself*. The root occurs twice in the text and I have rendered both according to the root meaning.

Both instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

38:44, 56:46.

XI.ix**sayyi'ah** — evil

I render this throughout as *evil*. This value is in general accordance with the Traditionalist's understanding, though consistently applied here.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:81, 3:120, 4:78, 4:79, 4:85, 6:160, 7:95, 7:131, 9:102, 10:27, 13:6, 13:22, 23:96, 27:46, 27:90, 28:54, 28:84, 30:36, 40:40, 41:34, 42:40, 42:40, 42:48.

XI.x**sayyi'āt** — evil

I render this throughout as *evil*. This value is in general accordance with the Traditionalist's understanding, though consistently applied here.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:271, 3:193, 3:195, 4:18, 4:31, 5:12, 5:65, 7:153, 7:168, 8:29, 10:27, 11:10, 11:78, 11:114, 16:34, 16:45, 25:70, 28:84, 29:4, 29:7, 35:10, 39:48, 39:51, 39:51, 40:9, 40:9, 40:45, 42:25, 45:21, 45:33, 46:16, 47:2, 48:5, 64:9, 65:5, 66:8.

XI.xi**shatāt** — wanton falsehood

I render this as *wanton falsehood* based on both the root sense of *injustice* and the contextual evidence which in both cases treats of false speech. This reading accords generally with Traditionalist renderings.

Both instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

18:14, 72:4.

¹ Qur'anic verses not in italics are from *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation*.

NOTEPAD XIII

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

Faith-based nomenclature

This Notepad looks at Qur'anic usage regarding the groups typically rendered *Jews*, *Christians* and *Muslims*.

**XIII.i
Jews**

The English word *Jew* is a fairly recent innovation. The letter *j* entered usage only around the middle of the 15th century. In the New Testament gospel accounts, in the Latin of the Vulgate, Jesus is portrayed at the crucifixion under a sign which reads Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudeorum.

Jesus is referred to as a Jew for the first time in the New Testament in the 18th century. The term is a contracted, corrupted English word for the 4th century *Judaes* found in the St. Jerome's Vulgate.

What it is to be a Jew emerges from within three conflated and questionably applied concepts:

- A person who professes a form of the religion known today as Judaism
- A person who claims to belong to the racial group of ancient Semites
- A person directly a descendant of a nation which claims residence in Palestine in ancient times

The concept of Judaism was coined by Flavius Josephus in order to pit it against Hellenism, by which was understood the manners, morals, customs and institutions which had spread from Greece across the world, but the term remained unknown to the people to whom it referred until later when they read Christian literature.

Like many who have taken the trouble to research such questions, I held for some time that the majority of people who identify today as Jews have no genetic connection with Semites but are descendants of the Khazars. However, the primary sources for such assertions are themselves Jewish, and while I do not dismiss them on that basis, I think one should not lose sight of the fact that non-Jewish assessments of behaviour commonly ascribed to those Jews of today who are supposedly of Khazarian origin is frequently encountered in the centuries preceding Khazaria's embrace of Judaism. Secondly, images dating back to antiquity (and unquestionably predating Khazarian Jewry) depicting Jewish persons bear a ready comparison with features typically associated with Ashkenazi as well as Sephardic Jews. In short, I tend to the opinion that Jewish lines generally do go back to antiquity and that the Khazarian discussion is something of a distraction and smokescreen. However one defines Jews, the Qur'an is clear that some among them are entirely righteous and that those among them who are will have their reward.

Points of interest:

- The root *h-w-d* means — in addition to *to be 'Jewish' — to turn to good from evil, to repent, to turn to the truth, to turn, to turn towards* (in which sense it is undeniably used at 7:156)
- The name of the prophet Hūd is based on the same root (see 7:65, 11:50, 11:53, 11:58, 11:60, 11:89, 26:124)
- It is the Rabbinic literature which emphasises the idea of the Jews as chosen people possessing souls qualitatively different (i.e. superior) to those of non-Jews; the redacted version of the Torah produced by Ezra also presents the *mitzvot* within the matrix of a racial policy.

alladhīna hādū — *those who hold to Judaism*
2:62, 4:46, 4:160, 5:41, 5:44, 5:69, 6:146, 16:118, 22:17, 62:6.

In previous editions of this book, this term was rendered Jews. Since then, I have noticed that this formula occurs in combination with mention of other faiths (*those who heed warning, Christians, Sabaeans and Magians*) — i.e. creeds one may choose to follow, and not based predominantly on racial requirements (at 2:62, 5:69 and 22:17). On that basis, I take *alladhīna hādū* to mean those who are Jews by faith but not necessarily by race.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

hūd — *such as hold to Judaism*
2:111, 2:135, 2:140.

This term is only found set in contradistinction with *Christians* (and thus, with those who hold to a creed rather than those with a racial orientation). Therefore, I take the term to be functionally equal to *alladhīna hādū* above.

It is noteworthy that this word is identical to the name of the prophet Hūd.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

yahūdi — *one who holds to Judaism*
3:67

We can accept this value as the singular of the value above since, like it, it occurs in contradistinction with *Christian*.

The instance in the text appears in the notes.

al yahūd — *Rabbinic Jews*

This convention occurs 8 times: 2:113, 2:113, 2:120, 5:18, 5:51, 5:64, 5:82, 9:30.

I render this as *Rabbinic Jews* (as opposed to those Jews who simply hold to the Torah and *mitzvot*) on the basis of 9:30 which states that this group claims Ezra as the son (*ibn*) of God. The usage of *ibn* in such a context clearly denotes *favoured one* or *pertaining to* rather than son in the exclusively biological sense which in Qur'anic parlance is *walad*.

Ezra represents the point at which the Torah and the Talmud were conflated which event provided the intellectual and cultural material for the Talmud's later 'secular' manifestations: Political Marxism, Cultural Marxism, Nihilism, Fraudulent Scientism and

Psychology, and Zionism — which are related cultural strategies aimed at defining Jewishness in terms of external enmity while racially undermining, debasing and enslaving non-Jews.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

**XIII.ii
Christians**

The Qur'an does not use the term Christians. It uses the term Nazarenes which occurs 14 times in plural (2:62, 2:111, 2:113, 2:113, 2:120, 2:135, 2:140, 5:14, 5:18, 5:51, 5:69, 5:82, 9:30, 22:17) and once in singular 3:67.

I rendered this word *Christians* in the first versions of this book and have reverted to it here despite my wish not to privilege the Christian extension of the Egypt-Palestine thesis over the Arabia Felix thesis (see Notepad XVI).

Points of interest:

- In all cases where distinctions are to be made between general religious groups (2:62, 5:69, 22:17) they are listed along with *alladhīna hādū*, never with *yahūd* or *hūdan*
- There is no racial aspect to Christians equivalent to *banī isrā'īl*
- There are two categories indicated:
 - The Christians
 - Those who say they are Christians

- Along with *al yahūd* (those under Rabbinic Judaism) they claim to be God's chosen ones

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

**XIII.iii
Muslims**

2:128, 2:128, 2:132, 2:133, 2:136, 3:52, 3:64, 3:67, 3:80, 3:84, 3:102, 5:111, 6:163, 7:126, 10:72, 10:84, 10:90, 11:14, 12:101, 15:2, 16:89, 16:102, 21:108, 22:78, 27:31, 27:38, 27:42, 27:81, 27:91, 28:53, 29:46, 30:53, 33:35, 33:35, 39:12, 41:33, 43:69, 46:15, 51:36, 66:5, 68:35, 72:14.

The Traditionalist claim that *muslimūn* as used in the Qur'an bears any correlation with what *Muslims* means today is disingenuous, manipulative and provably false.

Words evolve new meanings over time. To apply the Traditionalist's claims for the word *muslimūn* to its usage in the Qur'an would be like insisting that a particular famous brand of cigarette sporting a famous desert beast is, in fact, a camel.

The word *muslimūn* means *those who have yielded* or *submitted* or *surrendered* (in most contexts: *to God*). That is all.

All men of God have been *muslim*. Ādam was *muslim*. Nūḥ was *muslim*. Ibrāhīm was *muslim*. Mūsā was *muslim*. 'Īsā was *muslim*. Muḥammad was *muslim*. The Traditionalist uses this fact to try

to slip his religion past the goalposts of the uncritical mind and into the Qur'anic historical narrative to create the idea that his sectarian understanding is in some way intrinsic to the Qur'an. Any measure of sustained intellectual effort demonstrates precisely the opposite.

If we are to be satisfied with the argument that Ibrāhīm was in some way a Sunni Muslim (or any other brand of sectarian Islam) — that he prophetically anticipated the avalanche of extra-scriptural injunctions which would later comprise that religion — we are become no different to the Trinitarian Christian who works backwards with preconceived values to ascribe meanings to past events which they objectively do not have, or the Rabbinic Jew for whom the righteousness of God is a function of the Almighty's commendable good sense and prescience in correctly anticipating the racial supremacy and inherent specialness of a future race called (much later still) Jews. All such ideas are repudiated by the Qur'an.

This value is rendered literally as *submitted* throughout.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

NOTEPAD XIV

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

What follows is not highly systematised, and comprises part of my working notes at an early stage in my engagement with the text. While these points generally hold true and are borne out in my translation, I include them primarily as an additional study resource for the interested student.

Construction conventions

Here we identify the Qur'anic sense for particular construction conventions which use particles and particle collocations. I have applied the same iterative, pan-textual methodology to extract clear meanings and then applied them consistently.

In most cases, besides the consistent application, the values are the same or very similar to those which the Traditionalist assumes.

In most cases, any difference is a matter of emphasis or nuance. One or two instances differ somewhat from what is standard either in typical translations or in Modern Arabic.

To those who might argue that since such conventions in construction are used today in Modern Arabic we should simply accept those values, my answer is that my instinct has been to default to those values. However, where I have found that such values make the text laboured or confuse arguments, I have not been afraid to investigate them on the basis of the Qur'anic usage over the entire corpus and form conclusions on that basis.

law lā (as a single statement)

2:118, 4:77, 5:63, 6:8, 6:37, 6:43, 7:203, 8:68, 10:20, 10:98, 11:12, 11:116, 13:7, 13:27, 18:15, 18:39, 20:133, 20:134, 24:12, 24:13, 24:16, 25:7, 25:21, 25:32, 27:46, 28:47, 28:48, 29:50, 41:44, 43:31, 43:53, 46:28, 47:20, 56:57, 56:62, 56:70, 56:83, 56:86-87, 58:8, 68:28.

The difference between how the Traditionalist renders *law lā* as a single statement and how it is rendered here is a matter of emphasis only. For the Traditionalist, it denotes a simple question:

[...]“Why does Allāh not speak to us or there come to us a sign?”¹
(2:118)

After comparing all instances of *law lā* in the text I came to the conclusion that where *law lā* occurs as a single statement (as above) it indicates a wish couched in doubt. In the mouths of waverers, rejecters of God, dishonest scribes and the like, it allows for a range of moods: that of excuse, a challenge with little chance of being met, a nit-picking wistfulness and the insinuation of blame levelled at another. In the mouth of God it expresses a light challenge or rebuke, a prod. In the mouth of a good man it expresses a godly regret or rebuke.

[...]Oh that God would but speak to us or a sign but come to us!

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

law lā (part of double statement)

2:64, 2:251, 4:83, 4:113, 7:43, 8:68, 9:122, 10:19, 11:91, 11:110, 12:24, 12:94, 17:74, 20:129, 22:40, 24:10, 24:14, 24:20, 24:21, 25:42, 25:77, 28:10, 28:82, 29:53, 34:31, 37:57, 37:143, 41:45, 42:14, 42:21, 43:33, 48:25, 59:3, 63:10, 68:49.

Where *law lā* occurs in one part of a two-statement phrase I render in a way which is indistinguishable from the Traditionalist (although typically with more consistency) as *were / had (it, he, they) not*. For example:

Then were it not for the grace of God upon you and his mercy, you would have been among the losers.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

dhālika bianna — for it is that

2:61, 2:176, 2:275, 3:24, 3:75, 3:112, 5:58, 5:82, 7:146, 8:13-14, 8:53, 9:6, 9:80, 9:120, 16:107, 22:6-7, 22:61, 22:62, 31:30, 40:22, 47:3, 47:9, 47:11, 47:26, 47:28, 59:4, 59:13, 59:14, 63:3, 64:6.

See note to 22:6 in Notes & Commentary.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

dhālika bimā

2:61, 3:112, 3:182, 5:78, 8:51, 22:10.

See note to 22:10 in Notes & Commentary.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

alaysa

6:30, 6:53, 11:78, 11:81, 29:68, 39:32, 39:36, 39:37, 39:60, 43:51, 46:34, 75:40, 95:8.

The translators frequently seem to miss a part of its function. They render it as a bare negative interrogative: *Is this not the truth?* (Either *a* or *b* could have been the truth. It happens to be *a* and we all agree.)

However, the contexts show that its role in the argument is more subtle. There is an element of correction of a misplaced assumption or misconception: *Is then this not the truth?* (You had thought *a* was the truth, but actually it was *b*, and *b* is hereby demonstrated, in fact, to be the truth.)

Of course, depending on context the first reading performs the same function as the second. However, with the added *then* the emphasis remains constant, and there is perceptible tipping of an argument in favour of the point being made by means of a requisite rhetorical flourish.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

NOTEPAD XV

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

What follows is not highly systematised, and comprises part of my working notes at an early stage in my engagement with the text. While these points generally hold true and are borne out in my translation, I include them primarily as an additional study resource for the interested student.

In my work I default to standard identifications in the translation where possible. However, that does not imply that I agree with such correlations in all cases. I default to the transliterated Arabic in my notes.

Persons

It is not possible to correlate reliably all Qur'anic persons with those known to English-speaking audiences without assuming — in part or in whole — the conclusions of the dominant Egypt-Palestine thesis.

As imperfect though it must inevitably be, what follows comprises most persons mentioned in the Qur'an.

Abu Lahab. Lit.: *father of flame*. That this denotes a human archetype is clear in the context in which it occurs. The Traditionalist has stories which he attaches to this chapter which have no Qur'anic basis and which I ignore.

Ādam. Typically identified with Adam in the Hebrew scriptures, and rendered thus in the Translation throughout.

Aḥmad. Taken by the Traditionalist to be another name for Muḥammad. This is the comparative of the *ḥ-m-d* root whence the name Muḥammad derives, and means *more laudable* or *more praiseworthy*. While I do not follow it in my rendering (largely due to concerns about feeding a personality cult the Traditionalist has created at the expense of the Qur'anic message, but also because I am not convinced by the argument), the reader should know the claim of some Traditionalists (and others) in this regard. Muhammad Asad summarises it as well as anybody: *This prediction is supported by several references in the Gospel of St. John to the Parakletos (usually rendered as “Comforter”) who was to come after Jesus. This designation is almost certainly a corruption of Periklytos (“the Much-Praised”), an exact Greek translation of the Aramaic term or name Mawhamana. (It is to be borne in mind that Aramaic was the language used in Palestine at the time of, and for some centuries after, Jesus, and was thus undoubtedly the language in which the original - now lost - texts of the Gospels were composed.) In view of the phonetic closeness of Periklytos and Parakletos it is easy to understand how the translator - or, more probably, a later scribe - confused these two expressions. It is significant that both the Aramaic Mawhamana and the Greek Periklytos have the same meaning as the two names of the Last Prophet, Muhammad and Ahmad, both of which are derived from the verb hamida (“he praised”) and the noun hamd (“praise”). An even more unequivocal prediction of the advent of the Prophet Muhammad - mentioned by name, in its Arabic form - is said to be forthcoming from the so-called Gospel of St. Barnabas, which, though now regarded as apocryphal, was accepted as*

¹ Qur'anic verses in italics are from *The Qur'an - Arabic Text with Corresponding English Meanings* by Saheeh International.

authentic and was read in the churches until the year 496 of the Christian era, when it was banned as “heretical” by a decree of Pope Gelasius. However, since the original text of that Gospel is not available (having come down to us only in an Italian translation dating from the late sixteenth century), its authenticity cannot be established with certainty. It is my opinion that the Gospel of St. Barnabas — which I have read several times — while interesting, was written within the Islamic period. It contains references and assumptions which identify it as a piece of — perhaps pious — Islamic extemporisation rather than an original scripture containing the words and deeds of ʿĪsā.

Al-ʿAzīz. In the Hebrew scriptures, this is identified as Potiphar. In the Qur'an, he appears by title only, which means Governor or something similar.

Al-Yasaʿ. Typically identified with Elisha in the Hebrew scriptures.

Ayyūb. Typically identified with Job in the Hebrew scriptures.

Āzar. The father of Ibrāhīm. The name recorded in the Hebrew scriptures for Abraham's father is Terah.

Dāwūd. Typically identified with David in the Hebrew scriptures.

Dhūl-Kifl. Arabic: *dhūl kifl*. There are two general views on the meaning of *dhūl kifl* each of which is presented below. Muhammad Asad's comment on this point (which general position I have taken) follows with some light editing: *Lit., “and him of the pledge”. The expression dhu ʿl-kifl is derived from the verb kafala and especially the form takaffala - which signifies “he became responsible [for something or someone]” or “pledged himself [to do something]”. Although the classical commentators consider dhu ʿl-kifl to be the epithet or the proper name of a particular prophet - whom they variously, more or less at random, identify with Elijah or Joshua or Zachariah or Ezekiel - I fail to see any reason whatever for such attempts at “identification”[...]. I am, therefore, of the opinion that we have here (as in the identical expression in 38:48) a generic term applying to every one of the prophets, inasmuch as each of them pledged himself unreservedly to God and accepted the responsibility for delivering His message to man. Abdullah Yusuf Ali takes the other (and more popular view). While I have not been guided by him, I include his comment here for the sake of completeness: *Dhu al Kifl would literally mean “possessor of, or giving, a double requital or portion”; or else, “one who used a cloak of double thickness,” that being one of the meanings of Kifl. The Commentators differ in opinion as to who is meant, why the title is applied to him, and the point of his being grouped with Ismāʿīl and Idris for constancy and patience. I think the best suggestion is that afforded by Karsten Niebuhr in his Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien, Copenhagen, 1778, 2:264-266, as quoted in the Encyclopaedia of Islam under “Dhu al Kifl”. He visited Meshed ʿAh in Iraq, and also the little town called Kefīl, midway between Najaf and Hillah (Babylon). Kefīl, he says, is the Arabic form of Ezekiel. The shrine of Ezekiel was there, and the Jews came to it on a pilgrimage. If we accept “Dhu al Kifl” to be not an epithet, but an Arabised form of “Ezekiel”, it fits the context. Ezekiel was a prophet in Israel who was carried away to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar after his second attack on Jerusalem (about B.C. 599). His Book is included in the English Bible (Old Testament). He was chained and bound, and put into prison, and for a time he was dumb, (Ezekiel, 3:25-26). He bore it all with patience and constancy, and continued to reprove boldly the evils in Israel. In a burning passage he denounces false leaders in words which are eternally true: “Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do**

feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, you kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken . . .”, etc. (Ezekiel, 34:2-4). Dhu al Kifl is again mentioned in 38:48 along with Ismāʿīl and Elisha.

Dhūl-Qarnayn. Lit.: *He of the Two Horns* or *He of the Two Generations*.

Firʿawn. This word is rendered as a proper name under the Arabia Felix thesis and as a title of royalty (i.e. Pharaoh) under the Egypt-Palestine thesis. However, beyond either thesis, there is strong internal support for treating *firʿawn* as a proper name and not a title; firstly, house (*āil*) is only found with proper names, never with titles (2:49, 2:50, 2:248, 2:248, 3:11, 3:33, 3:33, 4:54, 7:130, 7:141, 8:52, 8:54, 8:54, 12:6, 14:6, 15:59, 15:61, 19:6, 27:56, 28:8, 28:45, 34:13, 40:28, 40:45, 40:46, 54:34, 54:41); secondly, *firʿawn* nowhere takes a definite article (cf. *al ʿazīz* or *al malik*). Were we not primed to think of *firʿawn* as a particular type of king, one would not assume it from the Qur'an's presentation of the word. However, in this edition, as far as possible I render names in their accepted English formats, and confine additional interpretative comments to notes. See Notepad XVI.

Hāmān. A minister under Firʿawn. A character is found in the Book of Esther by the same name, but has no other correlation.

Hārūn. Typically identified with Aaron in the Hebrew scriptures. **Hārūt** and **Mārūt.** Read both as *two kings* and as *two angels* (the difference in the diacritic marking is minimal). I have no other information on this.

Hūd. A prophet who does not appear in the Hebrew scriptures.

Iblīs; the shayṭān. Typically identified with Satan.

Ibrāhīm. Typically identified with Abraham in the Hebrew scriptures.

Idris. Typically identified with the prophet Enoch in the Hebrew scriptures.

ʿImrān. Typically identified with Amram, father of Moses, in the Hebrew scriptures.

Ilyās. Typically identified with Elijah in the Hebrew scriptures.

Ilyāsīn. Typically identified with Elias in the Hebrew scriptures. While I remain unconvinced by either his sources or his argument on this point, Muhammad Asad illustrates for us the problems here: *The form Il-Yasin in which this name appears in the above verse is either a variant of Ilyas (Elijah) or, more probably, a plural - “the Elijahs” - meaning “Elijah and his followers” (Tabari, Zamakhshari, et al). According to Tabari, ʿAbd Allah ibn Masʿud used to read this verse as “Peace be upon Idrasin”, which, apart from giving us a variant or a plural of Idris (“Idris and his followers”), lends support to the view that Idris and Ilyas are but two designations of one and the same person, the Biblical Elijah. My own view is that we should suspend judgment on this point until we have objective data.*

ʿĪsā; the Messiah; son of Maryam. Typically identified with Jesus crucified under Pilate in the Christian extension of the Egypt-Palestine thesis; seen as a separate figure, the founder of the sect of the Christians, and predating by around four centuries (though latterly conflated with) the central figure of modern Christology under certain aspects of the ʿAsīr-Ḥejāz thesis. See Notepad XVI. Also considered as the literal nephew of Mūsā at Notepad XVIII.

Ishāq. Typically identified with Isaac, son of Abraham, in the Hebrew scriptures.

Ismāʿīl. Typically identified with Ishmael, son of Abraham, in the Hebrew scriptures.

Isrāʿīl. Yaʿqub and Isrāʿīl are the same person in the Hebrew scriptures. No such claim is made in the Qur'an.

Jālūt. Typically identified with Goliath in the Hebrew scriptures.

Jibrīl. Typically identified with the Angel Gabriel in the Hebrew scriptures.

Lūṭ. Typically identified with the prophet Lot in the Hebrew scriptures.

Luqmān. Has no correlation in the Hebrew scriptures.

Maryam. Typically identified with Mary under the Christian extension of the Egypt-Palestine thesis; emerges as a figure some four centuries prior under the ʿAsīr-Ḥejāz thesis. See Notepads XVI and XVIII.

Mikāl. Typically identified with the Angel Michael in the Hebrew scriptures.

Mūsā. Typically identified with the prophet Moses in the Hebrew scriptures.

Muḥammad. Typically identified with the Muḥammad of the *ḥadīth* literature; any correlation breaks down given serious analysis of the Qur'an.

Nūḥ. Typically identified with the prophet Noah in the Hebrew scriptures.

Qārūn. Typically identified with Korah in the Hebrew scriptures.

Šālīḥ. Has no obvious correlation in the former scriptures, although claimed by some to correspond with a man named at 1 Chronicles 1:18 and Luke 3:35.

Sāmiriyy. Typically identified with *Samaritan*; more convincing identifications exist.

Sabaʿ. Typically identified with Sheba in the Hebrew scriptures.

Shuʿayb. Sometimes identified with Jethro in the Hebrew scriptures, but not convincingly.

Sulaymān. Typically identified with Solomon in the Hebrew scriptures.

Ṭālūt. Typically identified with Saul in the Hebrew scriptures.

ʿUzayr. Typically identified with Ezra in the Hebrew scriptures.

Yahyā. Typically identified with New Testament John under the Christian extension of the Egypt-Palestine thesis; emerges as a separate person entirely under the ʿAsīr-Ḥejāz thesis (see Notepad XVI; also Notepad XVIII).

Yaʿqūb. Typically identified with the prophet Jacob in the Hebrew scriptures.

Yūnus. Typically identified with Jonah in the Hebrew scriptures.

Yūsuf. Typically identified with the prophet Joseph in the Hebrew scriptures.

Zakariyyā. In the Christological expansion of the Egypt-Palestine thesis, Zechariah is the husband of Mary's cousin; in the ʿAsīr-Ḥejāz thesis he predates the Christian era by around four centuries. See Notepads XVI and XVIII.

Zayd. The Prophet's adopted son.

NOTEPAD XVI

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

Key locations and persons in scriptural narratives

Introduction

What follows is a bare-bones summary of disparate — often competing — assumptions and assertions relating to the main locations of core histories found in scriptures held by Jews, Christians and Muslims. Some versions overlap in places and mutually exclude each other — at times to a large degree — in others.

My primary purpose here is to acquaint the reader with those theses to which I refer in the notes — most particularly with those with which he may not be familiar; however, I also list theses which do not feature in the notes for interest.

This summary is in no way exhaustive or intended to replace a first-hand acquaintance with the literature.

MAIN THESES

Egypt-Palestine thesis

I use this term to refer to the dominant Judaeo-Christo-Zionist version, i.e. that version assumed by Bible colleges, as well as Jewish and non-Jewish schools:

1. Abraham came from Ur, Mesopotamia
2. The children of Israel removed to the land we know today as Egypt from where they were led by Moses
3. Palestine is the locus for core post-Moses Hebrew scripture narratives as well as for the kingdoms of Solomon and David
4. It was from Palestine that the children of Israel were taken into captivity to Babylon
5. The children of Israel went (back) to Palestine from Babylon

Since this is a key driver for the narratives of Zionism and Jewish exceptionalism and irredentism — and since those aligned to the interests of those narratives are invested in the primacy of the same — this is the version assumed by what passes for education and its corollary the entertainment industry.

I currently have no firm view on part 1 of this thesis; part 5 — barring the parenthesis — is clearly founded in recorded, real history. I have good reason to doubt the veracity of the locations assumed in parts 2, 3, and 4.

Traditionalist Muslim narrative

Somewhat strangely, Traditionalist Islam supports the Judaeo-Christo-Zionist Egypt-Palestine thesis, yet with flourishes and excursions of its own contrivance to accommodate what we may call the Makkah thesis.

This thesis — which is the child of the *ḥadīth* literature — has it that Makkah was the home of Muḥammad, and that his mission was focused on that place.

I reject the Makkah thesis as politically motivated fiction created

many decades after the time of the prophet. More importantly, the Qur'an's own descriptions ill fit Makkah — a point which pilgrims to that place well versed in the Qur'an have often been unable to ignore.

Those from the so-called Islamic world are as unlikely as Western academics to do the spadework necessary to uncover the facts, and for some of the same reasons. The ruling elites of traditionalist Muslim economies are entirely dependent upon the ruling elites of Western economies which, in turn, are controlled either directly by a powerful subset of Jewish interests or by pseudo-spiritual societies subordinate to the same.

I previously allowed that the part of the Makkah thesis which relates to the city today called Medinah was broadly correct. Today, I am not sure. It may be, or it may not be. I have no more reason to trust the Traditionalist Muslim's non-Qur'anic sources than I do those of the Talmudic Jew. I am sure there is some truth in both. It is not my function to disentangle truth from fiction in this case; rather to let the Qur'an speak without being hamstrung by either.

Personally, I do not care if a man chooses to face Makkah and pray five times a day and follow the other observances which certain schools of the religion called Islam require of him. The Qur'an is clear: those who believe in God and the Last Day and do good works have their reward. And that includes the Traditionalist Muslim. But I do not accept his analyses. I think they are weak. And I reject both his interpretative impositions upon — and claims to monopoly rights over — the Qur'an since they are founded in another, later literature.

'Asir-Ḥejāz thesis

By this term I mean the thesis advanced by Kamal Salibi as summarised in his book *Who was Jesus?*

Salibi was a Lebanese Christian and a professor of history. He places the children of Israel in the region between Taif and the border with Yemen prior to the Exile in Babylon. I refer the interested reader also to his works *The Bible came from Arabia* (a book it is increasingly difficult to obtain) and *Secrets of the Bible People*.

The Wikipedia entry for Salibi reads:

The (literally) central identification of the theory is that the geographical feature referred to as the "Jordan", which is usually taken to refer to the Jordan River, although never actually described as a "river" in the Hebrew text, actually means the great West Arabian Escarpment, known as the Sarawat Mountains. The area of ancient Israel is then identified with the land on either side of the southern section of the escarpment that is, the southern Hejaz and 'Asir, from Ta'if down to the border with Yemen.

This thesis is — predictably — rejected as 'anti-Semitism' by Zionists and those with reason to care about what Zionists wish them to care about. In today's academic and political atmosphere accusations of 'anti-Semitism' are fast becoming the *sine qua non* of divergence from orthodoxy in any sphere.

Equally, such accusations do not provide reason to accept a writer's work uncritically.

There is some overlap and correspondence between Salibi's thesis and that which follows, the Arabia Felix thesis, and I do not concentrate much on his work in my notes.

Salibi advances a view of the modern Christian conception of Jesus as a composite of three personalities: a figure called 'Īsā whom he places in the Ḥejāz region and claims to have been active around the 5th century BCE and who was, for him, the 'Īsā of whom the Qur'an speaks; an Arab fertility god of the same name; and a descendent of the line of David who travelled from the 'Asir or Ḥejāz region to Palestine in the early 1st century CE and claimed to be king of the Jews, and was there killed under Pontius Pilate.

My view is that his case regarding Jesus fits better with the Qur'anic conception of him than does the Muslim Traditionalist's assumption of the Christian's extension to the Jews' Egypt-Palestine thesis. I also find it reasonable to countenance the thought that the Essenes were influenced — if not founded — by 'Īsā centuries before Jesus lived (the very words 'Īsā and Essene bear an easy comparison).

Weaknesses in Salibi's thesis — at least from the point of view of the Arabia Felix thesis — might include the fact that the locations he claims ill fit the agricultural descriptions found in the Qur'an. Added to this, his model does not readily comply with a point central to the Arabia Felix thesis (and one which has Qur'anic substance) which is that the locus of all the prophets was materially the same.

Regarding Salibi's geographical claims, I remain open yet uncommitted to his views. Here, as elsewhere, objective and thorough excavation and investment in research is required.

Arabia Felix thesis

This thesis places the locus for the Qur'anic revelation in Yemen. My own engagement with this thesis came through publications by the Badr Society for Cultural Research which has produced (at the time of writing) four books which summarise the argument. These, I believe, may be found online. It is not possible to connect this thesis with particular writers — although I understand that such exist.

Under this thesis, then, the central locus for the histories of the procession of prophets through to and including Muḥammad is Yemen. It makes some of the same claims for Yemen which Salibi makes for 'Asir and Ḥejāz. It also advances strong arguments against the Egypt-Palestine theory.

The Arabia Felix thesis has some strong elements within it. In particular, I find compelling:

- The distinction between *miṣr* and Egypt
- The obvious point that Yūsuf tells his family to enter '*miṣr*' when they are already clearly in the land
- That al-'aziz buys Yūsuf from (a) *miṣr* (which ill fits the idea that *miṣr* is a country)
- The fact that Pharaoh as a title cannot be shown in Egypt,

but was imposed upon it by the Septuagint (and Western scholars under the influence of the same)

- The assertion that Fir'awn is a proper name (cf. Hāmān)
- The point that the Qur'an implies lack of rain (rather than the failure of the Nile to flood) as the cause for the drought
- Scepticism that a ruler of Egypt would personally pursue his enemies
- Scepticism at the claims made in the Hebrew scriptures for the numbers of the children of Israel at the time of the Exodus

My view here also is that this thesis requires diligent study and excavation of sites to establish the facts.

The Arabia Felix thesis is outlined more fully below.

Petra

My contact with serious consideration of Petra as the location of *al masjid al ḥarām* came by reading Dan Gibson's *Qur'anic Geography*.

To be clear, in my notes I use the following terms in the following ways:

- **Petra thesis.** This refers to the model in which *al masjid al ḥarām* was at Petra, Muḥammad was from the same city, and that city formed the focus of his concerns and operations until it was decommissioned (see 9:28 and notes thereto).
- **Petra pilgrimage thesis.** This refers to a model which accepts *al masjid al ḥarām* at Petra but does not necessarily concur that Muḥammad was from that place or spent considerable time there. Such a view might allow for some part of the Arabia Felix thesis, for example.

Gibson's broader thesis has Muḥammad as a citizen of Petra (in the southern part of modern Jordan), and identifies Petra itself as a place local to the previous peoples whose histories and demise are outlined in the Qur'an.

Beyond Gibson's emphasis on Petra as the city of Muḥammad's origin, there is contextual acceptance of the general Egypt-Palestine thesis (see above) and the underlying themes of the Medinah part of the mainstream Muslim narrative.

I do not have a strong opinion about Gibson's broader assertions, but I accept Petra as the site of *al masjid al ḥarām* and I do so for reasons which include the following:

- Makkah defies any attempt to align it with Qur'anic descriptions
- Makkah is found in no map prior to 900 CE, nor is it identified in the extant manuscripts of nearby literate cultures as a place of pilgrimage (whereas Petra meets both points)
- The foundations and sites of the earliest mosques are aligned with Petra
- The Qur'anic descriptions of the place of *al masjid al ḥarām* fit Petra
- There is objective evidence which identifies Petra as the ancient centre of a pan-Arab pilgrimage

Whether Petra was Muḥammad's home town or not, I cannot say with certainty. However, a point which I would like to emphasise

is that there is no inherent mutual exclusion between Petra as the locus of *al masjid al ḥarām* and either the 'Asir-Ḥejāz or Arabia Felix theses as places of Muḥammad's origin and main activities.

As touched upon above, Gibson places pre-Qur'anic narratives such as the stories of Thamūd and 'Ād close to Petra. The Arabia Felix thesis would say not. My position, again, is that more work on this needs to be done.

While the precise details are very interesting they are, to me, less pressing than the task to which such narratives point: the imperative to warn the peoples of our day after the Qur'anic model in order that judgment might become binding upon the rejecters and allow for God's destruction of the present and planned systems of tyranny.

The Petra thesis is expanded upon below.

ADDITIONAL THESES AND FINDINGS

Egyptian king thesis

Author Ahmed Osman identifies key Biblical personalities as kings of ancient Egypt. I do not find his arguments compelling and they do not find an obvious or persuasive fit with the Qur'an.

I do not reference his assertions in the notes.

Archetypal Christology

This holds that the Christian account of the character called Jesus is a re-telling of an oft-repeated archetypal mythos. This claim was popularised in the YouTube film *Zeitgeist* and asserts, in essence, that Jesus' story mirrors that of previous cultic personalities such as Horus, Attis, Krishna, Dionysus and Mithra.

The Qur'an certainly claims a non-standard conception for 'Īsā but contextualises it by reference to Ādam who had neither father nor mother. Thus, 'Īsā is fully human and no more than a prophet; besides, both Ibrāhīm and Zakariyyā have sons when their wives are past childbearing age.

Since there is minimal correspondence between this thesis and the Qur'anic narrative, I do not dwell upon it in the notes to the translation.

Astrological Christology

This is related in some ways to the thesis above, but holds that the Christological narrative is sun worship in allegory — one in which the sun dies and rises on the third day — and that the twelve disciples represent the twelve signs of the zodiac.

Nothing remotely like this is found in the Qur'an. 'Īsā does not die and come back to life; nor is the number of his disciples ever mentioned. Thus, this thesis does not feature in the notes to the translation.

'Īsā-Christ-Jesus thesis

To my mind, Kamal Salibi (originator of what I call the 'Asir-Ḥejāz thesis) makes a strong case for the composite nature of the modern conception of Jesus, and it is likely that the Messiah

(ʿĪsā) was born to a young woman named Maryam of the Levite line centuries before the character today called Jesus — likely of the Davidic line — was hailed as the king of the Jews in the city in Palestine called Jerusalem. Again, this is not a point which has a bearing on my decisions as a translator, and associated comments in notes number no more than a handful. (Jewish claims about what Judaism regards as its 'messiah' have only a tenuous connection with the Jewish Bible and no concrete foundation in the Torah; the thesis is based predominantly in Talmudic and Kabbalistic teachings.)

Others would argue — at times convincingly — along some of the same lines that ʿĪsā's mother was literally the sister of Hārūn (19:27-28).

For more on this see Notepad XVIII.

British Israelism / Black Hebrew Israelism

There is a gaggle of competing theories regarding the lost tribes of Israel including British Israelism (Anglo-Israelism) and Black Hebrew Israelism. I can not be sure how far any of these theories find purchase in the Qur'anic text and for our purposes here can be ignored.

Cities of Lūṭ at Dead Sea

A claim equally encouraging to either the Petra or the Egypt-Palestine theories is one which places the cities known in the Jewish Bible as Sodom and Gomorrah close to the Dead Sea.

Among those who have advanced such claims is amateur archaeologist and fundamentalist Christian, Ron Wyatt. Information on his findings may be found online. I refer to his findings in the notes.

Site of the Golden Calf at Jabal Al-Lawz in northern Saudi Arabia

This point can be claimed to support either the Petra or the Egypt-Palestine theory. Since it incorporates aspects of Egyptian idolatry, it is difficult to square with the Arabia Felix thesis which holds that the children of Israel were never in Egypt — unless one allows that the worship of Egyptian gods extended into Arabia.

Since it treats of a time when the children of Israel were in the wilderness, the considerable distances from it to the ʿAsīr-Ḥejāz region or to the Yemen do not necessarily exclude it from inclusion within those theses.

The evidence on the ground as presented by both a family of Christians and a two-man team of Christian-orientated investigators that this site is that of Biblical Sinai seems compelling on first sight. Such evidence includes: an altar with clear references to a cult of a bull, a great mountain — Jabal al-Lawz — (which is known locally as the Mountain of Moses), a great rock split from which water may be deduced to have come forth, and the presence of quail in the area.

More information may be found online with extensive video footage available on YouTube.

I refer to these findings in the notes.

Khazarian Jews

Much is made today in certain quarters of the distinction between Sephardic Jews and the Khazarian (Ashkenazi) Jews who embraced Judaism in the 8th century CE. See introduction to Notepad XIII.i.

I do not pursue this line within my work. I render the names which refer to particular groups consistently and — in the case of those taken to refer to Jews, though also with others — I provide references to the Notepad in the Appendix where I attempt to understand and standardise the results.

The Qur'an makes a distinction between the *children of Israel* as the genetic descendants of a man named Israel and those referred to by terms commonly rendered as *Jews* in English translation. It is clear that those who belong to the latter category belong to a *creed (milla)*. A creed may be adopted by anyone, as we know.

Maurice Bucaille's view on Ramesses II

Bucaille identified Ramesses II as the king who knew Moses. This point — whether true in specifics or in generalities — may be seen as implying support for the dominant Egypt-Palestine thesis since the Qur'an clearly says that Fir'awn will be preserved in his body, and mummification was practiced by the Egyptians.

Bucaille was an intelligent man and his theory is enthusiastically embraced by some portions of the Traditionalist Islamic community. Bucaille makes clear in his concluding comments that he does not consider the *ḥadīth* of the same order as the Qur'an — a point which is glossed over by those Traditionalists who point to Bucaille in support of their claims.

It is of interest, however, that cultures in ancient Yemen also practiced mummification. Again, should proper fieldwork un beholden to predetermined interests be forthcoming, I would welcome that.

INITIAL SUMMARY

My current view is that parts 2, 3, and 4 of the Egypt-Palestine thesis (see above) are likely untrue. My understanding is that they were fused into being first by Ezra after the Exile and that his deceits were compounded by the Masorettes, and later accepted first by the Jews, then the Christians, and then the Muslims.

The archaeological record simply does not exist to support the thesis — and not for want of looking.

I also do not believe we do justice to the Qur'an by attempting to process its statements via an assumption of any unproven thesis, including the Egypt-Palestine thesis.

I accept the Petra pilgrimage thesis — i.e. that Petra was the location of *al masjid al ḥarām*.

Which (if either) of the ʿAsīr-Ḥejāz or Arabia Felix theses is right and to what extent, I do not know. Both are interesting but require further and extensive study.

There follow extensive summaries of the Arabia Felix thesis and of the Petra thesis (which includes supporting evidence for the Petra pilgrimage thesis).

SUMMARY OF THE ARABIA FELIX THESIS

What follows is a skeleton outline of the topics treated in the four books produced by the Badr Society for Cultural Research.

Book 1: Search for Pharaoh

Introduction

- Prophetic message corrupted by *shayṭān*
- Conflated rabbinical teachings with first-tier investigations
- Joseph Smith as example of creating usurping literature (over native American Indians)
- Claim that Jews did the same with their post-Babylonian scriptures
- Correlation between Jewish lies and *ḥadīth* lies

Chapter 1

- Fir'awn: the creation of Jewish ideas (i.e. that Israelites were ever in Egypt)
- Muslim non-Qur'anic sources likewise tainted
- Education and media likewise tainted
- Questions correlation of *miṣr* with Egypt
- Various claims of forgeries and baseless assumptions
- Overview of Egyptian history; claim it was never called *miṣr* by indigenous people
- Real name of Egypt: *Qibt* (cf. *Copt*)
- Children of Israel became inheritors in the land (7:128-129, 7:137)
- Children of Israel never 'inherited' Egypt
- Ruler named king (*malik*) in story of Yūsuf
- Fir'awn exclusively that tyrant who persecuted Moses and children of Israel
- Various authorities in support of points:
- Jews can point to no remains of Solomon in 'Israel'
- Biblical Israel in Palestine a Zionist creation with irredentist motivations
- Place names projected upon Palestine; not native to it
- Various assertions regarding Egyptian history, chief among which is that the word pharaoh was never used by Egyptians themselves
- Rosetta Stone revealed no presence of Israelites in Egypt
- Indication that Fir'awn is personal name and not a title since it occurs without definite article (28:9)

Chapter 2

- Historical sources cited that *miṣr* created by Muslims after invasion of Egypt
- The word *miṣr* simply means *urban centre* or *city*
- Common noun *miṣr* became proper noun *Miṣr*
- Jewish accounts of their history in Egypt created by them and usurped older accounts
- Septuagint replaced *Msrim* with *Aigypto*
- Deceit practiced by Jews to claim rights over territories (not first case)

- Claims against Septuagint:
- Created fictional connection between Israelites and land of Egypt
- Allowed the conquering Greeks to write their own version of the history of Egypt in a way that was mutually beneficial to both the Ptolemaic Dynasty and the Jews who lived there
- Inserted the term *Pharaoh* by force into the culture of ancient Egypt, falsely claiming that the rulers of that land were designated by that title
- Falsely impugned reputation of Egyptian kings and hijacked Egyptian heritage
- Various points treating of Muslim intellectual torpidity and assorted cases of foolishness

Chapter 3

- miṣr* close to place Yūsuf left in well
- Yūsuf bought from *miṣr* (12:21) — thus, *miṣr* was not the purchaser's home
- Various conjectures on historical nature of *miṣr* or *amṣar* (pl.) — i.e. *trading centres*
- Ruler in story of Yūsuf is '*the king*' throughout
- Yūsuf's interpretation of the king's dream: '*and the people shall have rain[...]*' (12:49) yet Egypt does not depend upon rain, but upon the flooding of the Nile for crops — the Qur'an is talking about a land dependent upon rainfall for agriculture
- Various evidence commonly cited in favour of Egypt thesis refuted
- Problem with Egypt thesis identified:
- Qur'an treats Jacob and sons as relatively close by
- No reason why Egyptian lack of rain should affect Palestine
- Logistical impossibility of Joseph reporting directly to ruler under Egyptian codes of conduct
- Improbability of Joseph's brothers gaining audience with man of rank claimed for Joseph
- Joseph's family brought out of the *badou* (i.e. *desert*) (12:100)
- Jacob warning sons to enter at different gates (12:67)
- Joseph tells family to enter *miṣr* when they are already in the land (12:97-99)
- Various criticisms of Muslim corruptions
- Comments on '*rivers that flow below me*' (said by Fir'awn) at 43:51
- Land where *miṣr* located local to that of previous prophets (see 40:28-34)
- Incompatibility between geographical descriptions and reality in Egypt (the book cites 20:49-53 but there are no details on geography in that segment; perhaps it is an incorrect reference)
- Arabic *baḥr* means natural body of plentiful water
- Fir'awn is a personal name
- Problems with likelihood Ramesses II who had fathered around 100 children adopting child found in a river (28:7-9)
- Perceived linguistic communication problems between Mūsā and an Egyptian king
- Usage at 2:61 of *miṣr* (lit: '*go down to a miṣr*')
- Conclusion: no mention of Egypt in Qur'an at all
- Problems with numbers claimed for Israelites in the Hebrew scriptures given generations to Moses
- Large numbers claimed by Jews; Fir'awn says: '*These are but a small band*' (26:53-59)
- Would a king of Egypt personally pursue Moses and his tribe?

- No evidence for the large numbers claimed for Israelites
- Connection between Israelites and pyramids refuted; and between 'baked clay' (28:38) and pyramids
- It is in 'Asir and Yemen that houses were built of baked clay
- Qur'an claims that buildings of Fir'awn and his people were destroyed (7:137) — yet Egypt remains today

Chapter 4

- Septuagint lies; locus for Moses and other prophets in southern Arabia
- Word translated *Nile* in Greek (at place of 'Pharaoh's' dream) is *river* in original
- Motives ascribed to this process of historical revisionism
- Qur'an treats messenger as living in locale of previous prophets
- Land of Fir'awn also treated as local to the messenger (89:6-14)
- Claims that 'Ād, Thamūd, etc. are local to Yemen
- Various points from *hadīth*
- River narrow where Moses crossed because they could be seen from other side
- Israelites eventually inherited everything (7:128-129)
- Some assertions on meaning of *tūr sinā'*
- Assertions of further frauds practiced against other place names
- Association between geographical descriptions such as 6:141 and the green and productive fields of Yemen (a fertile, mountainous region)
- Improbability of 500 km journey across desert by Moses from Midian (as placed today) and Egypt
- Teiman of Habakkuk 3:3 related to Yemen
- Association of mount Pharan (Deut. 33:2) with Jabal al-Nabi Shu'ayb in Yemen, west of Sanā'.
- The theatre of the Qur'anic narrative is Arabia Felix or the western part of Yemen

Book 2: Road of the Patriarch

Introduction

- Notes on nature of what Jew / Israelite means
- Qur'an distinguishes between *yahūd* (Jews) and *bani isrā'īl* (Israelites)
- Claim that Qur'an maintains that *bani isrā'īl* are descended from one man (Isrā'īl) formed by analogy from how the names of other tribes are formed (i.e. on the name of their founding father) — see 19:58 where Isrā'īl is named
- Qur'an denies that Judaism is a tribe, national identity or race; it is a *millah* or religious creed (2:120)
- Assertion that Qur'an places all prophets in one geographical area and that Palestine is nowhere associated by it with the Israelites
- Judaism was creed of Yemeni kings from 120 BCE to 6th century CE
- Claim that between 11th century BCE and 9th century BCE Israelites established large kingdom in Sarāt region of southern Arabia, in the fertile region
- The Arabic *tūr* means wooded or fertile mount (one with trees and other plants)
- Claim that Yemen is the site of the kingdoms of David and Solomon

- Yemen was a major trade route and known to Romans as Arabia Felix
- Claims that ancient Assyrian and Babylon campaigns were directed at Arabia rather than Palestine
- Jerusalem had no significance until 250 BCE
- The Torah corrupted around the time of the Babylonian Exile
- Israelites natives of Arabia rather than migrants to it
- Current versions result of Jewish and other corruptions
- Israelites migrated from Arabia, not to it
- Newly founded towns named after old
- Abraham born in Yemen and migrated westward
- Jewish identity based on fraud
- Invention of national identity
- Jewish / Zionist lies founded Israel based on stolen history, geography and language in order to create brand of "Promised Land"
- A unified league of Arab nations a threat to Europe
- 'Israel' created to rid Europe of 'parasitic' Jews
- Various machinations by which aims were achieved
- Herzog acknowledges that archaeology does not support Jewish narrative in Palestine
- Khazarians as fake Jews
- Jews who occupy Palestine are not Biblical Jews
- Ancient Hebrew never existed
- Modern Hebrew creation of Russian literary figure Eliezar bin-Yehuda, an Esperanto for Jews
- Hebrew was never countenanced as a language until 1920s when the Zionist project began taking shape
- Semites and civilisation in general originated in southern Arabia
- Arabic oldest of Semitic languages; protolanguage of other languages
- 'Arabic' is not a language based in Arabia, but the name of a dialect — one of many spoken at the time of the Qur'anic revelation
- What is called today 'Hebrew' is simply a combination of Arabic and Aramaic with an injection of Yiddish (a German dialect)
- 'Hebrew' does not denote race
- 'Hebrew' means *nomad who enters population centre*

Chapter 1

- Muslim claims for Abraham's journeys from Ḥejāz to Palestine do not add up
- Problems with Hebrew scriptures' treatment of Abraham as from Chaldea originate with Septuagint translation and Jews' desire to lay claim to that land
- Arab historians support the fraud instead of exposing it
- Problems with and lack of support for Abraham's journey from Ur to Palestine
- Assertion — via ambivalence on part of al Tabari — for location of place called by Qur'an 'Blessed land' in Arabia
- Venting of various frustrations at institutional stupidity of Muslims
- Summary of bases upon which Levant considered 'Blessed' by commentators
- Muslims duped into marketing Jewish propaganda via the corrupted OT texts
- Only Arabia Felix is 'blessed for all peoples'
- Muslims follow corrupted OT texts

- Preliminary conclusions / assertions regarding Abraham's true history
- Places Ibrāhīm at the *bayt* calling other to him 22:26-28, 14:35-39, 11:69-73
- Other problems created by Muslim scholars who try to square the OT Bethel with Makkah area
- Identification of obviously false claims against Abraham in OT (such as his selling his wife)
- The Qur'an is the solution to these calumnies and other questions

Chapter 2

- When populations migrate, they name new territory after old
- Idea expanded to encompass Qur'anic and Biblical sites and ascribed to Masoretic Order and Jewish 'translators' of Aramaic texts to Septuagint in Greek
- True locus Yemen
- Palestine not sustainable as locus of OT drama
- Various supports for Yemen thesis correlated from OT

Chapter 3

- No archaeological proof of Canaanites as posited currently
- 'Hebrews' — nomadic livestock herders; 'Canaanites' — agricultural and sedentary residents adept at smelting iron (i.e. city-dwellers)
- Qur'an mirrors this (people of the city vs. Bedouins)
- No document in ancient world names Palestine as land of Canaan
- Claims of conflation and forgery by Orientalists of OT terms
- Connections revealed with Yemen origins by means of exposing orthographical manipulations
- Discussion of orthographical background and results of morphological changes
- Claim that city of Lot destroyed by volcano
- Refutations of various foolishness from *hadīth*
- Presence of volcanos in Yemen
- Claim that city of Lot was in Yemen
- Qur'anic exegesis reveals connection between locale of city of Lot with that of 'Ād and Thamūd
- People of 'Ād buried under Rub' al Khali desert, northern Yemen
- Refutation of Nabataean thesis for al Hijr based on claim that they are not Thamūdic
- Claim for Thamūd in Yemen
- Thamūd known to previous peoples, including those of Fir'awn (20:49-52, 40:28-30, 89:6-13, 29:38, 14:45)
- Assertions regarding what the Qur'an calls 'mother of towns' (cf. 42:7, 46:26-27, 12:109, 3:137)
- OT references to myrrh and frankincense related to Yemen, one of the main producers in the ancient world
- Modern-day Ṣan'ā' related to OT Uzal
- Speculation about Ibrāhīm; also about locations of primary nations mentioned in Qur'an; entire locus of OT / Qur'anic narratives Yemen

Book 3: Israel and Sheba

Preface

- Al-Hamadāni's Description of Arabia describing locus of OT?

- Memoirs of Syrian explorer, Nazeeh Mou'ayyid Al-Azim, who visited Yemen in the year 1916 relates region to kingdom of Solomon
- Jews of Yemen initially refused to relocate to Palestine
- Reference to Kamal Salibi's *The Bible Came from Arabia*
- References to OT / Qur'anic locales in Yemen found in pre-Islamic poetry
- Yemen locale for OT / Qur'anic narratives common knowledge among Yemeni academics
- Verses of poetry served as maps for Bedouins to find water
- Further refutation of Egypt-Palestine thesis
- Poetry serves as guides to locations; connects reciter with place
- Muslims reproved for their intellectual / investigative failures
- Key OT personalities and locale entirely Arabian

Failure of Biblical Archaeology

- Zionism based on tissue of lies
- Jerusalem insignificant settlement until 30 BCE
- Kingdom of Solomon unsustainable in region of Palestine
- Professor Herzog (Jewish historian) questions Zionist OT historical narrative vis-à-vis Palestine
- Professor Nedaf Neiman (also Jewish) states that Torah written 600 years after the fact
- Yemen identified as locus of kingdom of Solomon
- Qur'an refers to David and Solomon as making use of armour
- Proto-Canaanite used in Yemen
- Claim for the Ark (of the Covenant) in Yemen

Chapter 1

- Today's Jerusalem bears no physical relation to OT narrative
- OT Kadesh related to Jabal Qadas in Yemen
- Jerusalem does not stand on a mountain of any kind
- OT places projected onto region of Palestine after the fact
- Ṣayūn origin of Zion (of which Ṣahyūn is Yemeni corruption)
- Addition of middle hā' feature of South Arabian dialects (cf. Abram — Abraham, Yashū' — Yahshū')
- Bayt Būs claimed as Jerusalem of OT
- Claim and evidence for presence of ancient Egyptians in Yemen
- Correlations between place names as recorded by ancient Egyptians in Yemen and OT locations
- Philistines related with Al-Fils people

Chapter 2

- Exposition of tribes of Issachar and Zebulun
- Placement of OT locations in Yemen

Chapter 3

- Ruminations concerning Ethiopia and Queen of Saba'
- Discussion of Kebra Nagast document and Sheba-Menelik Cycle in particular
- History of ruling queens in Yemen up to 12th century CE
- City of Yatrib (cf. Yathrib) in Yemen, Dhamār province
- This people practiced mummification
- Outline of stories and myths relating to Queen of Saba'

- Comparison of OT and KN accounts of Queen of Saba'
- Further expansion of stories relating to Queen of Saba'
- Correction of Christian misunderstandings of narrative
- Jabal al-Nabi in Yemen
- Molten sea lava in Yemen related to 52:1-8; Palestine rejected on same basis
- Tur Sinā' deduced to be close to Madyan (inference being that both were in Yemen)

Chapter 4

- Fountain of brass placed by early commentators in Yemen (cf. *jinn* at 34:12-13)
- Assertions for meaning of words commonly translated birds and hoopoe at 27:20-24
- Domain scouted by 'hoopoe' not far from Solomon; Sheba's kingdom adjacent to his
- Claim for meaning of *shayātīn* as deviants or criminals
- Claim for *jinn* as non-urbanites
- Winds serving Solomon allusion to use of wind currents over Red Sea
- Use of *zabūr* — term used by Yemenis to refer to Book of Psalms; allowance made that same term in Qur'an does not necessarily relate to this
- Rehearsal of reasons against Palestine as OT locus
- Discussion of Isaiah 38:8 and sundial as featured in Salibi's *The Bible Came from Arabia*
- Retrograde motion on sundial impossible in Palestine but possible in Yemen
- Conclusion:
- OT penned by South Arabians around 700 BCE
- Judaism an Arabian religion born in Yemen
- Key OT figures Arabs
- Jews occupying wrong country on basis of lie
- Jews used as stooges for Zionist political ambitions

Book 4: The Assyrian Storm

Preface

- Babylonian enslavement took place in Yemen (and other nearby regions), not Palestine
- Victims large number of Arabian tribes as well as ancient Israelites
- Aims of book summarised:
- To break Judaeo-Christian hold over interpretation vis-à-vis Palestine as location
- To expose narrative which places Jews as exclusive targets of persecution
- Investigation of OT text to reveal place name hidden by Orientalists

Assyrians and Babylonians in Arabia

- Nebuchadnezzar's military excursions into Ḥejāz and Yemen attested by various historians
- Support that Nebuchadnezzar's enslavement took place in Yemen, not Palestine
- Correlation with Yemen thesis of Nebuchadnezzar's activities with various sources
- Qur'an's Al-Rass placed in Yemen (25:38-40)
- Chronicles scavenged for supporting points

- Qur'anic prophet Shu'ayb connected with Yemen

Chapter 1

- Red Sea scene of many battles between Egyptians and Mesopotamians
- Palestine a quiet backwater under full control of Mesopotamians
- Babylonian and Assyrian record attests to eight military campaigns — no reason to do so for a territory already secured:
- Assertion that such campaigns were directed against Arabia and reached coast of Red Sea
- Various inscriptions correlated with Yemen and portions of OT
- Further correlations between historical record and Babylonian and Assyrian excursions into Yemen
- Refutation of assertion that Assyrians would not have been able to reach as far as Yemen
- Further correlation of *miṣr* with town or urban centre
- Various etymological correlations to achieve place names
- Further refutation of 'pharaohs' as Egyptian phenomenon
- Regarding Egyptians: conclusion that conglomeration of Israelite, Bedouin and Muḍari (Mṣrim) clans defeated at Bayt Rafaḥ on outskirts of Ṣan'ā' by army of Sargon II and leaders taken captive to Nineveh

Chapter 2

- Ancient Jerusalem and Roman Jerusalem not the same
- Assertion that OT places found natively in Arabia
- Assertion that tribe of Gad found in Arabian culture
- Accusations of fraud among translators of OT
- Correlations of other OT place names with Arabia
- Palestine already under Babylonian control at time of Nebuchadnezzar's military attack
- Evidence for desire later on part of Mesopotamia and Persia to establish control over city of Najrān to gain access to Red Sea coast
- Correlation of Yemen with OT narratives and other histories
- Further deceptions practiced by translators of Aramaic scriptures (treating place names as common nouns)

Chapter 3

- Various tribes correlated with areas of Yemen

Preview

- Refutation of Mediterranean origins of Philistines
- Further evidence of fraud in this regard
- Name *Gaza* found nowhere in OT (written with 'ayn: 'Azzah)
- Further correlation of OT place names and tribal areas with Yemen on various bases
- Conclusion:
- The power of the big lie
- Further historical sources supporting Yemen as homeland of Jews
- As power of Egyptians waned, Assyrians took over and attempted to reach Red Sea, thus causing migration from Arabian Peninsula

- Process culminated in 586 BCE when Nebuchadnezzar launched massive campaign against Judea (in Yemen) and took vast numbers captive
- After captivity, Jews and non-Jews alike settled in Levant due to emerging Roman Empire and better conditions compared to homeland which had fallen into oblivion
- Contrary to Zionist propaganda, Romans did not reinvent place names, but Latinised them
- Romans named land Filistia after dominant Arab tribe identified by pagan Arabian deity al-Filis
- Muḥammad received and preached the Qur'an in the original homeland of the Jews and Naṣārā (Christians) — Yemen

SUMMARY OF THE PETRA THESIS AND ASSOCIATED PETRA PILGRIMAGE THESIS

Petra is not named in the Qur'an, but then neither is Makkah. Modern-day Makkah strikes even Traditionalist Muslims who make pilgrimage there by its lack of correspondence with the place described in the Qur'an.

Dan Gibson is a historian and a Middle-East specialist. While he and I may differ in our conclusions, we have a common belief that truth should be relentlessly pursued, and we share the dubious distinction of finding ourselves cast as iconoclasts as a result.

Unlike me, Gibson does not accept the Qur'an as a revelation from the Living God. He, like the Orientalist, speaks of the Qur'an as something which Muḥammad directed and shaped (i.e. wrote). The Qur'an refutes that position, and so do I. He also, in his capacity as a historian, ascribes the *ḥadīth* literature a relevance which I as a theologian deny it. But these are matters of conscience and professional and academic emphasis.

Gibson's book, *Qur'anic Geography*, is a *tour de force* of the subject it treats. He examines in detail the tribes of the descendants of Shem and thence of Ibrāhīm, thereby addressing a longstanding imbalance of emphasis in favour of the line of Iṣḥāq to the almost complete exclusion of the line of Ismā'īl. He convincingly places Muḥammad in Nabataea at Petra — at least during some part of his mission — and cites geographical, architectural and Qur'anic evidence as well as evidence from non-Qur'anic traditions in support of his thesis.

He points to Petra, not Makkah as both the place of the origin of the revelation and the centre of pilgrimage to which the various tribes repaired twice a year to meet and, importantly, bury and visit their dead. He also asserts that the Qur'an (which, as mentioned, generally exhibits a paucity in place names) rehearses the story of the (named) 'Ād and Thamūd so frequently because these empires were local to the Nabataean Arabs and known by them.

I certainly accept that Petra was the place of pan-regional pilgrimage. Where Muḥammad lived and grew up and where he received the bulk of his revelation — whether at Petra, or further down the Arabian Peninsula as per the various theses outlined here — I cannot say for certain. As a common believer, it is a matter of burning interest. As a theologian, it does not matter to me hugely; there are other, more pressing, concerns.

The evidence Dan Gibson presents is fascinating and well-argued, and I direct the interested student to his book.

I will limit my references to *Qur'anic Geography* to two fronts. Firstly, I quote verbatim below Gibson's work as it treats of the direction of early mosques since that evidence is empirical and — to my mind — irrefutable. Following that, I summarise some of the book's other findings which support the identification of Petra as a place in which the prophet operated.

Early mosques

1 AH 622 AD

The Quba Mosque just outside of Medina. The mosque was originally built around 622 AD, but subsequent renovations and rebuilding have so changed it that it is not possible to examine the original foundations and determine the direction of the original qibla.

1 AH 622 AD

The Mosque of the Prophet which would later be called al-Madina al-Munawara. [...]Because the mosque has undergone such extensive renovations at multiple times, it is impossible to make out the original floor plan and the original direction of prayer.

5 AH 626 AD

Masjid al-Qiblatain. [...]When the old mosque was torn down, the foundation stones of the earlier mosque revealed that the original building faced north towards both Petra and Jerusalem which were in almost exactly the same direction.

6 AH 627 AD

The Great Mosque of Guangzhou, known also as Huaiheng Mosque (Memorial of the Holy Prophet) or the Guangta Mosque (Light Tower Mosque) is thought to be the earliest surviving mosque in China. This mosque faces 12 degrees north of where the qibla should be, meaning that it directly faces Petra. Because of its great distance from Arabia, local Muslims feel that it is close enough to Mecca.

20 AH 641 AD

The Mosque of 'Amr ibn al-'As was founded by the Muslim conqueror of Egypt in 641 near his house in the town of Fuṣṭāṭ, outside of Cairo. This mosque was rebuilt and enlarged in 673 during the reign of Mu'āwiya, who is said to have added a minaret to each of its four corners. Today the mosque does not exist in its original form, having undergone numerous restorations so that the original foundation is no longer evident. However, the original ground-plan of the mosque shows that the qibla pointed too far north and had to be corrected later under the governorship of Qurra ibn Sharik. (Creswell 1969, pages 37,150.) Interestingly this agrees with the later Islamic tradition compiled by Aḥmad ibn al-Maqrizi that 'Amr ibn al-'As prayed facing east, and not more towards the south. (al-Maqrizi 1326 page 6; Crone-Cook 1977 pages 24,173).



Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO, Image US Geological Survey, © 2010 LeadDog Consulting, © 2010 GeoSpot Image

80 AH 700 AD

The Umayyad Palace (qaṣr) at Ḥumeima was built during the early Islamic era by Alī, a grandson of ‘Abbās, a paternal uncle of the prophet Muḥammad. It would have either included a prayer room or the central court would have been used for prayer; therefore the alignment of the entire building should have been according to the qibla. The building is oriented northeast. Mecca is not in this direction, nor is Jerusalem, but it does correspond with Petra, only 27 miles to the north. Later a smaller outside mosque was built with a qibla pointing closer to Mecca.

81 AH 700 AD

The Great Mosque of Ba‘albek in Lebanon is an Umayyad mosque dating back to 81 AH. It has suffered from deterioration due to dampness, salt, and structural degradation. The last renovation was conducted with special attention to archaeological remains, as it is believed that the mosque may have been built upon several older structures dating back to antiquity. Lime mortar and traditional materials were used to preserve the building's character. As you can see[...] the Ba‘albek Mosque (to the right of the main Ba‘albek ruins) has an orientation closer to Petra than to Mecca.

82 AH 710 AD

The first Islamic buildings on the Amman, Jordan citadel were built around 700 AD[...]. So far, it has not been possible to absolutely date the time of construction of these buildings, but they were built early during Umayyad rule. [...]the first set of buildings pointed south. The later buildings were built around 740 AD (above the earlier buildings) and clearly demonstrate a new focus and direction. The original buildings faced Petra, but the newer buildings (built some 40 years later) faced Mecca. [...] during the period between these two constructions ‘Abdallah ibn Zubayr completely destroyed the Ka‘ba and rebuilt it, possibly in a new location.

86 AH 705 AD

The Great Mosque of Ṣan‘ā is in the capital city of Yemen. According to early sources, the Prophet Muḥammad commanded the construction of this mosque, including its location and dimensions, sometime around 630 AD. While the validity of this claim lacks certainty, the mosque remains one of

the early architectural projects in Islam. Sometime between 705 and 715 AD, the Umayyad Caliph al-Walīd I rebuilt and enlarged the mosque. Like the previous examples, this mosque points towards Petra, but since it is south of Mecca it could be argued that it also points in the general direction of Mecca[...].



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87 AH 706 AD

Qaṣr Khirbat al Minya is in Khirbat al-Minya, Israel (also known as ‘Ayn Minyat Ḥishām). This is an Umayyad-built palace located in the eastern Galilee region about 200 meters (660 ft) west of the northern end of Lake Tiberias. It was erected as an Umayyad palace complex with a palace, mosque and bath built by al Walīd. (The date of construction is based on an inscription set into a gateway.) The palace contained a room that was constructed for the purpose of being a mosque. It was the room with pillars in the bottom right corner. Because it is almost directly north of Petra, the mosque and the entire building points directly at Petra, not Mecca which is southeast. We were unable to obtain satellite photos of this site, but the original plans can be obtained from www.archnet.org showing the layout of the building.

87 AH 707 AD

The Wasīṭ Mosque in Iraq has been the center of much discussion. Originally, Creswell and Fehervari studied the ground plans of this mosque and claimed that this mosque pointed to Jerusalem. (Creswell, 1969 pg 137 & 1989, pg 40; Fehervari, 1961, pg 89; Crone-Cook 1977, pgs 23 & 173) However, further research has shown that this mosque does not point to Mecca or Jerusalem, but somewhere in between. In their Internet article *Islamic Awareness, The Qibla of Early Mosques, Jerusalem or Makkah?* M S M Saifullah, Muḥammad Ghoniem, ‘Abd al Raḥmān, Robert Squires and Maṣṣūr Ahmed clearly demonstrate that the qibla of the Wasīṭ mosque points to neither Jerusalem (too far north) or Mecca (too far south). Instead they discovered that the qibla pointed 155 degrees 02 minutes of north (which is directly towards the Petra region).

89 AH 708 AD

Immediately after Zubayr’s rebellion and consequent rebuilding of the Ka‘ba, the miḥrab mark or niche was introduced. It is said that during the reign of the ‘Uthmān ibn Affan (644-656), the caliph ordered a sign to be posted on the wall of the mosques at Medina so that pilgrims could now easily identify the direction in which to address their prayers. This seems to be a strange development, since up until this time there was no question as to which direction the faithful should pray. The entire building faced the qibla. Now, however, a sign was provided in the

older mosques, seeming to indicate that a new qibla had been introduced.

During the reign of Al-Walīd ibn ‘Abd al-Mālik (Al-Walīd I, 705-715), the Mosque of the Prophet (the Masjid al Nabawi) was renovated and the governor (wali) of Medina, ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdul Azīz, ordered that a niche be made to designate the qibla. ‘Uthmān’s sign was then placed inside this niche. Eventually, the niche came to be universally understood as identifying the qibla direction, and so came to be adopted as a feature in other mosques. A sign was no longer necessary.

It is most interesting to notice that the miḥrab niche was developed right after the time we are suggesting the qibla changed. Evidently since there was confusion over which way to pray, older mosques began to adopt the miḥrab so that the faithful could pray in the new direction.

90 AH 709 AD

The Al Aqṣa mosque in Jerusalem has undergone multiple stages of construction and renovations over the years. It is generally agreed that ‘Abd al-Mālik, (685-705) the Umayyad Caliph who was the patron of the Dome of the Rock, started the construction of al-Aqṣa Mosque at the end of the 7th century. A major building phase took place during the time of the caliphate of his son, al-Walīd (709-715). The building suffered from several major earthquakes and was renovated and reconstructed during the Abbāsīd period by Caliph al-Mahdī (775-785), and possibly by Caliph al-Manṣūr (754-775). This mosque in Jerusalem does not point to Mecca but rather points 169.23 degrees which is towards Petra, only 160 miles away.

The Al Aqṣa mosque is located on the bottom center of the photo just below the arrow indicating the direction of Petra. None of the buildings on the Jerusalem citadel point towards Mecca.



90 AH 709 AD

Umayyad Damascus Mosque. This mosque holds a shrine which is said to contain the head of John the Baptist. The head was supposedly found during the excavations for the building of the mosque. There are also many important landmarks within the mosque for the Shi‘a. Among them is the place where the head of Ḥusain (the grandson of Muḥammad) was kept on display by Yazid I. There is also the tomb of Ṣalāḍīn, (Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn) which stands in a small garden adjoining the north wall of the mosque. Construction of the mosque was based on the house of Muḥammad in Medina. This mosque had many functions: it was

a place for personal and collective prayer, religious education, political meetings, administration of justice and relief for the ill and homeless. The new mosque was the most impressive in the Islamic world at the time. The interior walls were covered with fine mosaics considered to depict paradise or possibly the Ghouta, which tradition holds, so impressed Muḥammad that he declined to enter it, preferring to taste paradise in the afterlife. The Damascus Mosque was considered one of the marvels of the world because it was one of the largest in its time. The exterior walls were based on the walls of the temple of Jupiter and measured 100 meters by 157.5 meters.

This mosque was one of the first mosques (the other being al-Aqṣa Mosque in Jerusalem) to be shaped in such a way so that visitors could easily see the miḥrab and each other. The interior of the mosque is mainly plain white, although it contains some fragmentary mosaics and other geometric patterns. It is thought that the mosque used to have the largest golden mosaic in the world at over 4,000 m². The mosque has been rebuilt several times due to fires in 1069, 1401, and 1893 AD. Many of the early mosaics were lost, although some have been restored since.

The minaret in the southeast corner is called the Minaret of Jesus, as many Muslims believe that this is where Jesus will appear at the end of the world. The mosque does not face Mecca.



95 AH 724 AD

The Khirbat al Mafjar Mosque is located near Jericho in the Jordan Valley. The Khirbat al Mafjar Mosque is located near Jericho in the Jordan Valley. (31 degrees 52 minutes 41.07N, 35 degrees 27 minutes 29.97 E) Khirbat al-Mafjar remains one of the most highly sophisticated Umayyad palaces known for its elaborate mosaics, stucco carvings and overall sculptural magnificence. Khirbat al-Mafjar was built during the reign of Ḥishām Ibn ‘Abd al-Māli, and it was abandoned around 744 AD when the Umayyads dynasty collapsed and the Abbāsīds rose to power. The Abbāsīds never rebuilt the palace. Once again this is a palace that contained a mosque. It was located almost directly north of Petra, so the mosque (bottom center room) faces south as shown in the floor plan, rather than towards Mecca.

95 AH 714 AD

The Anjar Mosque is located 58 kilometers from Beirut, just a short distance from the Litani River. Anjar is the only exclusively Umayyad site in Lebanon. Its name originates from the term “‘Ayn Gerrah” which means “the source of Gerrah” in Arabic, referring to an ancient fortress in the region. Commissioned by

the Umayyad Caliph al-Walid, son of 'Abd al-Mālik ibn Marwān in the early 8th century, it prospered as a trading city, situated strategically at the crossroad of the north-south and east-west trade routes. However, by the conclusion of Umayyad political domination, no more than thirty years later, Anjar fell rapidly into disrepair and eventually was abandoned. Historically, it remains unique as the only inland commercial center in Lebanon. The entire complex including the palace and mosque are built with an orientation pointing towards Petra.

SUMMARY IN SUPPORT OF PETRA

Here, then, is a summary of those key points from Dan Gibson's *Qur'anic Geography* which have a direct bearing on the present work and support — or appear to support — Petra as the core focus for Muḥammad's activities:

- Makkah as Mother of All Cities (i.e. a major trading city) is not sustainable historically, but fits Petra
- Makkah is not found on any map until 900 CE, 300 years after Muḥammad's birth
- Makkah does not have a distinct valley or substantial mountains (part of the Qur'anic concept of the holy site) yet Petra has both
- The Jews have no record of Ibrāhīm in Makkah, or even of journeying anywhere near it
- The Jewish Bible places Ismā'īl growing up in Paran, the traditional home of the Thamūdīc or Nabataean people in northern Arabia
- Pilgrimages were traditionally made to Petra from across the Arab region from ancient times
- A zodiac dated to the second century CE indicates that there were two annual pilgrimages to Petra
- Petra was a holy burial city to which Nabataean Arabs would repair to eat a ritual meal in the place of the tombs of their ancestors (tribal burials took place at Petra and Hijra with Petra being the more important of the two by far)
- In Petra today one can see gathering halls attached to many tombs
- All the earliest mosques for which we have evidence of orientation in the first 100 years from the Qur'anic revelation point towards Petra (over the next 100 years there is confusion: 12% towards Petra, 50% towards Makkah and 38% follow parallel orientations)
- It is only 200 years after the Qur'anic revelation that all mosques are built facing Makkah
- The holy city is referred to as *bacca* (3:96) which indicates *sorrow* or *calamity*. Petra experienced earthquakes in 363 CE and 551 CE. Such an association could come from its role as a burial city
- The Qur'an focuses on northern Arabia: 'Ād, Thamūd and Madyan are all north Arabian civilisations; the cities of Lūṭ are claimed to be nearby
- Dr. Robert Hoyland contends that the Arabic script developed from Nabataean Arabic script, which supports the thesis that Islam rose in the north of Arabia
- Petra is entirely missing from the early Islamic literature and yet corresponds in myriad instances in the same literature's description of Makkah (a point which Gibson takes to indicate that they are the same place)
- Gibson identifies a large precinct (the Great Temple) at Petra as *al masjid al ḥarām*

- Stone boards for games of chance such as those mentioned in the Qur'an have been found at Petra, never at Makkah
- The Quraysh are said to have attacked Medina from the north, which makes sense if they came from Petra but not if they came from Makkah
- Gibson places key battles close to Petra
- Makkah was never a major city on a caravan route whereas Petra was both
- The written record of kingdoms neighbouring Makkah such as Yemen does not substantiate the existence of an ancient city at Makkah (in over 1,700 years of literacy prior to the Qur'anic revelation)
- Extensive evidence exists over this period for pilgrimages to Petra from Yemen but none for Makkah
- During the civil war with Ibn Zubayr (64AH, 683 CE) the Syrian army attacked the holy city with trebuchet stones; there is no evidence of trebuchet stones at Makkah whereas hundreds exist in Petra

In his work Gibson ascribes the *ḥadīth* literature a value which I do not and on that basis covers many points I have ignored in the short summary above.

Gibson is a historian and archaeologist and operates according to the dictates of those disciplines. Unlike myself, he seems to agree with the majority of the Traditionalist's claims for Islam, differing from him only to the extent that he sees an original religion later transposed from Petra to Makkah. For example, like the Traditionalist, he regards 2:138-158 as directing Muḥammad toward a place of prayer and then instituting a change in that direction, whereas I contest that assessment in any form. These are details which can be thought about and debated over time.

In any case, given my analysis of 9:28 such questions are purely academic and there is no sense in which there is or could be any Qur'anic justification for resurrecting *al masjid al ḥarām* in its correct geographical setting.

Leaving these points to one side, the unavoidable and immediate conclusion, given that Dan Gibson is right in his general thesis — and I am sure that he is — is that at the very least the Traditionalist is praying toward a place which formed no part in the Qur'anic backstory, and that Makkah is a later construct.

To summarise my attitude toward Dan Gibson and his excellent book: my emphasis is different to his; I am focused on theological results which survive the furnace of my own reason. To do my work I must, like him, preserve the integrity of the rational environment according to the dictates of that discipline to which I am committed — namely that of Quranite thinker and theologian — and that means treating the Qur'an on the terms it claims for itself: those of a complete revelation from God. That requirement necessitates the rejection of the Traditionalist's entire library of extra-Qur'anic postulations. I do not engage with Gibson's findings based on the *ḥadīth* literature not because I can demonstrate that he is sometimes or always wrong — or even because I think he is sometimes or always wrong — but because to stray into the realms of *ḥadīth* is anathema to my founding principles.

WIKIPEDIA

The following is the main Wikipedia article on Petra as of December, 2014. We can safely assume the contributors to be ignorant of or indifferent to the contents of the Qur'an. I have removed pictures and some of the extraneous detail relating to images, maps and references and simply entered Qur'anic references as notes. The results are certainly interesting.

Petra

Petra (Arabic: البتراء, Al-Batrā'; Ancient Greek: Πέτρα) is a historical and archaeological city in the southern Jordanian governorate of Ma'an that is famous for its rock-cut architecture and water conduit system. Another name for Petra is the Rose City due to the color of the stone out of which it is carved.

Established possibly as early as 312 BC as the capital city of the Nabataeans, it is a symbol of Jordan, as well as Jordan's most-visited tourist attraction. It lies on the slope of Jebel al-Madhbah (identified by some as the biblical Mount Hor) in a basin among the mountains which form the eastern flank of Arabah (Wadi Araba), the large valley running from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba. Petra has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1985. The site remained unknown to the Western world until 1812, when it was introduced by Swiss explorer Johann Ludwig Burckhardt. It was described as "a rose-red city half as old as time" in a Newdigate Prize-winning poem by John William Burgon. UNESCO has described it as "one of the most precious cultural properties of man's cultural heritage". See: UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Lists. Petra was chosen by the Smithsonian Magazine as one of the "28 Places to See Before You Die".

Geography

Pliny the Elder and other writers identify Petra as the capital of the Nabataeans and the center of their caravan trade. Enclosed by towering rocks and watered by a perennial stream, Petra not only possessed the advantages of a fortress, but controlled the main commercial routes which passed through it to Gaza in the west, to Bosra and Damascus in the north, to Aqaba and Leuce Come on the Red Sea, and across the desert to the Persian Gulf.

Excavations have demonstrated that it was the ability of the Nabataeans to control the water supply that led to the rise of the desert city, creating an artificial oasis. The area is visited by flash floods and archaeological evidence demonstrates the Nabataeans controlled these floods by the use of dams, cisterns and water conduits. These innovations stored water for prolonged periods of drought, and enabled the city to prosper from its sale.

In ancient times, Petra might have been approached from the south on a track leading across the plain of Petra, around Jabal Haroun ("Aaron's Mountain"), where the Tomb of Aaron, said to be the burial-place of Aaron, brother of Moses, is located. Another approach was possibly from the high plateau to the north. Today, most modern visitors approach the site from the east. The impressive eastern entrance leads steeply down through a dark, narrow gorge (in places only 3–4 m (9.8–13.1 ft) wide) called the Siq ("the shaft"), a natural geological feature formed from a deep split in the sandstone rocks and serving as

a waterway flowing into Wadi Musa. At the end of the narrow gorge stands Petra's most elaborate ruin, Al Khazneh (popularly known as and meaning "the Treasury"), hewn into the sandstone cliff. While remaining in remarkably preserved condition, the face of the structure is marked by hundreds of bullet holes made by the local Bedouin tribes that hoped to dislodge riches that were once rumored to be hidden within it.

A little farther from the Treasury, at the foot of the mountain called en-Nejr, is a massive theatre, positioned so as to bring the greatest number of tombs within view. At the point where the valley opens out into the plain, the site of the city is revealed with striking effect. The amphitheatre has been cut into the hillside and into several of the tombs during its construction. Rectangular gaps in the seating are still visible. Almost enclosing it on three sides are rose-colored mountain walls, divided into groups by deep fissures and lined with knobs cut from the rock in the form of towers.

History

Some of the earliest recorded farmers settled in Beidha, a pre-pottery settlement just north of Petra, by 7000 BC. Petra is listed in Egyptian campaign accounts and the Amarna letters as Pel, Sela or Seir. Though the city was founded relatively late, a sanctuary has existed there since very ancient times. Stations 19 through 26 of the stations list of Exodus are places associated with Petra. This part of the country was biblically assigned to the Horites, the predecessors of the Edomites. The habits of the original natives may have influenced the Nabataean custom of burying the dead and offering worship in half-excavated caves. Although Petra is usually identified with Sela, which means a rock, the Biblical references refer to it as "the cleft in the rock", referring to its entrance. In the parallel passage, however, Sela is understood to mean simply "the rock" (2 Chronicles xxv. 12, see LXX).

Josephus (Antiquities of the Jews iv. 7, 1~ 4, 7), Eusebius and Jerome (Onom. sacr. 286, 71. 145, 9; 228, 55. 287, 94) assert that Rekem was the native name, and this name appears in the Dead Sea Scrolls as a prominent Edomite site most closely describing Petra, and associated with Mount Seir. But in the Aramaic versions, Rekem is the name of Kadesh, implying that Josephus may have confused the two places. The Semitic name of the city, if not Sela, remains unknown. The passage in Diodorus Siculus (xix. 94–97) which describes the expeditions which Antigonos sent against the Nabataeans in 312 BC is understood to throw some light upon the history of Petra, but the "petra" referred to as a natural fortress and place of refuge cannot be a proper name and the description implies that the town was not yet in existence.

The Rekem Inscription before it was buried by the bridge abutments.

The name "Rekem" was inscribed in the rock wall of the Wadi Musa opposite the entrance to the Siq, but about twenty years ago the Jordanians built a bridge over the wadi and this inscription was buried beneath tons of concrete.

More satisfactory evidence of the date of the earliest Nabataean settlement may be obtained from an examination of the tombs.

Two types of tombs have been distinguished: the Nabataean and the Greco-Roman. The Nabataean type starts from the simple pylon-tomb with a door set in a tower crowned by a parapet ornament, in imitation of the front of a dwelling-house. Then, after passing through various stages, the full Nabataean type is reached, retaining all the native features and at the same time exhibiting characteristics which are partly Egyptian and partly Greek. Of this type close parallels exist in the tomb-towers at Madā'in Saleh in north Arabia, which bear long Nabataean inscriptions and supply a date for the corresponding monuments at Petra. Then comes a series of tombfronts which terminate in a semicircular arch, a feature derived from north Syria. Finally come the elaborate façades copied from the front of a Roman temple; however, all traces of native style have vanished. The exact dates of the stages in this development cannot be fixed. Few inscriptions of any length have been found at Petra, perhaps because they have perished with the stucco or cement which was used upon many of the buildings. The simple pylon-tombs which belong to the pre-Hellenic age serve as evidence for the earliest period. It is not known how far back in this stage the Nabataean settlement goes, but it does not go back farther than the 6th century BC. A period follows in which the dominant civilization combines Greek, Egyptian and Syrian elements, clearly pointing to the age of the Ptolemies. Towards the close of the 2nd century BC, when the Ptolemaic and Seleucid kingdoms were equally depressed, the Nabataean kingdom came to the front. Under Aretas III Philhellene, (c.85–60 BC), the royal coins begin. The theatre was probably excavated at that time, and Petra must have assumed the aspect of a Hellenistic city. In the reign of Aretas IV Philopatris, (9 BC–40 AD), the tombs of the el-Hejr type may be dated, and perhaps also the High-place.

Roman rule

In 106 AD, when Cornelius Palma was governor of Syria, that part of Arabia under the rule of Petra was absorbed into the Roman Empire as part of Arabia Petraea, and became its capital. The native dynasty came to an end, but the city continued to flourish. It was around this time that the Petra Roman Road was built. A century later, in the time of Alexander Severus, when the city was at the height of its splendor, the issue of coinage comes to an end. There is no more building of sumptuous tombs, owing apparently to some sudden catastrophe, such as an invasion by the neo-Persian power under the Sassanid Empire. Meanwhile, as Palmyra (fl. 130–270) grew in importance and attracted the Arabian trade away from Petra, the latter declined. It seems, however, to have lingered on as a religious centre. A Roman road was constructed at the site. Epiphanius of Salamis (c.315–403) writes that in his time a feast was held there on December 25 in honor of the virgin Khaabou (Chaabou) and her offspring Dushara (Haer:51).

Byzantine era — decline

The Petra declined rapidly under Roman rule, in large part from the revision of sea-based trade routes. In 363 an earthquake destroyed many buildings, and crippled the vital water management system. The last inhabitants abandoned the city (further weakened by another major earthquake in 551) when the Arabs conquered the region in 663. The ruins of Petra were an object of curiosity in the Middle Ages and were visited by Sultan Baibars of Egypt towards the end of the 13th century. The first European to describe them was Swiss traveller Johann

Ludwig Burckhardt in 1812.

Because the structures weakened with age, many of the tombs became vulnerable to thieves, and many treasures were stolen. In 1929, a four-person team, consisting of British archaeologists Agnes Conway and George Horsfield, Palestinian physician and folklore expert Dr Tawfiq Canaan and Dr Ditlef Nielsen, a Danish scholar, excavated and surveyed Petra.

T. E. Lawrence

In October 1917, as part of a general effort to divert Ottoman military resources away from the British advance before the Third Battle of Gaza, a revolt of Syrians and Arabians in Petra was led by British Army officer T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) against the Ottoman regime. The Bedouin women living in the vicinity of Petra and under the leadership of Sheik Khallil's wife were gathered to fight in the revolt of the city. The rebellions, with the support of English military, were able to devastate the Ottoman forces.

Religion

The Nabataeans worshipped the Arab gods and goddesses of the pre-Islamic times as well as a few of their deified kings. One, Obodas I, was deified after his death. Dushara was the primary male god accompanied by his female trinity: Al-'Uzzá, Allat and Manāt. Many statues carved in the rock depict these gods and goddesses.

A stele is dedicated to Qos-Allah 'Qos is Allah' or 'Qos the god', by Qosmilk (melech — king) is found at Petra (Glueck 516). Qos is identifiable with Kaush (Qaush) the God of the older Edomites. The stele is horned and the seal from the Edomite Tawilan near Petra identified with Kaush displays a star and crescent (Browning 28), both consistent with a moon deity. It is conceivable the latter could have resulted from trade with Harran (Bartlett 194). There is continuing debate about the nature of Qos (qaus — bow) who has been identified both with a hunting bow (hunting god) and a rainbow (weather god) although the crescent above is also a bow.

Nabataean inscriptions in Sinai and other places display widespread references to names including Allah, El and Allat (god and goddess), with regional references to al-Uzza, Baal and Manutu (Manat) (Negev 11). Allat is also found in Sinai in South Arabian language. Allah occurs particularly as Garm-'allahi — god decided (Greek Garamelos) and Aush-allahi — 'god's covenant' (Greek Ausallos). We find both Shalm-lahi 'Allah is peace' and Shalm-allat, 'the peace of the goddess'. We also find Amat-allahi 'she-servant of god' and Halaf-llahi 'the successor of Allah'.

The Monastery, Petra's largest monument, dates from the 1st century BC. It was dedicated to Obodas I and is believed to be the symposium of Obodas the god. This information is inscribed on the ruins of the Monastery (the name is the translation of the Arabic "Ad Deir").

Christianity found its way to Petra in the 4th century AD, nearly 500 years after the establishment of Petra as a trade center. Athanasius mentions a bishop of Petra (Antioch. 10) named Asterius. At least one of the tombs (the "tomb with the urn"?)

NOTEPAD XVII

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

What follows is not highly systematised, and comprises part of my working notes at an early stage in my engagement with the text. While these points generally hold true and are borne out in my translation, I include them primarily as an additional study resource for the interested student.

ḥaqq

The noun *ḥaqq* occurs 252 times in the text. All translators render *ḥaqq* variously as they go. In part, this is justified since in various collocations and contexts *ḥaqq* clearly signifies different (though associated) things. What is not acceptable is that there is little demonstration of any attempt to understand and render *ḥaqq* on a systematic basis.

The method I have used begins by identifying the forms in which *ḥaqq* occurs. These are:

- *bi ḡhayri (al) ḥaqq*
- *ḥaqq-*
- *bil ḥaqqi*
- *al ḥaqq*
- *aḥaqq-*

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

bi ḡhayri (al) ḥaqq

This means *without (a) cause* and it means it in all cases. It occurs at 2:61, 3:21, 3:112, 3:181, 4:155, 7:33, 7:146, 10:23, 22:40, 28:39, 40:75, 41:15, 42:42, 46:20

ḥaqq-

The meaning for *ḥaqq-* is dependent on the prepositions it takes.

i. *ḥaqqan 'alā*

This means *something binding upon (someone), a duty upon (someone) or a requirement of (someone)*. I render this as *binding upon*.

2:180, 2:236, 2:241, 9:111, 10:103, 16:38, 30:47.

ii. *ḥaqqan*

This operates as an adverb and means *truly or in truth*. I render as *in truth*.

4:151, 8:4, 8:74.

The remaining instances of *ḥaqqan* are singular nouns which are direct objects of verbs, usually *wa'ada (to promise)*.

We do not have to guess which of the possible meanings of *ḥaqqan* are indicated since the text tells us that *true* is what is meant.

The promise of God is ḥaqqan and who is more truthful (aṣḍaqui) than God in speech? (4:122)

iii. *ḥaqqan*

4:122, 7:44, 7:44, 10:4, 12:100, 18:98, 31:9.

iv. *ḥaqqa*

2:121, 3:102, 6:91, 22:74, 22:78, 39:67, 57:27.

with the x due him / it

v. *ḥaqqahu*

was used as a church. An inscription in red paint records its consecration "in the time of the most holy bishop Jason" (447). After the Islamic conquest of 629–632 Christianity in Petra, as of most of Arabia, gave way to Islam. During the First Crusade Petra was occupied by Baldwin I of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and formed the second fief of the barony of Al Karak (in the lordship of Outrejordain) with the title Château de la Valée de Moïse or Sela. It remained in the hands of the Franks until 1189. It is still a titular see of the Catholic Church.

Two Crusader-period castles are known in and around Petra.

The first is al-Wu'ayra and is situated just north of Wadi Musa. It can be viewed from the road to "Little Petra". It is the castle of Valle Moïse which was seized by a band of Turks with the help of local Muslims and only recovered by the Crusaders after they began to destroy the olive trees of Wadi Musa. The potential loss of livelihood led the locals to negotiate surrender. The second is on the summit of el-Habis in the heart of Petra and can be accessed from the West side of the Qasr al-Bint.

According to Arab tradition, Petra is the spot where Moses (Musa) struck a rock with his staff and water came forth, and where Moses' brother, Aaron (Harun), is buried, at Mount Hor, known today as Jabal Haroun or Mount Aaron. The Wadi Musa or "Wadi of Moses" is the Arab name for the narrow valley at the head of which Petra is sited. A mountaintop shrine of Moses' sister Miriam was still shown to pilgrims at the time of Jerome in the 4th century, but its location has not been identified since.

Threats to Petra

The site suffers from a host of threats, including collapse of ancient structures, erosion due to flooding and improper rainwater drainage, weathering from salt upwelling, improper restoration of ancient structures, and unsustainable tourism. The last has increased substantially, especially since the site received widespread media coverage in 2007 during the controversial New Seven Wonders of the World Internet and cell phone campaign.

In an attempt to reduce the impact of these threats, Petra National Trust (PNT) was established in 1989. Over this time, it has worked together with numerous local and international organizations on projects that promote the protection, conservation and preservation of the Petra site. Moreover, UNESCO and ICOMOS recently collaborated to publish their first book on human and natural threats to these sensitive World Heritage sites. They chose Petra as its first, and most important example of threatened landscapes. A book released in 2012, *Tourism and Archaeological Heritage Management at Petra: Driver to Development or Destruction?*, represents the first in a series of important books to address the very nature of these deteriorating buildings, cities, sites, and regions. The next books in the series of deteriorating UNESCO World Heritage Sites will include Macchu Picchu, Angkor Wat, and Pompeii.

6:141, 17:26, 30:38.
its / his due

vi. *haqqun*

3:86, 10:53, 10:53, 10:55, 18:21, 28:13, 30:60, 31:33, 35:5, 38:64, 40:55, 40:77, 45:32, 46:17, 51:23, 56:95, 69:51.
true, truth

vii. *haqqin*

bi *haqqin*
5:116.

The preposition *bi* is a function of the verb *laisa* in this case and one of the ways it takes an object.

(a) *right*

min *haqqin* (*fi*)
11:79.

Dictionary definition of *haqq fi*: a right to.

viii. *haqqun + li*

51:19, 70:24-25
a due for

ix. *haqqa + 'alā*
7:30.

due upon

bil haqqi

This convention occurs a total of 76 times. The core distinction to be made is between those cases where:

- *bi* is the preposition which the verb uses to engage an object: generally, (*with*) *the truth*
- *bi* is not a preposition needed by the verb to engage an object, but operating together with *al haqq* to produce an independent adverbial phrase: generally, *by right*.

The full set of instances for *bil haqqi* is:

2:71, 2:119, 2:176, 2:213, 2:252, 3:3, 3:108, 4:105, 4:170, 5:27, 5:48, 6:5, 6:30, 6:73, 6:114, 6:151, 7:43, 7:53, 7:89, 7:159, 7:181, 8:5, 10:5, 14:19, 15:8, 15:55, 15:64, 15:85, 16:3, 16:102, 17:33, 17:105, 17:105, 18:13, 21:18, 21:55, 21:112, 23:41, 23:62, 23:70, 23:90, 25:33, 25:68, 28:3, 29:44, 29:68, 30:8, 34:26, 34:48, 35:24, 37:37, 38:22, 38:26, 39:2, 39:5, 39:41, 39:69, 39:75, 40:20, 40:25, 40:78, 42:17, 43:78, 43:86, 44:39, 45:6, 45:22, 45:29, 46:3, 46:34, 48:27, 50:5, 50:19, 50:42, 64:3, 103:3.

i. verb object

jā'a bil haqqi

2:71, 7:43, 7:53, 21:55, 37:37, 50:19.

the truth

jā'a + personal object pronoun+ bil haqqi

4:170, 23:70, 25:33, 40:25, 43:78.

the truth

āta + personal object pronoun+ bil haqqi

15:64, 23:90.

the truth

arsala + personal object pronoun+ bil haqqi

2:119, 35:24.

with the truth

kadhhaba bil haqqi

6:5, 29:68, 50:5.

the truth

qadhafa bil haqqi 'alā

21:18, 34:48.

the truth

laisa hādha bil haqqi

6:30, 46:34.

the truth

tawāṣa bil haqqi

103:3.

to the truth

anzala + concrete object pronoun+ bil haqqi

17:105, 42:17.

with truth

shahada bil haqqi

43:86.

to the truth

ii. adverbial

The adverbial sense of *bil haqqi* which best fits is *aright* (in the sense of *properly, appropriately, in a suitable manner*)

fataha baina + personal object bil haqqi

7:89, 34:26.

hadā bil haqqi

7:159, 7:181.

akhraja + personal object pronoun + bil haqqi

8:5.

nazzala + concrete object pronoun + bil haqqi

2:176, 15:8, 16:102.

munazzal min + personal object pronoun + bil haqqi

6:114.

nazala bil haqqi

17:105.

nazzala 'alay + personal object pronoun + concrete object pronoun

+ bil haqqi

3:3.

anzala ilay + personal object pronoun+concrete object pronoun

+ bil haqqi

4:105, 5:48, 39:2.

anzala 'alay + personal object pronoun+concrete object pronoun

+ bil haqqi

39:41.

anzala + ma'a + personal object pronoun+concrete object

pronoun + bil haqqi

2:213.

NOTEPAD XVIII

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

'Īsā and Maryam

While I consider all topics in this Notepad to require further and fuller investigation, the following remarks may provide a helpful starting point.

'Īsā vis-à-vis Jesus

The following is a superficial sampling of some key points taken from the work of the unknown author of the four books published by the Badr Society for Cultural Research (summarised in Notepad XVI) along with some references to *Paul on Trial: Secrets from the Hidden Scroll* by Barrie A. Wilson and *Queen of Sheba and Biblical Scholarship* by Bernard Leeman. One is able, with an acceptable degree of confidence, to theorise that the 'Īsā of the Qur'an, the Christ of St. Paul, and the Jesus (Yeshua — or variant thereof) killed in Jerusalem around 30 CE are different personalities.

To begin with, Palestine is not uncontested as the original home of the children of Israel. Under the Arabia Felix thesis, for example, Nebuchadnezzar II, King of Babylon (605-562 BC) captured a place called Ur-salem in Yemen, destroyed the temple Solomon had built there and took the tribe of Israel captive to Babylon. When Cyrus the Great later released the Israelites from captivity, they moved *en masse* to Palestine and only then established their presence in and around a small town which they named after their ancestral home town in Yemen (Ur-Salem), which became Jerusalem. Here they built the Second Temple.

The man known today as Jesus was one Yeshua bar Nagara, the son of a craftsman or carpenter. He was an Israelite political rebel who claimed descent from the Davidic line. He made the move to Palestine some 2,000 years ago with his family from Arabia in the hope of overthrowing the Herodian Dynasty and re-establishing the Kingdom of David in Judea in accordance with Jewish ideas about a personality called *Messiah*.

Yeshua travelled from village to village, gathering supporters around him. Gradually, the Pharisees became aware of his activities and, in time, had him killed.

The followers of Yeshua (Jesus), led by his brother James, multiplied after his death and were persecuted by the Pharisee clergy. The Yeshua Movement was entirely Jewish in nature, observing the Sabbath and remaining attached to the Temple. Saul (or Paul) — himself a Pharisee — was active in the persecution of the young Church.

In Damascus, Paul received instruction from Hannania (Annanias), a Jewish rabbi, on how best to rid the world of what he regarded as a deviant movement. Annanias directed Saul to revive the story of 'Īsā extant in Arabia and to conflate it with Greek notions of a man-God saviour. The goal was to corrupt the teachings of the new movement, to turn adherents away from the Torah, and create a gnostic, salvation-based theology. At this

talā 'alay + personal object pronoun + bil haqqi

2:252, 3:108, 5:27, 28:3, 45:6.

khalaqa + concrete object (pronoun) + bil haqqi

6:73, 10:5, 14:19, 15:85, 16:3, 29:44, 30:8, 39:5, 44:39, 45:22, 46:3, 64:3.

qaṣṣa 'lā + concrete object pronoun + bil haqqi

18:13.

ḥakama (baina + personal pronoun object) + bil haqqi

21:112, 38:22, 38:26.

akhdha + personal object pronoun + bil haqqi

23:41.

naṭaqa ('alay + personal pronoun object) + bil haqqi

23:62, 45:29.

qatala (illa) bil haqqi

6:151, 17:33, 25:68.

bashshara + personal object pronoun+ bil haqqi

15:55.

qaḍā (baina + personal pronoun object) + bil haqqi

39:69, 39:75, 40:20, 40:78.

ṣadaqa + concrete object + bil haqqi

48:27.

sama'a + concrete object + bil haqqi

50:42.

al haqq

i.

Where *al haqq* operates as a nominative noun or as an object it means (*the*) *truth* or (*the*) *true*

2:26, 2:42, 2:42, 2:91, 2:109, 2:144, 2:146, 2:147, 2:149, 2:213, 3:60, 3:62, 3:71, 3:71, 3:154, 4:171, 5:48, 5:77, 5:83, 5:84, 6:57, 6:62, 6:66, 6:73, 6:93, 7:8, 7:105, 7:118, 7:169, 8:6, 8:7, 8:8, 8:32, 9:29, 9:33, 9:48, 10:30, 10:32, 10:32, 10:35, 10:35, 10:35, 10:36, 10:76, 10:77, 10:82, 10:94, 10:108, 11:17, 11:45, 11:120, 12:51, 13:1, 13:14, 13:17, 13:19, 14:22, 17:81, 18:29, 18:44, 18:56, 19:34, 20:114, 21:24, 21:97, 22:6, 22:54, 22:62, 23:70, 23:71, 23:116, 24:25, 24:25, 24:49, 25:26, 27:79, 28:48, 28:53, 28:75, 31:30, 32:3, 33:4, 33:53, 34:6, 34:23, 34:43, 34:49, 35:31, 38:84, 38:84, 40:5, 41:53, 42:18, 42:24, 43:29, 43:30, 46:7, 46:30, 47:2, 47:3, 48:28, 53:28, 57:16, 60:1, 61:9, 78:39.

ii.

Where *al haqq* occurs in combination with *'āla+personal object* (where *'āla* is not a function of the operative verb) it means (*the*) *obligation*

2:282, 2:282.

ahaqq-

The comparative occurs 10 times. In all cases it means *have more right*.

2:228, 2:247, 5:107, 6:81, 9:13, 9:62, 9:108, 10:35, 33:37 48:26.

point Paul left for Arabia (cf. Galatians 1:17).

In the event, Paul conflated three personalities to form his new theology: ʿĪsā (the original prophet of God who had lived in Arabia and about whom some residual knowledge was held by Arabian Jews), Jesus (Yeshua), a political rebel recently killed at Jerusalem, and the Christ of Paul's own imagination — one which owed much to pagan concepts taken from Greek and Roman thought.

At first, the followers of Jesus — whose master had died barely ten years previous — attacked Paul's manipulations. But some three centuries later Paul's religion received the backing of Rome and his invention became the foundation for the orthodoxy of the Roman Church.

The prophet about which the Qur'an speaks — ʿĪsā, son of a woman called Maryam — had been sent as a messenger to the children of Israel centuries before the personality called Yeshua entered Palestine, a place with which ʿĪsā was entirely unconnected.

According to the Qur'anic narrative, ʿĪsā was born under a ripe date-palm — a genuine possibility in late summer in Arabia — and was the man to whom God revealed the *Injil* (or Gospel). The works extant under that name which today participate in the Christian Canon contain some part of the original story and message of the prophet ʿĪsā, although in garbled and corrupted form and ascribed to Jesus (Yeshua).

The Yeshua Movement functioned within the parameters of the Judaism of the times: its members followed the Torah; they practiced male circumcision; they kept the Mosaic dietary laws, observed the Sabbath and Jewish festivals and worshipped in the Temple. What set the Yeshua Movement apart from mainstream Judaism was that its members revered Yeshua as an inspired teacher who had been resurrected from the dead by God and who would return to complete the job of fulfilling their expectations of the Messiah. They had expected Yeshua to act as a catalyst in overthrowing Roman authority, to establish an independent Jewish state under himself as the Davidic king, and to usher in an era of universal peace (Kingdom of God). This would reflect the universal rule of God, which Jesus had announced as imminent.

Paul's Christ Movement differs considerably from the Yeshua Movement and is a fundamental departure from the Judaism of that time — or of any other. Paul's writings rarely refer to the teachings or observances of the historical Yeshua. Paul also differed from the Yeshua Movement in terms of beliefs. He conceived of the Christ as a cosmic dying-rising saviour, not as a political leader come to re-establish the Davidic throne. For Paul, the Christ was *'in the form of God'* and *'thought it not robbery to be equal with God'* (Philippians 2:6-7). He urges his followers to come to *'know'* Christ and the *'power of his resurrection'*, as he had done; to share in his sufferings, thus *'being made conformable unto his death'* (Philippians 3:10).

While *Christ* (or *Christos*) is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *meshīakh* (*messiah*), Paul transports the concept from its Jewish political context and understanding into the cosmic world of

Greek thought and Roman mystery religions.

Paul is the founder of that religion known as Christianity, a religion based upon a vision of the Christ, not the religion of Jesus (Yeshua) which was Judaism. These were two distinct movements — two different religions — linked retroactively by the author of the Book of Acts, years after both Paul and James were dead.

The Yeshua Movement suffered a major setback with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Temple in 70 CE. Its members were few and their capacity for exercising leadership diminished. They were increasingly marginalised by members of Paul's numerically larger — and materially richer — Christ Movement.

Paul's Christ Movement does not originate in the message of Yeshua, nor does it represent an offshoot of the early Yeshua Movement. It was a separate religious enterprise.

Maryam: Sister of Hārūn

The Qur'an's use of the term *'sister of Hārūn'* has led to the claim by its detractors that Muḥammad (whom they treat as the author of the Qur'an) conflated Maryam sister of Mūsā with Maryam mother of that person they generally assume to be identical with the Jesus of the Christian tradition.

The following is culled from and summarises salient points taken from an article entitled *Mary, Sister of Aaron?* from the Islamic Awareness website. The article presupposes Christian assumptions of what is called here the Christian extension of the dominant Egypt-Palestine thesis — to which position I have no pre-existing commitment.

And she brought him to her people, bearing him. They said: "O Mary: thou hast done an unheard of thing. "O sister of Aaron: thy father was not an evil man, and thy mother was not unchaste."¹ (19:27-28)

The criticism levelled by some against the Qur'an is that it conflates Maryam, mother of ʿĪsā with the Hebrew Bible's Miriam, sister of Moses. Behind this criticism is the fact that the Qur'an's Maryam comes from the line of ʿImrān (which person is taken to be same as the Biblical Amram, father to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam) which — given the prevalent assumption that ʿĪsā is the same person as the Christian Jesus (Yeshua) makes Jesus (Yeshua) a nephew of Moses.

Working within this framework and set of assumptions, a mitigating argument can be made on lexical grounds. The words *sister*, *brother*, *son* and *daughter* in Arabic usage cover a wide range of connotations. On this basis alone much modern Western scholarship rejects the claim of any conflation or confusion between the two women; the underlying reasons for this are touched upon by A. J. Wensinck writing in the

Encyclopaedia Of Islam:

It is not necessary to assume that these kinship links are

¹ Qur'anic verses not in italics are from *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation*.

to be interpreted in modern terms. The words sister and daughter, like their male counterparts, in Arabic usage can indicate extended kinship, descentance or spiritual affinity. [1]

Christians and Jews do not admit such limitations upon their own texts and traditions. Listings under *achoth* (*sister*) in various Hebrew lexicons such as Gesenius' *Hebrew And Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scripture*[2], *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew And English Lexicon*[3], *The Hebrew And Aramaic Lexicon Of The Old Testament*[4], *Theological Dictionary Of The Old Testament*[5], *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew Language for Readers Of English*[6] and *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*[7] show that the word in Hebrew (a sister language to Arabic) has meanings far beyond the scope of a literal, contemporary female sibling.

אָחוֹת (the *achoth*, from the root *ach*, which in Arab. and Chald. is the same as *ʿah*) pl. with suff. *achoth* Est. 10:55 (sing. *ach*), and *achoth* Est. 10:56 (pl. sing. *ach*), which is from the root *ach*, comp. *Leviq.* p. 602.

A *sister* (Arab. *ah*, *ayn*, *ha*, for *hā*), Ch. *achoth* id.). It properly signifies an own sister, born of the same parents, but (where necessary of explanation is not important) used also of a sister, *apartenance*, Gen. 29:13; 3 Sam. 13:2, 3, or *apartenance*, *relation*, Lev. 18:9, 11; 20:17. The Hebrews also called sister—

(1) a *female relative*, *kinswoman*, Job 48:11; Gen. 44:66, where the mother and brother say to Rebecca, *thou sister* = *thou art our sister*." (2) *one of the same tribe or people*, Ex. 23:18. (3) *an ally*, a *confederate city or state*, Est. 10:40; 23:31. (4) *after *ach*, one... another*; used also of inanimate things of the feminine gender, Ex. 28:2, = *five varieties shall be joined* *achoth* *ach* *ach* *ach* *ach* = *another*? *verses* 2, 5, 17; Est. 13:9; 23:12. (5) *metaph. sister* is used of anything very closely connected with us; Prov. 7:4, "say to wisdom: thou art my sister"; Job 17:14. Compare the root of the words which bear the signification of *propinquity*, especially *ach* 20, 6, *ach* 20, 7. (6) a *relative* is lovingly so called, Cant. 4:10, 10; Compare *Thesol.* 21, 4, 26.

Indeed, the Hebrew scriptures contain the same usage of the Hebrew *achoth* (Arabic: *ukhtun*; English: *sister*) that some Jews and Christians seize upon in order to beat the Qur'an. For its part, the Blue Letter Bible lists the following Biblical usages under *achoth*:

- *sister (same parents)*
- *half-sister (same father)*
- *relative*
- *(metaphorical) of Israel's and Judah's relationship*
- *beloved*
- *bride*
- *(fig.) of intimate connection*
- *another*

Similar statements can also be seen in the Brown-Driver-Briggs *Hebrew And English Lexicon*.^[8] The New Strong's *Exhaustive Concordance of The Bible* briefly describes *achoth* (*sister*) saying that it is widely used both literally and figuratively in the Hebrew Bible.^[9]

We even find Judah called a *sister* to Israel (Jeremiah 3:7-10) a connection which derives from tribal descent from a common ancestor^[10].

Similarly, in New Testament Greek the word *adelphē* — meaning *sister* — is used to imply not only a literal sister; but also a connection to or with a female by means of a common faith.

In addition, one can argue that the Qur'an uses familial nomenclature in other cases where the meaning is likely not literal; for example:

- At 11:78 Lūt refers to the women of the town as *'my daughters'*.
- At 7:65, 7:73, 7:85 Hūd, Šālih and Shu'ayb are referred to as *'brothers'* of their respective peoples
- At 50:13 the people of Lūt are referred to as his *'brethren'*
- At 49:10 the faith connection is referenced by means of *'brethren'*

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[7] D. J. A. Clines (Ed.), *The Dictionary Of Classical Hebrew*, 1993, Volume I, Sheffield Academic Press: Sheffield (UK), pp. 184-186.

[8] F. Brown, S. Driver & C. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew And English Lexicon Coded With Strong's Concordance Numbers*, 2005 (9th Printing), Hendrickson Publishers: Peabody (MA), pp. 27-28, Strong's Concordance Number 269.

[9] J. Strong, *The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible*, 1990, Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville (TN), No. 269, p. 5 (Hebrew).

achoth: [...]*ja sister* (used very widely... lit. and fig.): - (an-) other, sister, together.

[10] The united monarchy refers to a period in the history of Israel where the Twelve tribes of Israel were united into one monarchy under King Saul roughly around 1050 BC.

[11] J. H. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon Of The New Testament Coded With Strong's Concordance Numbers*, 2005 (7th Printing), Hendrickson Publishers Inc.: Peabody (MA), p. 10.

ʿĪsā and Yeshua

The critic who attacks the Qur'an on the basis of its reference to Maryam as '*sister of Hārūn*' assumes his conclusions — conclusions which originate in the unproven Christian extension of the dominant though unproven Egypt-Palestine thesis. And, historically, the Traditionalist apologist for the Qur'an has agreed to proceed on that basis — a framework in which ʿĪsā and Yeshua (Jesus) are assumed to be the same person; namely a man who lived in Palestine around 2,000 years ago.

As we have seen, there is much to suggest that this is a faulty premise.

As part of our overview of data outlining the possibility that ʿĪsā and Yeshua (Jesus) are not the same person, we will now consider briefly the etymological divergence between the names ʿĪsā and Yeshua.

Jesus (pronounced /ˈdʒiːzəs/) is a transliteration based on the Latin *Iesus* originating in the Greek *Ἰησοῦς* (*Iēsoûs*), itself a Hellenisation of the Hebrew יְהוֹשֻׁעַ or Hebrew-Aramaic יְהוֹשׁוּעַ, meaning *Yahweh delivers* or *Yahweh rescues*. The Arabic form of this name is يسوع for which the transliteration is *yisū*ʿ.

ʿĪsā is based on an entirely different root, one common to the Hebrew name Esau (pronounced /ˈiːsɔː/) (Hebrew עֲשָׂו, Tiberian Hebrew ʿĒśāw; Greek: Ἡσαῖ). Esau is a Hebrew male name best known as that of the fraternal twin of Jacob / Yaqūb the patriarch.

If one reads an Arabic transliteration of Biblical Hebrew, one sees Esau rendered عيسو *not* عيسى. This — it is argued — is because there is no equivalent to the *alif maqsura* (ع) in Old Hebrew, the nearest correlation in Arabic being *waw* (و).

Yeshua, then, is *Yisū*ʿ in Arabic (يسوع); ʿĪsā (عيسى) is an entirely separate name and, logically speaking, likely denotes a different person.

Virgin Birth

Apologists for Traditionalist Islam assume the standard Christian narrative on this point. My position is that it is a subject for further study. However, in short, arguments can be formed against the doctrine of Virgin Birth on the basis of the Qur'anic text. These are interpretive rather than definitive in nature; one of the stronger individual indications of support for such a position is found below:

83 And that is Our argument We gave to Abraham against his people. We raise in degree whom We will; thy Lord is wise and knowing.

84 And We gave him Isaac and Jacob; each We guided; and Noah did We guide before; and of his progeny David and Solomon and Job and Joseph and Moses and Aaron; and thus We reward the doers of good;

85 And Zachariah and John and Jesus and Elijah; each was

among the righteous;

86 And Ishmael and Elisha and Jonah and Lot; and each did We prefer above all mankind;

87 And some of their fathers and their progeny and their brethren; and We chose them and guided them to a straight path:²
(6:83-87)

Here, the inclusion of the name of ʿĪsā without comment in a list of prophets having '*fathers*' allows an argument to be formed on a Qur'anic basis that he had one.

Messiah

The English word *messiah* comes from the Hebrew *mes̱hiakh*. The Arabic equivalent is *masīh*. The word simply means *anointed one*. If this were accepted as the full and final meaning of the word, we could close our treatment of this topic here.

However, the devil — as is well attested — is in the details. That being the case, the fracture lines and contentions reveal themselves in the specific rather than general meaning of the term *messiah* — as it is derived and applied by the thought-leaders of the Jews, the Christians, and the Muslims.

The Jewish application and concept of *mes̱hiakh* lies at the root of Jewish racial-religious claims to 'chosenness' — by which is meant a superiority of the type supposedly held by the National Socialists of pre-1945 Germany, and for which the latter are endlessly excoriated in the Jewish-controlled media.

While what Jews believe varies, belief in a Jewish *mes̱hiakh* is a central pillar of what Jewishness entails. The Jewish credo requires belief in — or at least tolerance of — the position that God's plan is focused on making the Jews rulers over the world and placing all peoples which are not Jewish under their feet. While various Jewish factions may argue about the details — whether *mes̱hiakh* should come before the creation of a state of Israel or afterwards, for example — they agree on the basic premise. Under this worldview, the *goyim* — i.e. *cattle* or *nations* depending on whom you ask — are fundamentally inferior. Jewishness itself is the arbiter of human value.

I'm not saying all Jewish people believe this deeply. I am saying that unless one believes it, it is impossible to be deeply Jewish — or really Jewish at all.

There is no question but that God chose the children of Israel for a purpose. In that very specific sense they were chosen. That purpose was to preserve their scripture and take monotheism to the nations. They failed on both counts. The bone they throw to the nations is the somewhat derisive tidbit called the Noahide Laws — a piece of Talmudic inventiveness created by rabbis and considered good enough for the non-Jewish rabble. The Noahide Laws are nowhere found in the Torah — or anywhere else in the Jewish Bible.

Moreover, there is no statement in the Torah — even in its questionable post-Exile condition — which refers directly to *mes̱hiakh* in any sense which explicitly corresponds to what

² Qur'anic verses not in italics are from *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation*.

modern Judaism claims. Not one. There is also nothing explicit in the rest of the Jewish Bible. The messianic narrative is cobbled together retrospectively and applied to various ambiguous portions of the text; but nowhere does the Tanakh say: the *mes̱hiakh*'s job is such and such — a crushing absence given the pedantic exactitude with which instructions on building the Temple or requirements for priests are set out, for example.

The entire messianic narrative comes from the Talmud and the Zohar — namely from texts the Jews themselves wrote and which have no Qur'anic or 'Biblical' legitimacy — which is then retrospectively applied to extant Jewish scriptures. This type of practice served as the model for what the Islamic Traditionalist later did with his *hadīth* literature. The Qur'an has plenty to say about such activities, and one who regards the Qur'an as preserved scripture can safely ignore the philosophies based on these non-scriptural sources.

The Jewish Bible contains references to several messiahs. Again, the word simply means *anointed one*. Any Temple priest was *anointed* (or *mes̱hiakh*). The Persian king Cyrus is presented in the Jewish Bible as *anointed* (or *mes̱hiakh*). However, the popular Jewish concept of *mes̱hiakh* as a racial rallying point is a chimera; a construct of the collective Jewish mind; their own deluded belief in themselves as *Übermench* made concrete and invested in the personality of a single, anticipated man. Yet is it something which properly originates not in specific statements in the Torah or the Tanakh as a whole, but in the inventions of the Jewish people's controlling rabbinic class.

The typical Christian understanding of messiah is even more confused. At bottom, its own conception originates in the same sources as the Jewish conception — i.e. in writings which have no explicit point of purchase in the Torah or the Tanakh — but it operates differently. It takes the Jewish invention of a special ruler and expands it to a future time while simultaneously claiming that that ruler has already come and gone but is coming back and is — to some contested degree — God incarnate.

The Christian conception, likewise, typically retrospectively attaches its claims to portions of the Hebrew scriptures; but the hooks upon which it hangs its hats nowhere state that the personality thus referenced is the 'messiah' in the sense in which the Christian means it (and would have one accept it), nor would one derive such an understanding from the snippets of the Hebrew scriptures thus targeted unless one were previously primed and conditioned to do so (while taking a rigidly uncritical view of how such 'sources' relate to those later writings the Christian believes to be canonical).

So, fundamentally, Christian and Jewish messianic conceptions derive from the same places — the Talmud and Zohar — but then argue over the ways in which they screw their respective narrative inventions to ambiguous statements in their common scriptures, with the Christians claiming that the Talmudic messiah came, failed, but will return, and the Jews claiming that failure to meet their own extraneously derived expectation renders any claim to a messianic calling invalid.

Again, neither ideology is implicit in the Jewish Bible. They are both examples of theological appropriation — retrospectively

claiming ideological turf on the basis of narratives invented after the fact.

The Traditionalist Muslim throws another layer of spurious complexity into the mix. He has bought into the Christian conception as opposed to the Jewish conception of a messiah but then added a further 'Islamic' personality — the so-called Mahdi or *rightly guided one* — to achieve a brand of nonsense that distinguishes him from his predecessors.

To be clear: neither the Christian conception of messiah nor any mention or indication of Mahdi or *rightly guided one* is native to the Qur'an. The former can only seem to be achieved by applying the same retrospective prescriptive machinations upon scripture which originate in external inventions of the type of which the Jews and the Christians have been guilty, and the latter is an entirely separate creation (though one linked after the fact by means of extra-Qur'anic texts to give the Traditionalist Muslim his very own eschatological-narrative saviour).

Belief in external saviours has been useful historically in creating passivity and controlling populations so it should not surprise us that the Islamic world's controllers found it expedient to follow suit.

The Qur'anic conception of *messiah* (Arabic: *masīh*) is simple. The Qur'an describes ʿĪsā as *the anointed one* in terms which are almost pedestrian, with no more emphasis than one might expect had his defining characteristic been that of plumber or accountant (see 3:45, 4:157, 4:171, 4:172, 5:17, 5:17, 5:72, 5:72, 5:75, 9:30, 9:31).

Clearly, whatever the Qur'an means by the term *messiah* does not equate with either of the sets of values the Jews and the Christians have attached to the term and, therefore, has nothing to do with the value the Traditionalist has assumed for it.

The Qur'an is clear: ʿĪsā was anointed — or *masīh*. But ʿĪsā is now gone; and any implication that he is either coming back or due to meet the Jewish or Christian requirements of a *messiah* can only be ascribed to the Qur'an by the same means by which it is ascribed by Jews and Christians to the Jewish Bible: by assuming one's conclusions and then stitching them by means of commentaries conceived elsewhere to ambiguous statements in order to achieve a dramatic narrative nowhere explicit in the text.

Conclusions

In summary, the Qur'anic reference to Maryam as '*sister of Hārūn*' at 19:28 may be ascribed to one of the following:

- An exclamation referencing Maryam's exalted lineage elicited by what the speakers take to be her immoral behaviour
- That Maryam had a literal brother called Hārūn but that this brother was someone other than the prophet Hārūn
- That Maryam, mother of the prophet called ʿĪsā, was the literal sister to the prophet Hārūn

Similarly, the fact that the Qur'anic narrative identifies Maryam as the daughter of ʿImrān may be due to one of the following:

- That the person the Qur'an references as 'Imrān is someone other than the person the present-day Torah references as Amram
- That the person the Qur'an references as 'Imrān and is referenced in the present-day Torah as Amram are one and the same but the Qur'an is using the type of loose familial language found frequently in both Arabic and Biblical Hebrew
- That the person the Qur'an references as 'Imrān and the person referenced in the present-day Torah as Amram are one and the same and the Qur'an is using familial terms in a literal sense

Part of the problem is that one's opponents, as it were, would have one assume their conclusions before we begin; one is expected to accept (and, as a rule, most do accept) *a priori* the dominant narrative found in the Egypt-Palestine thesis and the Christian extension thereof. In such a case one is required to assume that the Maryam and her son 'Isā mentioned in the Qur'an indicate persons who lived around 2,000 years ago in Palestine. However, the Christians themselves cannot convincingly establish the historicity of their central narrative at that time and place.

As a corollary to the general points made in this Notepad one may add that it is possible that references in extant Christian texts to such persons as Zachariah and John are retellings of previous, more ancient stories. Certainly, the origins of the name rendered in English today as John and the root of the name we find in the Qur'an — Yahyā — have nothing in common, and there is no pressing reason why one should demand that John the Baptist and Yahyā be the same person beyond expectations arising in the Christian's doubtful texts and assumptions based thereon.

One may add to the above points the fact that while the Qur'an confirms previous scripture, it acts as a control over it. Part of its remit is to correct corruptions and distortions which have entered the books of previous peoples. The extant Torah — though sufficient guidance for a sincere and good man to be righteous before God if he exercises a judicious intelligence — has been thoroughly 'redacted'; there is simply no way for us to know today what the pre-Exile text contained.

Likewise, one allows that the Christian texts provide sufficient material for one who would be guided by them to be so profitably.

But the Qur'an is clear: it — the Qur'an — (and not the unreliable scriptures of former peoples or traditions originating with those who claim monopoly rights over the Qur'an) is the right standard.

NOTEPAD XIX

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

The female companions of the Garden

We deal here with the subject of *hūr 'īn* and *kawā'ib* as used in the Qur'an.

While some well-intentioned Qur'an-centric researchers may balk at the Traditionalist's values for these terms (coming as they do from the *ḥadīth*) a full and systematic comparison of instances and contexts reveals the Traditionalist's values here to be fully sustainable — though, admittedly, not for the reasons the Traditionalist himself offers.

There is scant internal Qur'anic etymological information with which to work in this case, the terms themselves and those surrounding and supporting them commonly occurring in one or a couple of instances only. Thus, we have limited options for root comparisons or pan-textual analysis.

However, we are able to offer a strong case for our conclusions on the basis of instance location (i.e. where those instances which exist occur); by leveraging established meanings of such known values as intersect with those verses under review; and by referencing surrounding contexts.

hūr 'īn

The term *hūr 'īn* occurs at 44:54, 52:20, 56:22 and is rendered by the Traditionalist along the lines of *fair women with large [beautiful] eyes, or pure, lustrous-eyed maidens* (as here).

At 52:20 the verb *zawwaja* (*to match, to pair, to marry*) takes *hūr 'īn* as an object via the preposition *bi*:

And we match them with pure, lustrous-eyed maidens.
(52:20)¹

While the verb *zawwaja* may be used without a preposition in the sense of *to marry someone to someone else; to match someone with someone else* — and is used thus at 33:37, Wehr's authoritative Arabic-English dictionary notes the same sense with the preposition *bi* (as is the case at 44:54 and 52:20).

To claim an exceptional case at 44:54 and 52:20 based on the presence of the preposition *bi* would require exceptional etymological support within the Qur'an; and support of that kind is simply not there.

However, we can point to context, and at 44:51-54 the context is of '*facing one another*' (44:53) in gardens. The statement that God matches the believers with *hūr 'īn* at 44:54 is followed by '*They call therein for every fruit in safety*' (44:55). Certainly, this context suggests human interaction.

At 52:20 the surrounding context is of '*reclining upon couches*' and the progeny of those who heed warning following them to the Garden. Again, the context is of a distinctly human, personal

¹ Qur'anic verses in italics are from *The Qur'an – Arabic Text with Corresponding English Meanings* by Saheeh International.

type and if we look at the entire surrounding context for 56:22 (56:10-26) we see that it, too, treats of human or personal interaction in the garden; whatever *hūr 'īn* are, they fit within a human and intimate scenario.

For these reasons, I am satisfied that the term *hūr 'īn* indicates living persons or personages and that to claim abstruse derivations and interpretations for *hūr 'īn* is not only not possible on the basis of demonstrable pan-textual etymology, it is not warranted by any of the three contexts in which this collocation occurs.

I will now broaden the enquiry and draw in other elements — including that of *kawā'ib* — before correlating the findings to reach conclusions which are both demonstrable and sustainable.

abkār, 'uruban, atrāb

Verses 56:27-40 treat of the '*companions of the right hand*'. Here the contexts and scenarios are comparable with those of the '*vanguard*' (56:10-26) replete with mention of fruit and carpets.

A key section from this segment follows:

*We have brought them into being anew
And made them virgins
Loving, well-matched
For the companions of the right hand.*
(56:35-38)

Again, some key vocabulary here (underlined) is challenging from a pan-textual point of view given the paucity of occurrences. We shall work through the terms in the order in which they occur.

The term rendered *virgins* is *abkār*; *abkār* occurs only at one other place (66:5) and there can only mean *virgins* (in the plain sense of *never previously married*). On that basis, we are confident in taking that confirmed sense here as binding.

The term above rendered here *loving* (Arabic: '*uruban*') occurs only once — a fact which is initially problematic for the purposes of providing Qur'anic evidence for the word's intended meaning in the text.

The root of '*uruban*' is '*-r-b*'; namely, that root upon which the word *Arabic* itself is based in the Arabic language. The root sense is of *flowing eloquence* (cf. '*araba* — a swift river; *i'rāb* — declaration, utterance; expression; '*arbān* — a man chaste, uncorrupt or free from barbarousness in speech'). It is traditionally rendered along the lines of *loving* or *devoted*, yet a worry persists that what etymological support there is in the lexicons for this value may derive from Qur'anic exegesis based on *ḥadīth*. We shall discuss '*uruban*' again after our general analysis.

The term rendered here *well-matched* (Arabic: *atrāb*) occurs three times: 38:52, 56:37, 78:33. All cases treat of the same scenario: the rewards of the believers in the Garden.

Etymologically, *atrāb* shares a root with *turāb* (*soil, dust*) — God created man from *turāb* (3:59) — thus, there is an underlying connection between it and *atrāb* (*mate, companion, peer*) since,

ultimately, we are all taken out of one dust.

Acceptance of the Traditionalist's conclusions in this case granted (namely, that *hūr 'īn* and *kawā'ib* signify beautiful female companions — a conclusion with which we agree below on the basis of the analysis presented here) *well-matched* is entirely acceptable as a value given the etymological features of the root in which *atrāb* participates.

To summarise at this point: our value for *abkār* of *virgins* is strong given the proven value at 66:5, while our value for *atrāb* of *well-matched* may be considered strong also given that it is fully consistent with the word's root senses and the context in which it appears in the event that the Traditionalist's values for *hūr 'īn* and *kawā'ib* prove correct (analysis reveals that *atrāb* demonstrates a connection between certain verses — and thereby assists in locking in the sense the Traditionalist claims for *hūr 'īn* and *kawā'ib* — as we shall see below); our value for '*uruban*' remains undecided at this stage (it will be demonstrated only once other factors are in place).

kawā'ib

This word occurs once only (78:33) and is rendered by the Traditionalist along the lines of '*maidens with swelling breasts*'. While this word occurs once only, the root occurs also at 5:6, 5:95, 5:97. We are compelled to understand it to indicate *ankles* or *joints* in all three of the cases just enumerated since that meaning is objectively established at 5:6 (we simply apply that sense in this work consistently, unlike the Traditionalist) and because that proven sense fits the contexts at 5:95 and 5:97 also. The word at 78:33 is different, though based on the same root. What connects it with the values at 5:6, 5:95, 5:97 is the concept of *swelling* or *protuberance* (ankles — or any other joints — protrude from the limb; breasts, similarly, protrude from the body). Arabic dictionaries give *swelling* or *protuberance* as senses for this root (*ka'āb* — *buxom*; *kawā'ib* — *buxom girls*).

It is possible to argue that the dictionaries have here incorporated a sense originating in the *ḥadīth* literature (I argue thus myself on a number of other occasions), and experience has repeatedly shown that it pays to be wary of values the Traditionalist claims for terms which occur only once or twice in the text; however, the fact is that the *k'-b* root is established in the Qur'an in my work unambiguously as something for which *swelling* or *protuberance* are implicit characteristics. We will return to this question below.

If, for now, we allow the Traditionalist's value for *kawā'ib* 78:33 will read:

And well-matched maidens with swelling breasts

How to approach this subject

As we shall see, those rarely-occurring words which indicate the beautiful companions the Traditionalist discerns in the terms *hūr 'īn* and *kawā'ib* operate in conjunction with modifiers (*well-matched*, etc.) which themselves occur a very limited number of times in the text. By regarding the feature of scarcity here as an ally and considering those few instances where these modifiers occur pan-textually, one realises that these supporting words connote by their (admittedly rare) presence a significance which

allows us to form a discernible, provable verse set with which we can work in order to achieve objective, demonstrable results. To give an example of what we mean: if one has a thousand bowls of which 300 are white, 300 are red and 400 are blue, it is a simple matter to identify those colours as sets and to base an analysis upon that observation. It is also a simple matter to advance further conclusions if 30 of those bowls (across all three colours) contain, say, a black counter. However, in our case, we have only 4 counters as it were (i.e. those verses in which *hūr ʿīn* and *kawāʿib* occur). Yet, if we notice that certain other extremely rare counters (let's call them turquoise, teal and maroon) occur also in combination with our *hūr ʿīn* and *kawāʿib* counters, that fact itself becomes a valid path for investigation.

In addition, this feature becomes compelling if we find that sufficient of those rare secondary counters bring with them — or reference — sufficient proven values from outside the immediate limited set to allow us to establish with confidence the values of those terms we wish to clarify which occur within the set.

On such a basis, we may form an appreciation of definitions based upon derivative data; that is, by looking at all those places where key values occur around our core interest (*hūr ʿīn* and *kawāʿib*) and establishing the connections between such values and any known values, we may rightly infer which among the ranges of values available to *hūr ʿīn* and *kawāʿib* are correct.

Such a method is especially pertinent in a case which treats of feminine sexual beauty; the total effect may be likened to that of peering through a latticework window: where part of the vision is hampered, part is not — and by moving our point of vision across the surface we gain a full impression of that which lies beyond.

I will now traverse the full set of verses which pertain to this study and indicate how and where the full vista accumulates. There are several components; I will mention them as we go.

Component: *qāṣirāt al ṭarf*

At 37:48 the phrase *qāṣirāt al ṭarf* is (uniquely) modified by means of *ʿīn*. The word *ṭarf* means *glance* and occurs precisely in this sense outside the contexts we shall be discussing here (see 14:43, 27:40, 42:45).

The word *qāṣirāt* means (*those*) *shortening* or (*those*) *restraining*; its form is the feminine plural (thus indicating *women*). The expression *qāṣirāt al ṭarf* occurs at 37:48, 38:52, 55:56 (all of which verses are covered in this study).

Thus, a value of *maidens of modest gaze* or *maidens restraining their gaze* for *qāṣirāt al ṭarf* is entirely consonant with Arabic grammar and the established usage of *ṭarf* in a range of contexts which extends beyond that where the collocation *qāṣirāt al ṭarf* occurs.

Component: *ʿīn*

Since at 37:48 the collocation *qāṣirāt al ṭarf* is — and, again, we emphasise *uniquely* — modified by means of *ʿīn*, this fact acquires significance for us because *ʿīn* forms part of one of the key components of our investigation: *hūr ʿīn*.

Pan-textual investigation reveals that *ʿīn* occurs four times only in the entire Qur'an: here at 37:48 and as part of the collocation *hūr ʿīn* (44:54, 52:20, 56:22). Thus, an undeniable connection exists between what we know to be the value for *qāṣirāt al ṭarf ʿīn* at 37:48 (i.e. one incontrovertibly treating of *vision, looking, glances*, etc.) and that of *hūr ʿīn* at 44:54, 52:20, 56:22.

If we claim a value for *ʿīn* of human *eyes* at 37:48 (and we must give what supports that value both at that verse and beyond it), then we must hold to that value for *ʿīn* at 44:54, 52:20, 56:22 also.

Component: *hūr ʿīn*

Thus, the Traditionalist's value for *hūr ʿīn* which concentrates on *eyes* (namely the lustrous nature of eyes in which there is a marked contrast between the white of the cornea and the black of the iris) is fully sustainable since that valid option within Arabic etymology which has *hūr* as the lustrous contrast between the cornea and iris is corroborated by *eyes* which is now the proven value for *ʿīn*.

On this basis the sense may be demonstrated to refer to modest, lustrous, restrained eyes pertaining to females — and I render *hūr ʿīn* as *pure, lustrous-eyed maidens*.

Component: *hūr*

There remains the question of the meaning of *hūr* as a single word. It occurs once outside the *hūr ʿīn* collocation (55:72); the context there is unquestionably of a human, personal type and treats of the Garden and the pleasures of the believers therein.

In the immediate context, *hūr* are described as '*guarded in pavilions*' (an image the chapter's recurrent motif '*Then which of the blessings of your lord will you repudiate?*' itself serves to compound, operating as it were as a series of posts hedging about the occupants like the poles of a pavilion)

Both the words rendered here *guarded* (Arabic: *maqṣurāt* — related by root to *qāṣirāt* found at 37:48, 38:52, 55:56) and *pavilions* (Arabic: *khiyām*) occur only once each in the text.

These facts serve to lock *hūr* into place within the construct of what we now know about *hūr ʿīn*, and on that basis I regard it as a truncated version of the same; I render it *pure-eyed maidens*.

Component: *ṭamaṭha*

To continue from the previous point, the verse following the repeating motif *Then which of the blessings of your lord will you repudiate?* then reads:

Whom neither man nor jinn have touched before them (55:74)

The verb here rendered *touched* in the Arabic is *ṭamaṭha*. This verb occurs only at two places: 55:56 and 55:74 (fittingly, perhaps, given the supremely dual character and tone of the chapter); its primary signification is that of *deflowering* (in the sense of *coitus causing bleeding*).

In the light of this, it is impossible to consider the context in any seriousness beyond the sensuous terms the Traditionalist claims for it.

Component: *atrāb*

We have touched upon this term above. It tends to be rendered *well-matched* and synonyms.

We note that *atrāb* participates in 38:52 where it is found in combination with *qāṣirāt al ṭarf*. Moreover, it is found also at 78:33 in combination with our solitary instance of *kawāʿib* (for which term the Traditionalist's value suggestive of female breasts is confirmed below).

As we saw previously, *atrāb* occurs also at 56:37 where the preceding context is of *virgins* — a word the value for which is unquestionably *virgins* (in the direct sense of women never before married) at its only other place in the text (see 66:5).

Outside the three places just mentioned, *atrāb* occurs nowhere. Thus, *atrāb* is fused by association to the concept of modest, physically desirable virgins.

Given these facts, a value of *compatibility* for *atrāb* is entirely appropriate. To claim otherwise requires that we demonstrate an alternative value for *virgins* at 66:5 (which, given the context at that verse, is impossible); to overturn the established meaning of *ṭarf* at 14:43, 27:40, 42:45; and to dismiss the obvious and accepted sense of *qāṣirāt* (one confirmed by implication at 55:72).

On the basis of the above, I am confident in rendering *atrāb* as commonly rendered: *well-matched*.

Analysis

The list below comprises the verse references for each of the key words we have treated thus far.

It is important to note that this list comprises all occurrences of each value — no value cited here occurs anywhere outside of these verses.

It is equally significant that each of the verses listed here is firmly entrenched in contexts which treat of the rewards of the Garden for believers.

We should also remember that the value of *virgins* (56:36) and of *glances* or *gaze* (37:48, 38:52, 55:56) are established beyond reasonable doubt outside this set.

Additionally, the verb *ṭamaṭha* objectively means *to deflower* (in the sense of *to devirginalise*) and occurs only at 55:56 and 55:74. Lastly, *ʿīn* — which can only mean *eyes* in the context of *qāṣirāt al ṭarf* at 37:48 — is found also only in the collocation *hūr ʿīn* at 44:54, 52:20, 56:22 and nowhere else. To assume the sense where it occurs in this collocation to be connected with anything other than *eyes* is repugnant to the established sense at 37:48.

Thus, the items listed below occur nowhere else in the Qur'an:

37:48 qāṣirāt al ṭarf | ʿīn
38:52 qāṣirāt al ṭarf | atrāb
44:54 hūr | ʿīn
52:20 hūr | ʿīn

55:56 qāṣirāt al ṭarf | ṭamaṭha
55:72 hūr | maqṣurāt | khiyām
55:74 ṭamaṭha
56:22 hūr | ʿīn
56:37 atrāb | ʿuruban
78:33 kawāʿib | atrāb

A second look at ʿuruban

We were unable to discern a strong value for ʿuruban above. It occurs only once in the text (56:37), and as we stated, the values claimed for it (generally: *loving* but also rendered as *pious, chaste* and *devoted*) find no strong purchase in the lexicons.

This Notepad is — by force of circumstance — predicated upon a derivative form of analysis, since our primary, staple methods (namely, Qur'anic definitions and pan-textual analysis) proved impossible in this case. Let us then extend our process of derivative analysis one step further to see if it permits us to gain purchase upon the meaning of the solitary instance of ʿuruban.

Here is the text under discussion once again with a common translation for ʿuruban underlined:

We have brought them into being anew
And made them virgins
Loving, well-matched
For the companions of the right hand.²
 (56:35-38)

We may reasonably accept ʿuruban as a modifier or intensifier not only of *virgins*, but also as a value pertaining to *well-matched* (Arabic: *atrāb*); and if we accept that, it is reasonable to allow — given the tight, closed-system environment we have demonstrated for this lexical set — that in those other contexts where *well-matched* (Arabic: *atrāb*) occurs, ʿuruban is present also, albeit at one place removed.

The two remaining places where *atrāb* occurs are 38:52 and 78:33. I provide both verses with a little of their following contexts below:

And with them maidens of modest gaze, well-matched.
 (38:52)

This is what you are promised for the Day of Reckoning.
 (38:53)

And well-matched maidens with swelling breasts
 (78:33)

And a cup overflowing
 (78:34)

They hear therein neither vain speech nor lying
 (78:35)

² Qur'anic verses in italics are from *The Qur'an – Arabic Text with Corresponding English Meanings* by Saheeh International.

*A reward from thy lord
(A bestowal
A reckoning)
(78:36)*

In the first case (38:52) the statement is clearly concluded by what follows at 38:53.

The situation at 78:33 is different. The statement there leads naturally into the following two verses (78:34-35) before the segment is concluded by 78:36 in a manner similar to that of 38:53.

The expressions 'a cup overflowing' (78:34) and 'neither vain speech nor lying' (78:35) happen also to occur nowhere else in the text. If we cast our minds back to our original comments on 'urban, we find the very concepts mentioned there as core values of the root upon which 'urban is based embedded into 78:34-35; namely, *flowing* and *verity in speech*.

For this reason, I do not accept the Traditionalist's value of *loving* (and synonyms) for 'urban (or, at least, consider them too vague to be fit for purpose) and, instead, render 'urban as *pure of speech*. The underlying sense is of a flow of communication which is at once alive and pure, and free of the slightest imperfection or deceit.

(It is interesting in this regard to note the testimony of a considerable number of persons claiming after-death experiences who say that their communication was both telepathic and incapable of subterfuge of any kind.)

A second look at *kawā'ib*

The Traditionalist's value for *kawā'ib* (one which is suggestive of female breasts) is entirely consonant with the etymological meanings (derived either by primary or derivative means) of all supporting values listed above; with all the surrounding contexts where those supporting values occur; with the context where *kawā'ib* itself occurs; with the fact that the sole meaning for the *k-b* root which may claim purchase upon the Qur'an in this work is unambiguously one for which *swelling* or *protuberance* are core characteristics; and with the fact that the word form is allowable as a feminine plural.

On this basis, I understand *kawā'ib* as *maidens with swelling breasts*.

Conclusions

We have found the low incidence of the component parts which make up this study to indicate a closed-system environment. We noted also that all contexts in which these terms are found treat of the rewards of the faithful in the Garden. These terms are provably correlated — both directly and indirectly — with such unavoidably sensual terms as *virgins* and *deflower*.

The construct our analysis reveals echoes the classical feminine virtues; it signals its purposes indirectly by means of hint, clue and implied association; it achieves its purposes by means of context and derivative meaning; it drops its handkerchief that we may pick it up — dignity and modesty permit no more.

It is possible that the process of derivative contextual analysis demonstrated in this article may be further developed and applied in additional contexts where the Quranite hermeneutic stalwarts of Qur'anic definitions and pan-textual analysis are not possible.

I accept that the Traditionalist is demonstrably correct — at least generally speaking — in his understanding of *hūr 'īn* and *kawā'ib*, but for reasons he has hitherto never articulated on a Qur'anic basis.

NOTEPAD XX

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

Interpretation of 9:36-37

The Traditionalist is ever straining to gain seeming legitimacy for his non-Qur'anic material; one of the ways he achieves this is by asserting explanations for parts of the Qur'an which originate in his non-Qur'anic material and then claiming that one is unable to understand the text without accepting the conclusions which he assumes. He then insists everyone else assume his conclusions also and derides those who cannot find support for his conclusions within the text alone for not trusting to his non-Qur'anic sources. Along with particularising the general, this is one of his commonest strategies.

At the verses under discussion here, the Traditionalist attempts again to insert himself into the process since — according to him — there are four special months mentioned in the Qur'an, and without him and his extraneous set of histories created centuries after the fact, it is impossible to understand which months are meant.

The Qur'an poses many challenges. The Qur'an's *mysterious letters* are an extreme example; lesser examples are found at verses 89:1-5, chapter 97, and confirmation of the *hūr 'īn* and *kawā'ib*. Given the progress made in this work in these cases, it is perhaps not unreasonable or presumptuous to apply ourselves to 9:36-37 also.

I am not going to argue against the Traditionalist's claims per se. His foundations have no validity in my view; if one wishes to understand him and his reasoning, it is best to ask him directly. The question which will be examined here is whether it is possible to gain a robust, sustainable understanding of these verses based upon Qur'anic data. It is then a question for the individual student to decide which argument he finds more convincing.

The Traditionalist's understanding of 9:36-37 in summary

The traditionalist's understanding (given expression by Saheeh International) of 9:36-37 is found below:

Indeed, the number of months with Allāh is twelve [lunar] months in the register of Allāh [from] the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred. That is the correct religion [i.e. way], so do not wrong yourselves during them. And fight against the disbelievers collectively as they fight against you collectively. And know that Allāh is with the righteous [who fear Him].¹
(9:36)

Indeed, the postponing [of restriction within sacred months] is an increase in disbelief by which those who have disbelieved are led [further] astray. They make it lawful one year and unlawful another year to correspond to the number made unlawful by Allāh and [thus] make lawful

what Allāh has made unlawful. Made pleasing to them is the evil of their deeds; and Allāh does not guide the disbelieving people.
(9:37)

If one reads the Traditionalist's commentaries at this point one finds material (all of which derives from the ḥadīth, naturally) along the lines of that which has been added – one presumes posthumously – to Abdul Yusuf Ali's translation by an editor at verse 9:36:

This and the following verse must be read together. They condemn the arbitrary and selfish conduct of the Pagan Arabs, who, because there was a long-established custom of observing four months as those in which fighting was forbidden, changed the months about or added or deducted months when it suited them, to get an unfair advantage over the enemy. The four Prohibited Months were: Dhu al Qa'dah, Dhu al Hijjah, Muharram, and Rajab. If it suited them they postponed one of these months, and so a prohibited month became an ordinary month: while their opponents might hesitate to fight, they got an undue advantage. It also upset the security of the Month of Pilgrimage. This very ancient usage made for fair dealing all round, and its infraction by the Pagans is condemned.

The question of a solar astronomical year as against the lunar Islamic year does not arise here. But it may be noted that the Arab year was roughly lunisolar like the Hindu year, the months being lunar and the intercalation of a month every three years brought the year nearly but not accurately up to the solar reckoning. From the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage (A.H. 10) the Islamic year was definitely fixed as a purely lunar year of roughly 354 days, the months being calculated by the actual appearance of the moon. After that, every month of the Islamic year came about 11 days earlier in the solar year, and thus the Islamic months travelled all round the seasons and the solar year.

The Muslims were at a disadvantage on account of their scruples about the Prohibited Months. They are told not to wrong themselves in this. If the Pagans fought in all months on one pretence or another, they were allowed to defend themselves in all months. But self-restraint was (as always) recommended as far as possible.

This, then, is a fair summary of the Traditionalist's position. The central tenets of this position are useful to the Traditionalist since they presuppose a requirement for his offices as the arbiter and keeper of the details pursuant to this understanding (the religion known as Islam is wedded to a calendar which features the months cited above) the implication being that if we need him and his extraneous literature for thus much, then surely we must need him for more.

As ever, we need to work methodically and to present our evidence consistently. If the approach here seems perhaps fuller than perhaps the material merits, it is because the sheer number of years the Traditionalist's interpretation of this segment has gone unchallenged puts the burden of evidence more heavily upon a rational approach than might otherwise be the case.

¹ Qur'anic verses in italics are from *The Qur'an – Arabic Text with Corresponding English Meanings* by Saheeh International.

The process by which I demonstrate my case draws upon surrounding contexts, upon verses related to key terms, and upon derivative hermeneutic processes such as significant numbers of occurrences of particular words.

Religious scholars

The context proper begins at 9:29 — and I recommend the student review the text from that point. In the interests of space, I will start at 9:34. My own translation (which differs little from the Traditionalist's understanding here) reads:

34 O you who heed warning: many among the rabbis and the religious scholars consume the wealth of men in vanity, and turn away from the path of God. And those who amass gold and silver and spend it not in the cause of God: give thou them tidings of a painful punishment: —
35 The day it will be heated in the fire of Gehenna, then therewith will be branded their foreheads and their sides and their backs: "This is what you amassed for your souls; so taste what you amassed!"²
(9:34-35)

Thus, the backstory — or broader surrounding context — prior to the verses in question treats of stinginess and hoarding originating with the religious elite. This will prove significant later. By reviewing where the Arabic *ahbār* (rendered in my work *religious scholars*) occurs at (5:44, 5:63, 9:31, 9:34), we gain a fuller understanding. These four instances are repeated below with their relevant contexts.

44 We sent down the Torah wherein is guidance and light. The prophets who submitted judged thereby those who hold to Judaism as did the rabbis and the religious scholars with what they were given charge of the Writ of God and were thereto witnesses: "So fear not mankind but fear Me; and sell not My proofs at a cheap price." And whoso judges not by what God has sent down, it is they who are the false claimers of guidance.
(5:44)

The next instance (5:63) requires its entire surrounding context to be understood:

59 Say thou: "O doctors of the Law: do you resent us save that we believe in God and what was sent down to us and what was sent down before, and that most of you are perfidious?"
60 Say thou: "Shall I inform you of worse than that as a recompense with God? He whom God cursed and with whom He was wroth and made of them apes and swine and servants of idols: those are worse in standing and further astray from the right path."
61 And when they come to you, they say: "We believe"; but they entered in denial, and they left in it; and God best knows what they were concealing.
62 And thou seest many of them competing in sin and enmity and their consumption of illicit gain; evil is what they do.
63 Oh, that the rabbis and the religious scholars had but

forbidden their speaking sin and their consumption of illicit gain! Evil is what they were working.

64 And the Rabbinic Jews say: "The hand of God is fettered." Fettered are their hands! And cursed are they for what they say! Nay, His hands are spread wide; He spends how He wills. And there increases many of them in inordinacy and denial what was sent down to thee from thy Lord. And We have cast among them enmity and hatred until the Day of Resurrection; whenever they lit the fire of war, God extinguished it; and they strive in the land for corruption; and God loves not the workers of corruption.

65 And had the doctors of the Law believed and been in prudent fear, We would have removed their evil deeds from them and made them enter the Gardens of Bliss.

66 And had they upheld the Torah and the Gospel and what was sent down to them from their Lord, they would have eaten from above them and from under their feet. Among them is a moderate community; but many of them, evil is what they do.
(5:59-5:66)

29 Fight those who believe not in God or the Last Day, and make not unlawful what God and His messenger have made unlawful, and adhere not to the doctrine of truth among those given the Writ, until they make reparation under supervision when they are brought low.

30 And the Rabbinic Jews say: "Uzayr is the son of God"; and the Christians say: "The Messiah is the son of God." That is the speech of their mouths; they imitate the speech of those who ignored warning before. May God curse them! How are they deluded?

31 They take their rabbis and their religious scholars as lords rather than God, and the Messiah, son of Mary; and they were not commanded save to serve One God; there is no god save He. Glory be to Him above that to which they ascribe a partnership!

32 They want to extinguish the light of God with their mouths; and God refuses save to perfect His light, though the false claimers of guidance be averse.

33 He it is that sent His messenger with the guidance and the doctrine of truth, that He might make it manifest over all doctrine, though the idolaters be averse.

34 O you who heed warning: many among the rabbis and the religious scholars consume the wealth of men in vanity, and turn away from the path of God. And those who amass gold and silver and spend it not in the cause of God: give thou them tidings of a painful punishment: —

35 The day it will be heated in the fire of Gehenna, then therewith will be branded their foreheads and their sides and their backs: "This is what you amassed for your souls; so taste what you amassed!"
(9:29-35)

The topic in all cases is the responsibility of the ruling religious elite to implement the revelations they have from God and not to sell them '*for a cheap price*' — a term which consistently treats of trading revelation for material gain — (2:41, 2:79, 2:174, 3:77, 3:187, 3:199, 5:44, 9:9, 16:95); the failure of that religious elite to implement the same (5:59-5:66) — again in a material regard; the responsibility of the believers to fight those among

them who do not implement what '*God and his messenger*' have made unlawful (the term '*God and his messenger*' or '*messengers*' cannot be claimed to refer exclusively to Muhammad — despite what the Traditionalist claims when it suits him — when reviewed on a pan-textual basis, but includes other prophets; cf. 2:279, 3:179, 4:13, 4:14, 4:100, 4:136, 4:150, 4:150, 4:152, 4:171, 5:33, 5:55, 5:56, 7:158, 8:1, 8:13, 8:13, 8:20, 8:27, 8:46, 9:1, 9:3, 9:16, 9:24, 9:29, 9:54, 9:59, 9:62, 9:63, 9:71, 9:74, 9:80, 9:84, 9:90, 9:91, 9:94, 9:107, 24:48, 24:50, 24:51, 24:52, 24:62, 24:62, 33:12, 33:22, 33:22, 33:29, 33:31, 33:33, 33:36, 33:36, 33:57, 33:71, 48:9, 48:13, 48:17, 49:1, 49:14, 49:15, 57:7, 57:19, 57:21, 58:4, 58:5, 58:13, 58:20, 58:22, 59:4, 59:7, 59:8, 61:11, 64:8, 72:23) until they make '*reparation*' (Arabic: *jīzya*) (9:29). This is followed by mention of the fact that the Rabbinic Jews and Christians have usurped their respective revelations by means of their own inventions, taken their religious rulers in derogation to those revelations, and the ultimate futility of that policy (9:30-33). The segment closes with the statement that many among these same religious rulers '*consume the wealth of men in vanity*' and a warning of the recompense in Hell for such people.

Thus, the subject matter throughout the set incontrovertibly treats of the wrong treatment of wealth vis-à-vis former revelations by the respective religious scholars of those former revelations.

We are now ready to look at the verses which form the primary topic under consideration.

Analysis of 9:36-37

We have summarised the Traditionalist's assertions, and there is no need to rehearse them here. Suffice to say at this juncture that they bear no relationship to the immediate context other than in the mind of the Traditionalist — and only on a footing which assumes his conclusions and proceeds on that basis. Absent his assumptions and assertions, the facts on the page present a backstory which treats of the religious scholars of previous revelation.

Additionally, the verses under consideration contain the phrase '*that is the right doctrine*'. This expression occurs only three times in the Qur'an (9:36, 12:40, 30:30). In each case it is found either in close proximity to — and set in opposition to — '*the idolaters*' (9:36, 30:30) or explicit mention of men serving other than God (12:40). Thus, the term '*that is the right doctrine*' is found where it corrects doctrinal error.

But what doctrinal error pertaining to the religious scholars of previous revelation can the present text be correcting? The answer can only be: one pertaining to the count of time. We shall work through the segment methodically and explain our reasoning as we go.

Verse 9:36 opens:

The count of months is with God

The word '*idda*' means *count* (in the sense of *number*) and is rendered typically by the Traditionalist thus (or by means of synonym) in this context.

The next word in Arabic is *shuhūr* and means *moons* (in the sense of *months*); the singular *shuhr* has two plurals (*ashūr* and *shuhūr*); *ashūr* is the plural form commonly found in the Qur'an; *shuhūr* found at 9:36 is the only instance of this form in the text. This suggests — to me at least — that we should pay particular attention at this point; when the Qur'an says '*The count of the months is with God*' using thereby a plural form of the word *moon* found nowhere else in the text, my sense is that one should begin counting — especially, given that what follows is a number:

twelve months were in the Writ of God the day He created the heavens and the earth

I repeat: we are to anticipate that the segment is correcting a doctrinal point pertaining to the religious scholars of previous revelations; these facts give colour to the words '*in the Writ of God*' (rendered commonly '*in the book of God*' — Arabic: *fi kitāb allah*).

We will now work through the '*count*' and see what it reveals.

The count: twelve months

Pan-textual analysis of the word moon (i.e. *shahr* — *moon*, *month*) across the text reveals that it occurs precisely twelve times in the Qur'an in the singular noun form. The full list follows with plurals marked with asterisks and the dual marked with a D (2:185, 2:185, 2:194, 2:194, 2:197*, 2:217, 2:226*, 2:234*, 4:92D, 5:2, 5:97, 9:2*, 9:5*, 9:36, 9:36, 34:12, 34:12, 46:15, 58:4D, 65:4*, 97:3).

I do not claim this observation to originate with myself; I read it so long ago that I regret that I do not remember the source.

The count: in the Writ of God

The collocation *fi kitāb allah* occurs four times: 8:75, 9:36, 30:56, 33:6.

The count: day

In all forms the word day occur a total of 405 times; however, if we discard all 30 non-singular forms — *yawmayni* (2:203, 41:9, 41:12), *l ayamu* (3:140), *ayyamin* (2:184, 2:185, 2:196, 2:203, 3:41, 5:89, 7:54, 10:3, 11:7, 11:65, 22:28, 25:59, 32:4, 41:10, 41:16, 50:38, 57:4, 69:7), *ayyami* (10:102), *bi-ayyami* (14:5), *l-ayami* (69:24), *wa ayyaman* (34:18), *ayyaman* (2:80), *ayyama* (45:14), *ayyaman* (2:184), *ayyaman* (3:24) — and all ten instances which have suffixes (e.g. 'his day', 'their day' etc.) — *yawmaku* (21:103), *yawmikum* (6:130, 32:14, 39:71, 45:34), *yawmihim* (7:51), *yawmihimu* (51:60), *yawmahumu* (43:83, 52:45, 70:42) as well as all 70 instances of *yawmadhdhin* which means *that day* (3:167, 4:42, 6:16, 7:8, 8:16, 11:66, 14:49, 16:87, 18:99, 20:102, 20:108, 20:109, 22:56, 23:101, 24:25, 25:22, 25:24, 25:26, 27:89, 28:66, 30:4, 30:14, 30:43, 30:43, 30:57, 37:33, 40:9, 42:47, 43:67, 45:27, 52:11, 55:39, 69:15, 69:16, 69:17, 69:18, 70:11, 74:9, 75:10, 75:12, 75:13, 75:22, 75:24, 75:30, 77:15, 77:19, 77:24, 77:28, 77:34, 77:37, 77:40, 77:45, 77:47, 77:49, 79:8, 80:37, 80:38, 80:40, 82:19, 83:10, 83:15, 88:2, 88:8, 89:23, 89:23, 89:25, 99:4, 99:6, 100:11, 102:8) — we find there are precisely 365 instances of the singular form of the word day in the Qur'an (1:4, 2:8, 2:48, 2:62, 2:123, 2:126, 2:177, 2:228, 2:232, 2:254, 2:259, 2:259, 2:264, 2:281, 3:9, 3:25, 3:55,

² Qur'anic verses not in italics are from *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation*.

3:114, 3:161, 4:38, 4:39, 4:59, 4:87, 4:136, 4:162, 5:14, 5:36, 5:64, 5:69, 5:119, 6:12, 6:15, 7:14, 7:59, 7:167, 9:3, 9:18, 9:19, 9:25, 9:29, 9:35, 9:36, 9:44, 9:45, 9:77, 9:99, 9:108, 10:15, 10:28, 10:45, 10:60, 10:92, 10:93, 11:3, 11:8, 11:26, 11:43, 11:60, 11:77, 11:84, 11:98, 11:99, 11:103, 11:103, 11:105, 12:54, 12:92, 14:18, 14:31, 14:41, 14:42, 14:44, 14:48, 15:35, 15:36, 15:38, 16:25, 16:27, 16:27, 16:63, 16:63, 16:80, 16:80, 16:84, 16:89, 16:92, 16:111, 16:124, 17:13, 17:14, 17:52, 17:58, 17:62, 17:71, 17:97, 18:19, 18:19, 18:47, 18:52, 18:105, 19:37, 19:85, 20:59, 20:102, 20:104, 21:47, 21:104, 22:2, 22:9, 22:17, 22:47, 22:55, 22:69, 23:16, 23:65, 23:100, 23:111, 23:113, 23:113, 24:2, 24:37, 24:64, 25:14, 25:17, 25:22, 25:25, 25:26, 25:27, 25:69, 26:38, 26:82, 26:87, 26:88, 26:135, 26:155, 26:156, 26:189, 26:189, 27:83, 27:87, 28:41, 28:42, 28:61, 28:62, 28:65, 28:71, 28:72, 28:74, 29:13, 29:25, 29:36, 29:55, 30:12, 30:14, 30:43, 30:55, 30:56, 30:56, 31:33, 32:5, 32:25, 32:29, 33:21, 33:44, 33:66, 34:30, 34:40, 34:42, 35:14, 36:54, 36:55, 36:59, 36:64, 36:65, 37:20, 37:21, 37:26, 37:144, 38:16, 38:26, 38:53, 38:78, 38:79, 38:81, 39:13, 39:15, 39:24, 39:31, 39:47, 39:60, 39:67, 40:15, 40:16, 40:16, 40:17, 40:17, 40:18, 40:27, 40:29, 40:30, 40:32, 40:33, 40:46, 40:49, 40:51, 40:52, 41:40, 41:47, 42:7, 42:45, 42:47, 43:39, 43:65, 43:68, 44:10, 44:16, 44:40, 44:41, 45:17, 45:26, 45:27, 45:28, 46:5, 46:20, 46:21, 46:34, 46:35, 50:20, 50:22, 50:30, 50:34, 50:41, 50:42, 50:42, 51:12, 51:13, 52:9, 52:13, 52:46, 54:8, 54:19, 54:48, 55:29, 56:50, 56:56, 57:12, 57:12, 57:13, 57:15, 58:6, 58:7, 58:18, 58:22, 60:6, 62:9, 64:9, 64:9, 65:2, 68:39, 70:4, 70:26, 70:43, 70:44, 73:17, 74:9, 74:46, 75:1, 75:6, 76:7, 76:10, 76:11, 76:27, 77:12, 77:13, 77:14, 77:35, 77:38, 78:17, 78:18, 78:39, 82:17, 82:18, 82:19, 83:5, 83:11, 85:2, 90:14, 2:85, 2:113, 2:174, 2:212, 2:249, 3:30, 3:77, 3:106, 3:155, 3:166, 3:180, 3:185, 3:194, 4:109, 4:141, 4:159, 5:3, 5:3, 5:5, 5:109, 6:22, 6:73, 6:73, 6:93, 6:128, 6:141, 6:158, 7:32, 7:51, 7:53, 7:163, 7:163, 7:172, 8:41, 8:41, 8:48, 19:15, 19:15, 19:15, 19:26, 19:33, 19:33, 19:33, 19:38, 19:38, 19:39, 19:95, 20:64, 20:100, 20:101, 20:124, 20:126, 24:24, 41:19, 45:34, 45:35, 50:44, 54:6, 60:3, 64:9, 66:7, 66:8, 68:24, 68:42, 69:35, 70:8, 73:14, 78:38, 78:40, 79:6, 79:35, 79:46, 80:34, 82:15, 83:6, 83:34, 86:9, 101:4).

The count: he created the heavens and the earth

The verse later states '*from it are four inviolable*'. The word *inviolable* (Arabic: *ḥurum*) indicates *things protected, things set apart*. Despite what the Traditionalist assumes and asserts, the object pronoun is in the feminine singular, and it makes more sense that it should relate to *count* (Arabic: *'idda*) than to anything else. Thus far, we have had three '*counts*'; we should expect one more.

All but one of the statements pertaining to the number of days in which God (he) '*created the heavens and the earth*' are listed below:

- One day: heavens and earth; (he) — 1 occurrence (9:36)
- Two days: earth; seven heavens; (he) — 2 occurrences (41:9, 41:12)
- Six days: heavens and earth; (he) — 6 occurrences (7:54, 10:3, 11:7, 25:59*, 32:4*, 57:4)

*Indicates the presence of the phrase '*and what is between them*'.

This is not the place to analyse the meanings of these statements;

but it is not unreasonable to regard the correlation between the incidence (or '*count*') of each formula and the number it contains as significant.

However, there occurs one further statement of this kind; in single instance the verb is in the third person plural (we) form:

And We created the heavens and the earth and what is between them in six days, and there touched Us no weariness. (50:38)

Thus, there are six mentions of '*six days*' plus one; and I assert that this formula both illustrates the six working days and Sabbath required of the recipients of the previous revelations and corrects the doctrine found in the Hebrew scriptures that God rested on the seventh day.

A summary of the four counts

We saw that the verse at 9:36 opens by telling us that '*the count of months is with God*'. We saw also that it states later that '*from it*' (i.e. from the *count*) '*four are inviolable*'. Accordingly, we established a '*count*' of four things which do indeed impress themselves upon the mind as protected and set apart within the text:

- The count of months: 12 (there are 12 months in each year)
- The count of *in the Writ of God*: 4 (there are four seasons in a year)
- The count of days: 365 (there are 365 days in each year)
- The count of *created the heavens and the earth in six days*: 6 plus 1 (there are 7 days in a week, one of which is rightly a Sabbath for the recipients of the former revelations)

The verse continues: '*so wrong not your souls concerning them*'. Here the feminine plural object pronoun ('*in them*') denotes — I would suggest — the *counts* which are now established.

We find that the count of '*your souls*' (Arabic: *anfusikum*) occurs 49 times in the text (2:44, 2:54, 2:54, 2:84, 2:85, 2:87, 2:110, 2:187, 2:223, 2:235, 2:235, 2:272, 2:284, 3:61, 3:165, 3:168, 3:186, 4:29, 4:66, 4:135, 5:105, 6:93, 9:35, 9:36, 9:41, 9:128, 10:23, 12:18, 12:83, 14:22, 16:72, 17:7, 24:61, 24:61, 30:21, 30:28, 30:28, 40:10, 41:31, 42:11, 49:11, 51:21, 53:32, 57:14, 57:22, 61:11, 64:16, 66:6, 73:20)

I believe this is significant for the following reasons:

- It occurs in the concluding statement which treats of the religious scholars among those who are in receipt of a previous revelation at the end of 9:35 (while the Traditionalist's understanding of 9:36-37 has been side-tracked into conclusions required by his extraneous literature, we are still focused on the Qur'anic narrative as it is)
- The entire preceding context — as we have established above — treats of the wrong treatment of wealth vis-à-vis former revelations by the respective religious scholars of those former revelations
- The means by which the count of 7 days accrued both divided the count into 6 and 1 and established the fact that God was not wearied by His creation. This division is suggestive of

those people of former revelation who are required to rest on the Sabbath

- When understood as a count of 49, the point of the campaign against those who '*make not unlawful what God and His messenger have made unlawful*' among those in possession of the Law makes sense as we shall see
- When understood as a count of 49, the meaning of the *reparation* (Arabic: *jizya*) at the end of 9:29 (which those defeated among those possessed of previous revelation are to be forced to make) becomes clear also.

The meaning, then, is this: the count of 49 indicates the forty-nine-year cycle of the jubilee; the year in which — according to the scripture to which the religious scholars among the Jews claim to hold — all debts are to be forgiven:

8 And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. **9** Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. **10** And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. **11** A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which growth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. **12** For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field. **13** In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession. Leviticus 25:8-13 (King James Version)

Thus, the believers are not called to convert Jews or Christians to a 'religion' of any kind or to extract a tax from them (9:29); rather, they are exhorted — when they have military mastery over the same — to enforce the jubilee; namely, that part of the scripture which the religious scholars are supposed to enforce but choose to ignore to their own damnation.

The verse at 9:36 ends:

and fight the idolaters altogether as they fight you altogether, and know that God is with those of prudent fear — (9:36)

The meaning of *idolater* is established in the context above at 9:30-34; it pertains to those who take their religious scholars, rabbis, or the son of Maryam in derogation of God. There is no other way to read the segment; thus, at 9:36 the idolaters mentioned simply must be the same as those mentioned in the lead-up to that point.

Verse 9:37 then introduces the question of '*postponement*'. As we have seen, for the Traditionalist, this treats of an extraneous matter related to his preferred literature. However, for us it

is simply a continuation of the same subject; it relates to the jubilee.

37 Postponement is but an increase in denial whereby those who ignore warning are led astray; they make it lawful one year and make it unlawful another year; that the count might agree with what God made unlawful — so they make lawful what God made unlawful; made fair to them is the evil of their deeds; and God guides not the people of the false claimers of guidance. (9:37)

Given the understanding we have gained which shows that this relates to the Jews and the jubilee, the meaning of this verse is entirely clear.

Conclusions

Nowhere does the text at 9:36 say explicitly: '*make the Jews keep to their obligation to observe the jubilee*'. However, neither does it state explicitly what the Traditionalist claims for it.

The Traditionalist imports his understanding from an extraneous literature, thereby effectively insinuating himself into the process as the arbiter and expert, while at the same time breaking the narrative across 9:29-37 into a disjointed mishmash of unrelated subjects.

We, on the other hand, have — by disregarding the Traditionalist and concentrating on the text and the evidence based on the '*count*' arising therein — presented an interpretation which is entirely limited to the Qur'an and the Torah; is consonant with the meaning across the broader context; in which the clause '*that is the right doctrine*' makes sense; which integrates the meaning of the single occurrence of the word *reparation* (Arabic: *jizya*) into the narrative on a rational basis; which explains the purpose of the campaign against the Jews on a basis consistent with the clear Qur'anic directives to allow others to follow their own religions; in which '*postponement*' (9:36) makes intrinsic sense; and which makes 9:29-37 a single, coherent narrative.

Postscript

We note that there is some argument in the Talmud over whether the Jubilee was observed in the 49th year itself or in the 50th year; this discrepancy appears to be anticipated in the Qur'an which supplies a single alternative version of the word we are using as the platform for this analysis (*anfusikum*) in *nufusikum* (17:25). I am indebted to Anwar Sufi for bringing this point to my attention.

NOTEPAD XXI

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

Al sujūd

My view is that the purpose of the segments identified between chapters 50 and 114 in Article II is not only private vigil, but a reading to which believers are to invite others; that this nightly reading is not only for our private edification, but also comprises a key part in our own obligation to warn others.

The key to this point is the word **السُّجُود**. This occurs only six times in the text. This word has two meanings: a) *the submitting* and b) *the submission*. It occurs in the first sense — as a plural adjective — at 2:125 and 22:26 in the set phrase: *'the lowly, the submitting'*.

The remaining four instances are the singular noun I render *the Submission*; and I capitalise it because I think it indicates a proper noun.

29 Muḥammad is the messenger of God. And those with him are hard against the atheists, merciful among themselves — thou seest them lowly, in submission, seeking favour from God and approval, their mark on their faces of the effects of **the Submission** — that is their likeness in the Torah. And their likeness in the Gospel is like a seed that put forth its shoot, and strengthens it, and established itself upon its stem pleasing the sowers, that by them He might enrage the atheists. God has promised those who heed warning and do righteous deeds among them forgiveness and a great reward.¹ (48:29)

39 So be thou patient over what they say, and give thou glory with the praise of thy Lord before the rising of the sun, and before its setting.

40 And some of the night, glorify thou Him; and at the ends of **the Submission**.

41 And listen thou for the day the Caller will call from a near place,

42 The day they will hear the Blast in truth: that is the Day of Emergence:

43 — It is We who give life, and We give death; and to Us is the journey's end —

44 The day the earth is split asunder from about them, they hastening forth; that is a gathering easy for Us.

45 We best know what they say; and thou art not a tyrant over them. But remind thou with the Qur'an him who fears My warning.

(50:39-45)

42 The day the shin is uncovered — and they are invited to **the Submission**, but they are not able —

43 Their eyes will be humbled, humiliation covering them, for they had been invited to **the Submission** when they were whole.

44 So leave thou Me with those who deny this narrative.

We will lead them by degrees, whence they know not;

45 And I will grant them respite — My plan is firm.

(68:42-45)

It is interesting that this phrase occurs in this sense in the following three contexts only:

- At the only place in the Qur'an where Muḥammad is explicitly (and positively) named the messenger of God (chapter 48)
- In the chapter prefaced by ق (chapter 50)
- In the chapter prefaced by ن (chapter 68)

It is my opinion that *the Submission* (السُّجُود) is Qur'anic parlance for a single reading based on the divisions of that **range** within the *qāf-nūn range* which we identify in Article II (i.e. a segment between chapters 50 through to the end of the Qur'an); that *the Submission* (السُّجُود) is a nightly reading to which the believers are required to apply themselves; that others are to be invited to attend; and that the character of those who attend may be rightly determined based on their response (for more on this, see chapter 97 and notes thereto).

NOTEPAD XXII

Notepads comprise observations which informed parts of my process, and are included for interest.

I wish here to set out my understanding of the Qur'anic position on the question of homosexuality, not to engage with the broader debate of current political sexuality; that is, I am interested here only in the Qur'anic position on homosexuality, and not in any view held — however strongly — on any other basis.

One discerns two competing views of homosexuality vis-à-vis the Qur'an which — when generalised and polarised — may be presented thus:

There is the hadith-orientated Islamicist position — at least as intoned by the generality of mullahs. This has it that homosexuality (and here I am speaking of male homosexuality) is a crime, a crime so heinous that when uncovered those found guilty are to be executed — preferably thrown from a high building.

The liberalised person claiming Muslim status finds this view abhorrent for many obvious and decent reasons — not least of which being that nothing of the kind is found in the Qur'an. He takes the view that a laissez-faire approach is acceptable; that — in line with recent media indoctrination — homosexuality is a lifestyle choice to be left to the individual to decide; that sexual activity is essentially a Coke-or-Pepsi decision of no intrinsic significance, and that outside restriction is arbitrary and evil.

My understanding is that the Qur'anic position is at variance with both of these views in whole or in part; and it is to that understanding that the remainder of this article is dedicated.

Underlying principles

In order to grasp the specifics of the subject in question, we need first to accept certain unambiguous principles found in the Qur'an.

The first principle to understand is that the Qur'anic position is that many people will not believe; that is, no matter how one dislikes the reality, the fact is that many will be impervious to the remembrance of God no matter what.

178 Whom God guides, he is guided; and whom God sends astray, it is they who are the losers.

179 And We have created for Gehenna many among the domini and the servi: they have hearts wherewith they understand not; and they have eyes wherewith they see not; and they have ears wherewith they hear not. Those are like cattle; nay, — they are further astray — it is they who are the heedless.¹

(7:178-179)

Thus, being rightly guided is not a social phenomenon or a cultural inheritance such as being born into a group which claims a particular religion; it is a condition of soul: one either is rightly guided or one is not rightly guided.

The second principle is that submission to God is by individual choice.

256 There is no compulsion in doctrine; sound judgment has become clear from error. So whoso denies idols and believes in God, he has grasped the most firm handhold which has no break; and God is hearing and knowing. (2:256)

The third principle is that the job of those who are genuinely *muslim* is to call people to faith; it is not to force anyone to believe anything.

143 And thus We made you an intermediary community that you might be witnesses to mankind, and that the Messenger might be a witness to you[...] (2:143)

And fourthly, there is no such thing within the Qur'an as punishment for apostasy.

So to summarise briefly at this point:

- There exists no Qur'anic support for forcing anyone to believe anything — and that includes homosexuals, naturally
- Anyone can renounce his faith should he choose to at any time — and that includes homosexuals.

Homosexuality

The fact that one may choose to accept or reject faith taken as given, I will now look at the Qur'an's position on homosexuality.

The Qur'an provides clear statements which define core textual values (i.e. key words). And the core value we are looking for at this point is in Arabic *fāḥish* which I render throughout as *sexual immorality*.

While *fāḥish* is translated variously by the Traditionalist, we do not have to guess as to the meaning. The Qur'an applies *fāḥish* (sg.) to three scenarios only: sex outside marriage (17:32); marrying the former wife of one's father (4:22); and male homosexuality (7:80-81, 27:54-55).

References

fāḥishat — sexual immorality

3:135, 4:15, 4:19, 4:22, 4:25, 6:151, 7:28, 7:33, 7:80, 17:32, 24:19, 27:54, 29:28, 33:30, 42:37, 53:32, 65:1.

fāḥshā — sexual immorality

2:169, 2:268, 7:28, 12:24, 16:90, 24:21, 29:45.

32 And approach not unlawful sexual intercourse — it is sexual immorality, and evil as a path — (17:32)

22 And marry not what your fathers married among women save what is past; it was sexual immorality, and hateful, and an evil path. (4:22)

¹ Qur'anic verses not in italics are from *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation*.

¹ Qur'anic verses not in italics are from *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation*.

80 And Lot: when he said to his people: "Do you commit sexual immorality, that none among all mankind has preceded you?"

81 "You approach men with lust rather than women; the truth is, you are a people committing excess."
(7:80-81)

54 And Lot: when he said to his people: "Do you commit sexual immorality with open eyes?"

55 "Do you approach men with lust instead of women? The truth is, you are a people in ignorance."
(27:54-55)

There are two versions of this word (*fāhish* and *fahshā*). However, the fact that they are synonyms is established at 7:28, and I render them identically.

28 And when they commit sexual immorality, they say: "We found our fathers doing it," and: "God enjoined it upon us." Say thou: "God enjoins not sexual immorality; do you ascribe to God what you know not?"

29 Say thou: "My Lord has enjoined equity. Uphold your countenances at every place of worship, and call to Him, sincere to Him in doctrine; as He created you, so you will return."

30 A faction He guided, and upon a faction was misguidance due: they took the satans as allies instead of God, and think they are guided.
(7:28-30)

People of Lūt

Arguments are advanced that God's condemnation of the people of Lūt stemmed not so much from their homosexuality but from the particularly aggressive and rapacious form of homosexuality which they practiced. This argument seems to hold water, but only up to a point.

Firstly, to see that acceptance of open homosexuality within any society leads towards an aggressive homosexual proselytisation of the type under discussion one need only remember what the process has been in our own countries over the last thirty years.

In its early stage — in the propaganda stage — homosexuals were presented by media as sensitive and persecuted. This then transmuted into an assertive, condemnatory and aggressive stance by homosexuals, shouting down and labelling as bigots all who wished not to be subsumed within a cultural agenda set by them; in this stage they sought not only acquiescence (called 'tolerance') but required that everyone embrace and 'celebrate' their activities.

Laws are then brought in which persecute those who refuse to collude in the agenda advanced by highly vocal and aggressive homosexuals.

Do all homosexuals behave in this fashion? No. Is such an agenda an integral part of that political movement called Gay Rights? Without a doubt.

It is clear from the Qur'an that while the people of Lūt were aggressive and practiced male rape, it was specifically for male-

with-male sex that Lūt upbraided his people:

80 And Lot: when he said to his people: "Do you commit sexual immorality, that none among all mankind has preceded you?"

81 "You approach men with lust rather than women; the truth is, you are a people committing excess."
(7:80-81)

To summarise the Qur'anic position at this point:

- Faith is by choice
- Those who renounce faith have every right to do so
- Believers have no place imposing their faith upon others
- God does not enjoin sexual immorality and those who practice it are not rightly guided
- It is the satans which lead us to think we are guided when we are not
- Homosexuality is 'sexual immorality'; sexual immorality is sin
- Believers should warn against sin, including homosexuality and heterosexual sex outside of marriage
- The sexual immorality practiced by the people of Lūt was based in both ignorance and excess

So while the so-called liberal Muslim approach may appeal to those who wish to appease the vociferous so-called Gay Rights movement, or who wish not to be seen to be bigoted, or who are (understandably) appalled at the Islamicist practice of murdering homosexuals and wish to counter that evil, their arguments — well intentioned or not — do not stand up to a rigorous Qur'anic analysis. In the Qur'anic worldview, male homosexual activity is sin — along with heterosexual activity outside of marriage. There is simply no getting away from this fact.

Yet as concerns a community of unbelievers, beyond the duty to exhort people to turn away from sin, the believer has no remit.

Within the believing community

There is no Qur'anic provision to force another to join a community of believers, and none to coerce one to remain within such a community who wishes to leave. However, within a community of believers marriage is the only acceptable institution within which sex is condoned.

The Qur'an is clear on the question of the marriage bond for believers: it may exist between one man and up to four women at any one time. The question of women taken in war or bought as slaves is separate and will not be looked at here.

It is unquestionably the case that it is women (*nisā*) who accept or reject marriage proposals — never men. Thus, there are no grounds for arguing in favour of a marriage bond between men.

The Qur'an nowhere regards homosexuality as a legitimate sexual requirement or need and nor does it regard heterosexual activity outside marriage in such a light. Believers are to be chaste until married (24:33).

This puts paid to any claims on the part of those who practice

either heterosexual sexual activity outside marriage or homosexual activity of any type; among the practitioners of both (what we shall call here) deviancies are those who claim that they are unable to resist the urge; that they are 'made that way'; or that it is a social custom and accepted practice.

Those from any background who practice such deviancies and argue from the stance that they are natural, necessary or accepted find no purchase in the Qur'an for their positions; rather, they follow the *shaytān*.

168 O mankind: eat of what is in the earth lawful and good, and follow not the footsteps of the satan; he is to you an open enemy.

169 He but enjoins upon you evil and sexual immorality, and that you ascribe to God what you know not.

170 And when it is said to them: "Follow what God has sent down," they say: "Nay, we will follow that upon which we found our fathers;" — even though their fathers did not reason, nor were they guided?
(2:168-170)

Within the context of a community of believers we are to hinder those we know to be committing *fāhish* — or sexual immorality:

16 And the two who commit it among you, hinder them; but if they repent and make right, let them be; God is accepting of repentance and merciful.
(4:16)

But should such people disregard our disapproval and have means and opportunity to engage in their sins without our acquiescence or our assistance, their case falls under the remit of those principles outlined in chapter 24 which treat specifically of the believing community.

2 The unchaste woman and the unchaste man: lash each one of the two with a hundred lashes, and let not pity for them take you concerning the doctrine of God if you believe in God and the Last Day. And let witness their punishment a number of the believers.
(24:2)

However, the Qur'anic requirement is four witnesses to the fact; not four people who suspect, four people who surmise or four people who deduce; but four eye-witnesses.

Again at chapter 24 we find a general warning which should be instructive to us all:

19 Those who love that there be spread sexual immorality among those who heed warning, theirs will be a painful punishment in the World and the Hereafter; and God knows and you know not.

20 And were it not for the bounty of God upon you and His mercy, and that God is kind and merciful[...].

21 O you who heed warning: follow not the footsteps of the satan. And whoso follows the footsteps of the satan: he enjoins sexual immorality and perversity. And were it not for the bounty of God upon you and His mercy, not one of you would have been pure ever. But God increases in

purity whom He wills; and God is hearing and knowing.
(24:19-21)

Directly following this section we find the rules on entering houses. The location of these rules is itself instructive.

27 O you who heed warning: enter not houses other than your houses until you have asked leave and greeted the people thereof; that is best for you, that you might take heed.

28 And if you find not therein anyone, then enter not until leave be given you. And if it be said to you: "Go back," then go back; it is purer for you. And God knows what you do.

29 You do no wrong to enter uninhabited houses in which there is benefit for you. And God knows what you proclaim and what you conceal.
(24:27-29)

In summary, the Qur'anic position in the context of a believing community with regard to those committing the sin of *zinā* (fornication / adultery) is:

- Such people are to be hindered (i.e. not encouraged or assisted in their sin)
- Such people — along with all other people — are to be inviolate in their own homes; not subject to intrusions or importune 'visits' from busybodies or so-called morality police or anyone else
- Such people are to be punished by means of 100 lashes — a punishment to be witnessed by believers — in the event that four eye-witnesses are produced.

Thus, the society intrinsically discourages such sins; it also punishes flagrant demonstrations of those sins in the public arena; at the same time it allows those determined to indulge in them the possibility to do so in the privacy of their own homes — and denies the broader society the opportunity of violating that privacy.

My opinion

My position is that homosexuality within the believing community is covered by the laws governing *zinā* since my understanding given Qur'anic usage is that *zinā* is penetrative sex of any kind outside marriage (the impossibility of homosexual marriage having been summarised above).

Lesbianism is not referred to in the Qur'an. Since there is no physical intrusion upon the body of the woman by the phallus — and hence no genuine copulation — lesbianism is a non-issue Qur'anically speaking.

And while heterosexual marriage is unequivocally the unit of society, all believers are to be safeguarded from prying eyes in the privacy of their own homes — including those practicing male or female homosexuality or engaging in extramarital (heterosexual) sex.

To be clear: according to the Qur'an male homosexuality is not merely a lifestyle choice, it is a sin; it is not an intrinsic condition, it is a perversion of the natural condition. It is a condition of excess, ignorance and lust; something a godly society restrains,

constrains and does not promote. But it is not a sin beyond redemption, and it is certainly not a sin worthy of death — and those who take it upon themselves to mete out mortal punishments are guilty of murder.

Final thoughts

In closing, I would like to say the following: I was brought up in an ignorant and licentious society; like most people of my generation I, too, was indoctrinated to believe that sexual licence was a form of freedom and a good thing, and that any sort of restraint upon inclination was an imposition or evil. When I began to take the Qur'an seriously and took the decision to base my life upon it, I realised that — as a believer — I needed to repent of my past sins and to turn away from them in future. This I did; and I recommend that course to all.

My position is that it is not the place of believers to attack those who have been deceived into embracing what the Qur'an regards as sexual immorality. But neither should we allow immoral propaganda to flow unchecked into our minds or those of our children or to allow it to pollute the houses in which we live. We should be uncompromising and ready always to tell those who enquire about a righteous life that they should give up sin and be pure. And we should be exemplars of exactly that righteousness we would promote to others.

But while working to prevent the propagation of sin into our communities — and while taking sensible precautions to protect our children from it — we should not hurry to condemn those who have bought into homosexual propaganda. Rather, we should remember that we are called to follow the creed of Ibrāhīm:

95 Say thou: "God spoke truly; so follow the creed of Abraham, inclining to truth; and he was not of the idolaters."
(3:95)

And Ibrāhīm's attitude to the homosexuals of his day is instructive — as is God's response:

74 And when the alarm had left Abraham and the glad tidings had reached him, he disputed with Us concerning the people of Lot;
75 Abraham was clement, compassionate, penitent.
76 "O Abraham: forsake thou this; the command of thy Lord has come, and there will come to them a punishment which cannot be repelled."
(11:74-76)

If you are currently a heterosexual libertine or a homosexual and you want to be clean, I recommend immersing yourself in scripture, prayer, penance and fasting. If you sincerely ask God to guide you and make every effort to follow His guidance, I am confident that you will be successful.

But those who do not wish to repent from sexual immorality — or think they can leave repentance to a later point — I leave with the following thought:

18 And acceptance of repentance is not for those who do evil deeds — when death has come to one of them, he says: "I repent now," — nor is it for those who die as atheists; for those We have prepared a painful punishment.
(4:18)

Al Ṣalāt and Al Zakāt Considered

Introduction

In this article we will be discussing two important features of the Qur'an's presentation: what are called in Arabic *al ṣalāt* and *al zakāt*.

For those with no background in the Traditionalist's presentation, the summary of his position is that *al ṣalāt* is a precise worship ritual, and *al zakāt* is a specific annual tax. The details pursuant to his understanding are not found in the Qur'an, but are derived from a vast body of literature called the *aḥādīth*.

While *al ṣalāt* and *al zakāt* are mentioned separately in a number of places, they are found frequently together — so much so that, in tandem, the terms form a significant Qur'anic motif (see 2:43, 2:83, 2:110, 2:177, 2:277, 4:77, 4:162, 5:12, 5:55, 9:5, 9:11, 9:18, 9:71, 19:31, 19:55, 22:41, 22:78, 24:37, 24:56, 27:3, 31:4, 33:33, 58:13, 73:20, 98:5).

The requirement to comply with the imperatives which feature these terms is so strong within the text of the Qur'an that the Traditionalist's understanding of them forms two of the principal pillars of his religion (although it should be noted that neither term is named as a pillar of religion in the Qur'an, and nowhere does the Qur'an treat directly of such a concept as pillars of religion).

In eight of the cases listed above (2:43, 2:83, 2:110, 4:77, 22:78, 24:56, 58:13, 73:20), these two terms are delivered by means of the masculine plural imperative, namely: *uphold al ṣalāt, and render al zakāt* (Arabic: *أَقِمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَعَاتُوا الزَّكَاةَ*). The masculine plural imperative in Arabic is used to direct the imperative mood towards a plurality of male persons, but it is used also with regard to the generality of humankind.

The Qur'an is clear: people are *to uphold x and to pay (or render) y*; but it does not supply an obvious description of either *x* or *y* *in situ*. Rather, the meaning of both parts of this imperative is treated as self-evident, and this fact produces a sense of want in the reflective reader.

For the Traditionalist, the absence of the details in the Qur'an itself implies a need for his extraneous (and voluminous) literature known as the *aḥādīth* and developments based thereupon (particularly, what is claimed to be the *sunnah* — or *practice* of the Prophet). One might assume, given the Traditionalist's high dudgeon and energetic presentation, that there exists a single statement in his supposedly reliable non-Qur'anic literature where the form and content of the complete ritual he calls *al ṣalāt* is clearly set out. But one would be mistaken. He has constructed a ritual out of little pieces carved out of the corpus of the *aḥādīth* literature and claimed the result to be of divine origin. Nowhere does any single *hadīth* which he claims to be reliable contain a full explanation of the ritual he claims to be the central — if not the defining — characteristic of his religion.

This is problematic for the Traditionalist. His theology is predicated on the idea that the claimed sources for his stories had superlative memories and were the best Muslims that ever existed. Yet not one of the stories attributed to any one of the

sources he regards as reliable provides a single instance where one of the best Muslims who ever existed proved capable of doing what any child of only average intelligence and perhaps less-than-average piety brought up in a Traditionalist Muslim household can today do with ease, namely: list the received daily prayers and summarise their exact format.

Again, the Qur'an itself nowhere says that the value for *al ṣalāt* is equal to *x*. The Traditionalist assumes a value of *x* and then attacks those who are sceptical of his claims for not agreeing with his externally derived value for *x* — a value he himself cannot find cut of whole cloth within the vast library of non-Qur'anic sources he claims as canonical.

A further problem is that the Traditionalist's extraneously derived specificity results in values which ill suit universal application across all instances of the term as found in the Qur'an, or contradict clear Qur'anic principles. Additionally, his values are noun types which require glaringly illegitimate combinations in cases where a single verb takes two objects — a subject we address in detail later.

We share the sense of deficiency implicit in the Qur'anic imperative we identified above. But rather than look elsewhere for our values, we embrace the components of this core imperative itself to identify both the noun *type* and *value* for each term by leveraging the mechanics of key sentence structures and insisting upon values which are consistent across all instances.

The Torah and the Qur'an

We will begin here with the first three instances in the textual order of the imperative statement identified above.

The first two cases are unambiguously directed to the children of Israel:

40 O children of Israel: remember My favour wherewith I favoured you; and fulfil the covenant with Me, and I will fulfil the covenant with you; and Me — be you in fear of Me.

41 And believe in what I have sent down confirming what is with you, and be not the first to deny it; and sell not My proofs at a cheap price; and Me — be you in prudent fear of Me.

42 And clothe not truth with vanity, nor conceal the truth when you know.

43 And **uphold *al ṣalāt*, and render *al zakāt***, and be lowly with the lowly.¹
(2:40-43)

And when We took an agreement of the children of Israel: "Serve not save God; and towards parents good conduct, and towards kin, and the fatherless, and the poor; and speak kindly to men; and **uphold *al ṣalāt*, and render *al zakāt***," then you turned away save a few among you; and you are averse.
(2:83)

While it may be argued that 2:43 is an imperative anchored in

¹ Qur'anic verses not in italics are from *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation*.

the time of the revelation of the Qur'an, there is no question that 2:83 is anything other than a historical (i.e. pre-Qur'anic) case.

We turn now to the third instance:

108 If you desire to ask your messenger as Moses was asked before: — and whoso exchanges faith for denial has strayed from the right path —

109 Many among the doctors of the Law wish to turn you back as atheists after your faith out of envy from their souls after the truth has become clear to them. But pardon and forbear until God brings His command; God is over all things powerful.

110 And **uphold *al ṣalāt*, and render *al zakāt***; and what good you send ahead for your souls, you will find it with God; God sees what you do.

111 And they say: "None will enter the Garden save such as hold to Judaism, or are Christians." Those are their vain desires. Say thou: "Bring your evidence, if you be truthful."

112 Verily, whoso submits his face to God and is a doer of good, he has his reward with his Lord; and no fear will be upon them, nor will they grieve.

(2:108-112)

The imperative at 2:110 itself can be read as directed both towards the doctors of the Law (understood here as the doctrinal leaders among the Jews and the Christians) and towards the believers in the Qur'anic revelation. At the same time, the entire broader segment runs contrary to the type of sectarian specificity the Traditionalist requires of *uphold al ṣalāt*, and *render al zakāt*.

On the basis of what we have seen to this point, if *al ṣalāt* and *al zakāt* mean what the Traditionalist says they do, the children of Israel have either never met God's requirements of them or, if they have met them, they have consistently concealed the fact.

Some Islamic commentators supply workarounds to accommodate this difficulty. But they create thereby further problems, since they increase their stock of specific but inconsistent definitions for terms which feature repeatedly in a book which itself claims to be consistent.

I say that the case is simpler: the terms *al ṣalāt* and *al zakāt* are consistently used in the Qur'an, and their meanings can be derived from the text. The result does not suit the Traditionalist because his religion needs them to mean something very specific — something the values of which he is the arbiter. I say that when God tells the children of Israel in the Qur'an that they should *uphold al ṣalāt*, and *render al zakāt*, this is something the children of Israel could implement on the basis of the Torah not only historically, but today also.

I will now summarise my understanding of these two terms based on my research; I provide a fuller discussion of both in what follows.

The term *al ṣalāt* is a generic term meaning *the duty or the commandment* (i.e. of God). The imperative *uphold the*

commandment of God is capable of two modes of application: it can be understood as a general instruction to obey the commandments of God overall (i.e. to keep the principal duties which God makes binding upon a man), or in a more exact sense, one which is dictated by context. In my view, the Qur'an uses both these modes.

The term *al zakāt* is a subset of the commandments of God, one which treats solely of three scenarios in which one should spend (none of which coincides with the Traditionalist's value for *al zakāt*). We identify these three scenarios later in this presentation.

Lastly, my view is that the absence of detail to be found in the Qur'an in regard to these two terms is — to put it in modern technical parlance — not a bug, but a feature.

We saw above that the first three instances of this key imperative in the Qur'anic text treat of the children of Israel. Turning to the Torah, we find that the Hebrew term *mitzvah* (*duty, commandment*) is capable of the same dual application we assert for *ṣalāt*: on the one hand, the instruction *to obey the commandment of God* has a generic or general sense, while in particular contexts it may have also a specific application.

Moreover, on a pan-textual basis the value of *ṣalāt* as *duty* fits all instances of the word, whereas the Traditionalist is forced to resort to a form of linguistic juggling.

Maimonides identifies 613 *mitzvot* (commandments or duties) in the Torah, and his enumeration is the most popular today, but other assessments and compilations exist also. No matter the precise number and exact nature of the *mitzvot*, we can agree that the Torah contains a heavy legal component, whence its name is derived (Torah means Instruction or Law). The word *zakāt* is related to the Hebrew זָכָה (*z'khūt*, "legal right, moral right, merit"). I assert that the imperative upon the children of Israel in the Qur'an to *render al zakāt* refers to that subset of the total *mitzvot* which treat of what one is to spend. And the meaning of the term for those who hold to the Qur'anic revelation is analogous: a discrete subset of the total duties binding upon a believer which treat of what one is to spend.

Of course, the Torah provides much information of a specific kind, information which is highly time- and location-specific, and which can now be applied in modern times only after challenging processes of analogising.

The Qur'an is clear both that the Torah contains a righteous law and that God ordains communities with their own sets of laws (5:44-48). I assert that *al ṣalāt* and *al zakāt* have comparable general meanings in the case of both the Torah and the Qur'an, but that the application is, by dint of the differences in the amount and type of law the two scriptures contain, different in terms of detail for the followers of each scripture. (Consider the imperative *Go home!* If you live in one city and I live in another, we can set off in entirely different directions, while obeying the same instruction.)

The Qur'an's component of legal imperatives is tiny by comparison with the Torah (the number of three percent has been cited for the amount of text in the Qur'an dedicated to legal matters, and while I have not counted the verses personally, as one who knows the Qur'an well, this assessment seems about right).

Additionally — and importantly — the Qur'an's mode of delivery is different to that of the Torah; the Qur'an tends to paint with a broad brush, frequently leaving the believer to infer details from context.

Understanding *al ṣalāt* generically and as a term with a dual mode results in a core of permanent duties binding upon all believers which may be combined with time- and location-specific duties binding upon particular believers in particular circumstances. A system of Qur'anic jurisprudence based on this hermeneutic would draw on explicit Qur'anic statements to establish the fixed principles, and leverage particular contexts for secondary purposes, and thus be entirely free of legal impositions originating externally to the Qur'anic text.

The imposition of externally derived specificity in the case of both the terms which form the focus of this discussion created a system in which ossification and blind imitation were inevitable, and resulted in societies in which innovation is not only discouraged, it is actively attacked.

The task here is not to present a new and fully-fledged system of jurisprudence; this would be task for specialists in law and related fields. Rather, my object is to outline the hermeneutic platform upon which such processes may take place. The Qur'an is not a revelation the task of which is to impose seventh-century Arabian culture upon the world; it is a revelation for all mankind — at least, that is its claim. And, as such, it must — by virtue of what it is — lock within its system a high degree of latitude. Thus, the absence of specificity which the Traditionalist (correctly) identifies in the Qur'an is, as we have said, not a bug, but a feature. And when understood as such, it is a great boon.

We will now look at the components of the imperative which is the subject of this analysis in some detail.

Discussion of *al ṣalāt*

My argument, in summary, is as follows:

1. The Traditionalist conflates different types of noun in an opaque manner: he treats *al ṣalāt* predominantly as a proper noun (i.e. the Prayer) whether or not he capitalises it in his translations, while also treating it as both a common noun and an abstract noun on an *ad hoc* basis;
2. That while a generic and an abstract noun may together legitimately be objects of a single verb, and while a proper noun and a common noun may together legitimately be objects of a single verb, no crossover between these two categories is possible (e.g. a single verb may not legitimately take both an abstract and a proper noun as objects); yet, the Traditionalist's values for *al ṣalāt* force precisely this type of unnaturalness upon the Qur'anic text;
3. And that the verb portion of the first part of the imperative

which forms the basis of our argument — *uphold al ṣalāt*, and *render al zakāt* (Arabic: *أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ*) — supplies the signpost necessary to demonstrate that *al ṣalāt* must be a generic noun.

Noun types

We will be dealing with four noun types: proper noun, common noun, generic noun, and abstract noun. Our definition summaries come from gramerly.com.

Proper nouns and common nouns

A proper noun is a specific (i.e., not generic) name for a particular person, place, or thing. Proper nouns are always capitalized in English, no matter where they fall in a sentence. Because they endow nouns with a specific name, they are also sometimes called proper names.

Every noun can be classified as either common or proper. A common noun is the generic name for one item in a class or group.

palace
girl
book

A proper noun, on the other hand, names a noun precisely.

Buckingham Palace
Cynthia
War and Peace

Generic nouns

Generic nouns are nouns that refer to all members of a class or group. They are often used when making generalizations or talking about universal truths. Generic nouns can be singular or plural, and be used with or without articles.

*Do you think **the computer** has revolutionised our society?*

Abstract nouns

An abstract noun is a noun that cannot be perceived using one of the five senses (i.e., taste, touch, sight, hearing, smelling). Look at the examples below:

*We can't imagine the **courage** it took to do that.*

Courage is an abstract noun because it cannot be seen, heard, tasted, touched, or smelled.

*Early paleontologists assumed that the small brains of some dinosaurs indicated **stupidity** of the species.*

*Higher **education** is strongly recommended.*

There is a conceptual line dividing these noun types into two groups with proper nouns and common nouns on one side of the line, and generic nouns and abstract nouns on the other.

proper nouns | generic nouns

common nouns | abstract nouns

Below are examples of a single verb taking different types of noun as objects. The verb in each case is in bold and the noun objects of the verb are in italics. In the case of legitimate combinations, both objects are from the same side of the line.

The following combinations are legitimate:

As a mathematician, **he utilises** logical *thought* [abstract] and the modern *computer* [generic].

She read my *books* [common] including *War and Peace* [proper].

We will now mix up the types in an illegitimate fashion based on the first example:

As a mathematician, **he utilises** logical *thought* [abstract] and his *computer* [common].

While this may initially and superficially seem an acceptable combination, on reflection one sees that there is an insurmountable dissonance between the two objects (whereas *thought* [abstract] will remain a constant, his *computer* [common] will change over time).

If we change this last item for something presumably more permanent than the oft-changing computer, the dissonance becomes more obvious:

As a mathematician, **he utilises** logical *thought* [abstract] and his comfortable *study* [common].

Of course, it is possible to apply verbs with fuzzy meanings (*to like, to love*, etc.) and thereby seem to be able to combine noun types from both sides of the line, but any apparent legitimate combination of types of object will be the result of an imprecise use of language.

In the second example, one struggles to suggest nouns from the opposite side of the line which could be inserted. The reader may experiment for himself (abstract nouns include: *hope, patience, love, fear, loathing*; for a pointer on generic nouns, see above.)

Verbs with two objects

We return now to the Qur'an. I have left *al ṣalāt* below untranslated:

45 And seek help in patience and *al ṣalāt* [...] (2:45)

Before we continue, let us consider the current summary on Wikipedia of the Anglican Mass:

Gathering: Begins with a Trinitarian-based greeting or seasonal acclamation ("Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy spirit. And Blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen").[45] Then the Kyrie and a general confession and absolution follow. On Sundays outside Advent and Lent and on major festivals, the Gloria in Excelsis Deo is sung

or said. The entrance rite then concludes with the collect of the day.

Proclaiming and Hearing the Word: Usually two to three readings of Scripture, one of which is always from the Gospels, plus a psalm (or portion thereof) or canticle between the lessons. This is followed by a sermon or homily; the recitation of one of the Creeds, viz., the Apostles' or Nicene, is done on Sundays and feasts.

The Prayers of the People: Quite varied in their form.

The Peace: The people stand and greet one another and exchange signs of God's peace in the name of the Lord. It functions as a bridge between the prayers, lessons, sermon and creeds to the Communion part of the Eucharist.

The Celebration of the Eucharist: The gifts of bread and wine are brought up, along with other gifts (such as money or food for a food bank, etc.), and an offertory prayer is recited. Following this, a Eucharistic Prayer (called "The Great Thanksgiving") is offered. This prayer consists of a dialogue (the Sursum Corda), a preface, the sanctus and benedictus, the Words of Institution, the Anamnesis, an Epiclesis, a petition for salvation, and a Doxology. The Lord's Prayer precedes the fraction (the breaking of the bread), followed by the Prayer of Humble Access or the Agnus Dei and the distribution of the sacred elements (the bread and wine).

Dismissal: There is a post-Communion prayer, which is a general prayer of thanksgiving. The service concludes with a Trinitarian blessing and the dismissal.

We see plainly that each part of the process above is a proper noun. It is identified as such by means of capital letters, and its specifics follow. The Traditionalist's preferred treatment of *al ṣalāt* is precisely of this order:

The Prayer: A procedure of washing, standing, reciting verses of the Qur'an, bowing, prostrating, and sitting performed at prescribed times and in prescribed numbers of units each day.

And the Traditionalist is quite happy with this evaluation, except where it creates problems for him — and it creates many.

But he tends to focus the mind of the English-speaker on the cases where this value suits him, and to allow the English-speaker to understand the definite article (Arabic: *al*) to have in Arabic the function it has in English (that of indicating specificity). Of course, it frequently has that sense in Arabic. But the Traditionalist omits to tell the English-speaker that generic and abstract nouns can also require the definite article in Arabic, (and there are many examples in the Qur'an of both which all — including the Traditionalists — translate accordingly).

In the verse at 2:45, in both cases the noun is attended by the definite article: *al ṣabr* (English: *patience*) and *al ṣalāt*. And — importantly — the Qur'an links these words by means of a single verb. And this fact damns the Traditionalist's treatment of *al ṣalāt* as a proper noun.

The Arabic *al ṣabr* (English: *patience*) is not a proper noun. We know — and it is uncontested by the Traditionalist — that *al ṣabr* means *patience* or a synonym thereof. The question is

whether we mean *patience* as a purely abstract noun (i.e. the abstract quality of *patience* in general) or *patience* as a generic noun (i.e. as a noun that refer to all members of a class by means of a singular case); but whichever we admit makes no difference to the fact that *al ṣalāt* must also be one or the other; that is, it must fall the same side of the conceptual line as *al ṣabr*.

One either has patience in a given circumstance or one does not have it. And while it is true that in some cases a man may exhibit patience by gritting his teeth and clenching his fists, that does not mean that either the gritting of the teeth or the clenching of the fists defines patience in any way, let alone exhaustively. A man who exhibits these two attributes in certain circumstances would not be having patience, he would be having a seizure.

If the Traditionalist stands firm in his default value of *al ṣalāt* here, it results in a mismatch of noun types (in this case, of an abstract noun with a proper noun). While this mismatch is not immediately obvious, it becomes clearer when we apply a similar mismatch to one of our previous examples:

As an Anglican mathematician, **he utilises** logical *thought* [abstract] and *The Celebration of the Eucharist* [proper].

Here there is an obvious disconnect between the two objects, one which becomes more distinct the more specific one gets about what the verb means.

What the Traditionalist does in effect is slide in and out of an abstract value for *al ṣalāt* (i.e. prayer as a general concept) where it suits him (and in cases such as that at 2:45 he has no alternative since he is pinned down by a logical fork created by the single verb taking two objects).

We operate according to a textually-based hermeneutic. Accordingly, in order to refine our understanding, we look to the broader text. We find that *al ṣabr* occurs only four times in the Qur'an, and in each of these four cases it is combined with a second noun as the object of a single verb, either directly (where only one verb exists) or effectively (where the same verb repeats).

Thus, in addition to 2:45 above, we find:

153 O you who heed warning: **seek help in patience and *al ṣalāt***; God is with the patient. (2:153)

17 Then being among those who heed warning, and **counsel one another to patience**, and **counsel one another to compassion**. (90:17)

2 Man is in loss,
3 Save those who heed warning and do righteous deeds, and **counsel one another to truth**, and **counsel one another to patience**. (103:2-3)

If one considers all four verses themselves as well as the available broader contexts (particularly 2:153-157, 90:11-17), it

could be argued that what is meant is *the act of patience* (i.e. as a generic noun; that is: a single act of patience indicative of more of like kind), and not patience as an abstract concept. Support for this may be found at 103:3 which expressly treats of actions (righteous deeds), while the broader context of 90:11-17 makes plain that both patience and compassion have practical, real-world applications. But whether read as a generic or an abstract noun, the fact is, this noun is unambiguously on the generic-abstract side of the conceptual line affecting nouns.

In view of the fact that *al ṣabr* is combined also with *al ṣalāt* by means of a single verb at 2:45, *al ṣalāt* must also be on the same side of the conceptual line.

It follows that to speak of a single, knowable, definition of *al ṣalāt* is as illogical as to claim one knows the exact specification of *the computer* [which] *has revolutionised society* or of a single, universally recognised and applicable form of patience suitable to all circumstances.

Finally, since *al ṣalāt* and *al zakāt* are themselves combined also by means of a single verb, *al zakāt* must also be either a generic or an abstract noun (and, therefore, to speak of a single, universal value for *al zakāt* fails for the same reasons it does for *al ṣalāt*).

The two places where this occurs are:

31 "And made me [Jesus] blessed wherever I be — and **enjoined upon me *al ṣalāt* and *al zakāt*** as long as I live — (19:31)

55 He [Ishmael] **enjoined upon his people *al ṣalāt* and *al zakāt***, and was pleasing in the sight of his Lord. (19:55)

The imperative plural verb form

We turn now to the imperative plural verb form which features in the first part of the phrase *uphold al ṣalāt, and render al zakāt* (Arabic: أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ).

Outside those instances which take *al ṣalāt* as the object, the same form of the imperative of the verb *to uphold* (Arabic: *aqīmū*) is found in four places only (7:29, 42:13, 55:9, 65:2). These are listed below with additional context where needed:

28 And when they commit sexual immorality, they say: "We found our fathers doing it," and: "God enjoined it upon us." Say thou: "God enjoins not sexual immorality; do you ascribe to God what you know not?"

29 Say thou: "My Lord has enjoined equity. **Uphold your countenances** at every place of worship, and call to Him, sincere to Him in doctrine; as He created you, so you will return."

30 A faction He guided, and upon a faction was misguidance due: they took the satans as allies instead of God, and think they are guided.

(7:28-30)

The broadly Sunni translator Muhammad Asad supplies a note at 7:29 which opens:

The term wajh (lit., "face") occurring here is often used, in the abstract sense, to denote a person's entire being or entire attention - as, for instance, in the phrase aslamtu wajhi li'llahi, "I have surrendered my whole being unto God" (3:20)[...]

I broadly agree with Asad, but his clarity and honesty are not representative of the Traditionalist position. The two notes to my own translation at this point read:

Arabic: *aqāma*. Wherever this verb occurs with *al ṣalāt* as the object the Traditionalist says it means *to uphold* or *to establish the [five daily] prayer[s]* (a regimen found nowhere in the Qur'an). Here it takes *wujūhahum* (*your faces* or *your countenances*). Now that he needs it to mean something completely different, the verb is bent into the necessary shape; the Hilali & Khan translation, for example, has here: *that you should face Him only (i.e. worship none but Allah and face the Qiblah, i.e. the Ka'bah at Makkah during prayers) in each and every place of worship*. The serious student of the Qur'an should understand that this type of bait-and-switch is typical of the Traditionalist's treatment of the Qur'an: his job is to impose his religion upon the text no matter what the words say or mean. Additionally, his sectarian value for *masjid* collapses if one considers 7:31, for example, which also employs *masjid* and is directed to all mankind.

Arabic: *wajh* — *face, countenance, personality, true self*. I take the collocation *to uphold one's countenance* to mean *(be able to) hold one's head up high* in English. The preceding context is the key: by staying sexually clean, observing equity (which means integrity and consistency with inner convictions on the one hand, and faith in God alone on the other — see 3:18 and note thereto) one may come before God in prayer and worship in an effective manner. Without sexual purity, it is not possible. This is why all Satanic systems promote illicit sex as virtue.

Whether or not one agrees with my deeper thoughts on the subject, the fact is that an objective reading of the text supports what both Asad and I maintain: that the word *countenances* (or *faces*) is used here in an abstract sense.

We turn now to the second instance of the imperative form of the verb *to uphold* which comprises this portion of our discussion.

13 He ordained for you of doctrine what He enjoined upon Noah, and that We have revealed to thee, and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus: **"Uphold the doctrine, and be not divided therein."** Difficult for the idolaters is that to which thou investest them. God chooses for Himself whom He wills, and guides to Himself him who turns in repentance. (42:13)

While the Traditionalist claims here a single religion or doctrine revealed to those mentioned, this is shown to be false if one

applies to the word translated *the doctrine* above the level of specificity the Traditionalist requires of it. The Traditionalist's religion requires mention of Muḥammad as part of its initiating statement (a statement found nowhere cut of whole cloth in the Qur'an), and is something those mentioned above prior to Muḥammad could not possibly have said. The remaining pillars of the Traditionalist's religion likewise either shake or collapse once one applies similarly stringent rationale to them. The only remaining option is that *the doctrine* is used here generically. The final two remaining instances in our list read:

9 And **uphold the weight** with equity, and cause not loss to the balance. (55:9)

2 And when they have reached their term, retain them according to what is fitting, or release them according to what is fitting. And call to witness two just men from among you; and **uphold the witness** for God. By that is admonished he who believes in God and the Last Day; and whoso is in prudent fear of God — He will make for him a way out, (65:2)

It is not possible that *the weight* and *the witness* in the verses above can be proper nouns (i.e. objectively recognised values which do not change, which is what the Traditionalist requires for *al ṣalāt* and *al zakāt*). It is clear that both *the weight* and *the witness* are generic values — that is, values the specifics of which depend upon individual contexts — and the Traditionalist himself treats them as such.

Our argument, then, is that in every case beyond that core phrase which comprises the platform for this discussion, the imperative plural of the verb *to uphold* (Arabic: *aqīmū*) takes a generic or abstract object (and in three of those cases, one with a definite article); that, likewise, the term *al ṣalāt* means *the duty* or *the commandment* in a generic sense, the instruction *to uphold the duty* being comparable in type to the instructions treating of *the weight* and *the witness*: i.e. indicating generic instances, or instances known by context.

The Traditionalist's pan-textual treatment of *al ṣalāt*

We will summarise briefly the nature of the problem the Traditionalist creates for himself and those who are guided by him by his treatment of *al ṣalāt*.

As we have seen, he generally means by this term a precise formula of washing, standing, bowing, prostrating and sitting. And while the Traditionalist does not always capitalise the noun, he treats *al ṣalāt* by default as a proper noun, i.e. *the Prayer*. Like *Mount Everest*, by *the Prayer* he means something known and recognised as a discrete thing.

The duplicity and ambiguity inherent in the Traditionalist's presentation of this term is exacerbated by the fact that *prayer* for the English speaker is an abstract rather than concrete concept, and translations which use *prayer* manage to slip a conflation of noun types past the attention of the non-specialist reader.

But the Traditionalist is highly inconsistent in his treatment of this word. The range of values he applies to *ṣalāt* and its plural *ṣalawāt* comprises:

- Default: the Islamic ritual (proper noun)
- Prayer in general (abstract noun)
- The Jewish prayer (proper noun)
- Blessings — most commonly: blessings sent by the believer upon the (dead) Prophet (abstract noun)
- Blessings — from God toward men (abstract noun)
- Synagogues (common noun)

This assertion may be verified by means of an exhaustive linguistic concordance of the Qur'an. An online utility of this nature is found at corpus.quran.com.

A hand and a glove possess a correlation which a foot and the same glove simply do not enjoy, no matter how one pushes. And what the Traditionalist has *does not fit*; it fits neither in terms of word meaning nor in terms of noun type. He is forced to adopt multiple values for *ṣalāt* and to make use of both sides of the conceptual line we identified above since the tension created by the surrounding context is so great in certain places that he can complete the verse with a straight face by no other means.

If we test *duty* as a generic noun across all instances in the text, it fits in every case. There are no overlaps or unclear instances. Gone are blessings sent upon a dead prophet, Jewish synagogues, and all the other workarounds to which the Traditionalist has to resort. The reading flows and is unproblematic throughout, including at instances such as 9:84, 9:103, 11:87, 19:59, 24:41, 33:43, 33:56, 35:18 and 58:13.

Importantly, gone also is any need to hop from one side to the other of the conceptual line between noun types.

Worship

One is obliged to say a few words about formal worship since this is the value the Traditionalist strains to attach to *al ṣalāt* in every case.

There are instances in the Qur'an which treat of worship in the context of *al ṣalāt* (*duty*). Clearly, worship was a duty upon the Messenger, as it was upon all men of God. If we earnestly seek God, we make worship a duty upon ourselves also.

But to claim *al ṣalāt* in every case to be worship is like claiming fruit in every case to be oranges; certainly, oranges *are* fruit, but not all fruits are oranges, and to treat them as if they were is sophistry.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

ṣallata
3:39, 4:102, 4:102, 9:84, 9:103, 33:43, 33:56, 33:56, 75:31, 87:15, 96:10, 108:2.
muṣalīn
70:22, 74:43, 107:4.

ṣalāt
2:3, 2:43, 2:45, 2:83, 2:110, 2:153, 2:157, 2:177, 2:238, 2:238, 2:277, 4:43, 4:77, 4:101, 4:102, 4:103, 4:103, 4:103, 4:142, 4:162, 5:6, 5:12, 5:55, 5:58, 5:91, 5:106, 6:72, 6:92, 6:162, 7:170, 8:3, 8:35, 9:5, 9:11, 9:18, 9:54, 9:71, 9:99, 9:103, 10:87, 11:87, 11:114, 13:22, 14:31, 14:37, 14:40, 17:78, 17:110, 19:31, 19:55, 19:59, 20:14, 20:132, 21:73, 22:35, 22:40, 22:41, 22:78, 23:2, 23:9, 24:37, 24:41, 24:56, 24:58, 24:58, 27:3, 29:45, 29:45, 30:31, 31:4, 31:17, 33:33, 35:18, 35:29, 42:38, 58:13, 62:9, 62:10, 70:23, 70:34, 73:20, 98:5, 107:5.
muṣallan
2:125.

Discussion of *al zakāt*

My argument, in summary, is as follows:

1. The Traditionalist treats *al zakāt* as a proper noun when it simply cannot be one, for reasons we have covered above; it is a generic noun;
2. That the instruction to the children of Israel in the Qur'an to render *al zakāt* treats of a subset of their total commandments (i.e. of those which treat of payments), and we should expect an analogous value for *al zakāt* in the context of the Qur'an;
3. And that the verb portion of the second part of the imperative which forms the basis of our argument — *uphold al ṣalāt, and render al zakāt* (Arabic: *أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ*) — supplies the signpost necessary to demonstrate in what *al zakāt* consists in the Qur'anic context.

American economist Mark Skousen has said:

Taxation is the price we pay for failing to build a civilized society. The higher the tax level, the greater the failure. A centrally planned totalitarian state represents a complete defeat for the civilized world, while a totally voluntary society represents its ultimate success.

I agree with Skousen's statement. And it is interesting in this regard that the only contexts in which the Qur'an mentions particular figures (fractions) to be given by believers concern inheritance law (specifically wealth which remains after any debts or bequests), and spoils of war. Despite the fact that the Qur'an frequently appeals to believers to spend, in no case beyond those cited is any amount fixed; there is simply no principle of taxation within the Qur'an.

As already touched upon, the Traditionalist has taken the lack of specificity attached to *al zakāt* as a cue to import a value from a separate literature. But the value he imports is, by dint of the level of specificity he applies to it, a proper noun, and we already know that a value for *al zakāt* as a proper noun is not sustainable in the book the Traditionalist claims as his foundational scripture. Moreover, his value is repugnant to a revelation which pointedly avoids being drawn on the amount that believers should spend (consider 2:215 and 2:219). The general rule outside very particular contexts is that people should choose what they spend; that is, that spending is voluntary, and by agreement.

But voluntary spending does not suit the Traditionalist. He

needs *al zakāt* to be a tax. And while the Traditionalist pretends that his value for *al zakāt* is not a tax, that is a deceit; a fixed percentage of one's wealth extracted by an authority *is* a tax, no matter how that transfer is obfuscated by talk of religion.

This tax is a cornerstone of the Traditionalist's religion. But the precise value he ascribes to it falls flat in a number of cases. As an example, we will consider the following:

6 Say thou: "I am only a mortal like you. It is revealed to me that your God is One God. So take a straight path to Him, and ask forgiveness of Him!" And woe to the idolaters: 7 Those who render not *al zakāt*, and of the Hereafter they are deniers! (41:6-7)

That idolaters deny the Hereafter is confirmed by experience; but idolaters have at no time that I know of been immune to taxation. And not only do idolaters pay tax at the present time, they do so in amounts far greater than those imposed by the Traditionalist under the cloak of his religion.

We will identify in what follows those portions of the Qur'an in which what constitutes *al zakāt* for the followers of this scripture are indicated, and demonstrate that *al zakāt* is, as the Qur'an says, something that idolaters characteristically do not pay.

The Children of Israel and the Torah

As we saw above, the Qur'an instructs the children of Israel by means of the same generalised imperative we are taking as the platform for our analysis to render *al zakāt*:

43 And **uphold *al ṣalāt*, and render *al zakāt***, and be lowly with the lowly. (2:43)

The verb taking *al zakāt* as its object is *ātā* and it means *to render, to pay, to give*. These are the plain meanings of the verb, and it is used in this sense wherever it takes a direct object in the Qur'an. The question concerns only what it is that one should pay.

In Maimonides' list of 613 *mitzvot* compiled from the Torah, one may identify a subset treating of what one should spend. There are twenty-three *mitzvot* which fall under the category of t'rumah, tithes and taxes, for example, and sundry others which pertain to treatment of the poor, and to business practices. Thus, if one follows the Torah and wishes to know what he is to pay, he may work his way down the list and see which parts of what he reads may be applied today.

The verb *ātā* and the value of *al zakāt*

Like the Torah, some portion of the Qur'an's (relatively small) total corpus of legal imperatives pertains to payments.

Again, the verb in our core phrase taking *al zakāt* as its object is *ātā* (*to render, to pay, to give*). And, again, the question concerns only what it is that one should pay.

We will leverage the form in which we find this verb in our core phrase to identify what is meant by *al zakāt* for the adherents of the Qur'an.

The masculine imperative plural form of the verb *ātā* occurs eleven times outside the formula *uphold al ṣalāt, and render al zakāt* (Arabic: **أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ** — and found at 2:43, 2:83, 2:110, 4:77, 22:78, 24:56, 58:13, 73:20). We list all eleven below before looking at their implications.

2 And **give the fatherless their property**; and exchange not the bad for the good, nor consume their property into your property; that is a great misdeed. (4:2)

4 And **give the women their dowries** as a gift willingly; but if they remit to you anything of it voluntarily, then consume it with satisfaction and pleasure. (4:4)

24 And married women save what your right hands possess. The Writ of God is over you. But lawful to you is what is beyond that, if you seek with your wealth in chastity, not being fornicators. And what you enjoy thereby of them: **give them their rewards as an obligation**. And there is no wrong upon you in what you do by mutual agreement after the obligation; God is knowing and wise. (4:24)

25 And whoso among you has not the means to marry free believing women, then from what your right hands possess of believing maids; and God best knows your faith. You are of one another, so marry them with the leave of their people; and **give them their rewards according to what is fitting**, they being chaste and not fornicators, nor taking secret friends. But when they are in wedlock, then if they commit sexual immorality: upon them is half what is due the free women of punishment; that is for him who fears hardship among you. And that you be patient is best for you; and God is forgiving and merciful. (4:25)

33 And for all have We appointed heirs to what parents and relatives leave; and **those with whom you have entered into contract: give them their share**; God is witness over all things. (4:33)

141 And He it is that produces gardens, trellised and untrellised, and the date-palms, and crops diverse in their food, and the olive and the pomegranate, similar yet different. Eat of the fruit thereof when it bears fruit, and **render its due on the day of its harvest**; and commit not excess, He loves not the committers of excess. (6:141)

94 They said: "O Dhūl-Qarnayn: Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj are workers of corruption in the land; so may we appoint for thee payment, that thou make between us and them a barrier?"

95 He said: "That wherein my Lord has established me is

better; but assist me with strength: I will make between you and them a dam.

96 "**Give me sheets of iron.**" When he had made level between the two openings, he said: "Blow." When he had made it a fire, he said: "Bring me to pour thereon molten brass."

97 And they could not pass over it, and they could not pierce it. (18:94-97)

32 And give in marriage the unmarried among you, and the righteous among your male slaves and your female slaves; if they be poor, God will enrich them out of His bounty; and God is encompassing and knowing.

33 And let abstain those who find not marriage until God enriches them out of His bounty. And those who seek the writ from among those your right hands possess: contract with them if you know good to be in them; and **give to them out of the wealth God has given you**. And compel not your slave-girls to whoredom, if they desire chastity[...] — seeking the enjoyment of the life of this world. And whoso compels them, then God, after their compulsion, is forgiving and merciful. (24:32-33)

10 O you who heed warning: when the believing women come to you as émigrées: examine them. God best knows their faith. And if you know them to be believing women, then return them not to the atheists. Such women are not lawful for them, and they are not lawful for such women. **And give them what they spent**. And you do no wrong to marry such women when you give them their rewards. And hold not by tie denying women; and ask for what you have spent, and let them ask for what they have spent. That is the judgment of God; He judges between you; and God is knowing and wise. (60:10)

11 And if any of your wives slip away from you to the atheists, then you are met with the same: **give those whose wives have gone the like of what they spent**; and be in prudent fear of God in whom you are believers. (60:11)

6 Let them dwell in what manner you dwell, out of your means, and harm them not so as to straiten them. And if they be bearing, then spend on them until they lay down their burden. Then if they suckle for you, **then give them their reward**, and take counsel among you according to what is fitting. And if there be difficulties between you, another shall suckle for him. (65:6)

The subjects of these verses fall into two categories: those which pertain primarily to the individual, and those which pertain primarily to the community:

Individual

- Obligation to fulfil inheritance rights (4:2)
- Obligation upon a man to pay a bride price to a woman as a

condition of marriage (4:4, 4:24, 4:25)

- Obligation to pay what is owed by contract (4:33)
- Obligation to give timely charity on increase (4:141)
- Obligation to assist deserving slaves to marry (24:33)
- Obligation to maintain a woman who cares for one's infant child (65:6)

Community

- Obligation to contribute to a socially beneficial project initiated by a godly leader (18:96)
- Obligation to assist believing women to extricate themselves financially from unbelieving men (60:10)
- Obligation to recompense a bride price given by a believing man to a woman who subsequently joins unbelievers (60:10)

Given that we are right — that the same phrase which implies knowledge on our part of the values of *al ṣalāt* and *al zakāt* (Arabic: **أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ**) has within it the seeds of the solution for one seeking those values — the internal evidence is that the areas identified above comprise the Qur'anic value of *al zakāt*.

Implications

No part of the values we have identified for *al zakāt* comports with the Traditionalist's assertions.

The verse at 6:141 may appear to have something in common with the Traditionalist's value at first blush, but it is of a fundamentally different type: no amount is stated, and what is to be given should be given immediately (whereas the Traditionalist imposes an annual tax). This Qur'anic giving requirement favours the poor (who are both attuned to local cycles of production, and well placed and motivated to benefit from them) over any representative of the authorities. Lastly, 6:141 explicitly treats of *produce*, not of existing wealth, which fact distinguishes it also from the Traditionalist's externally derived values.

The aspects of *al zakāt* which pertain to inheritance law and payment of a bride price by the groom as a condition of marriage are covered in sufficient detail in the Qur'an, and it is not my intention here to rehearse the points connected with them more than in a general way.

As concerns inheritance law, the Qur'an is clear that blood relations are not superseded by matters of faith (8:75); thus, inheritance is due on the basis of blood, irrespective of religious conviction. The Qur'an also safeguards the inheritance rights of those most easily trampled under foot: the fatherless.

As regards the payment of the bride price: firstly, we should recognise that a woman's insistence upon receiving her bride price from the man as a prerequisite for the intimacies of marriage is a contribution on her part to the health of the social fabric. Secondly, it serves to guard the sexual morality of both men and women. Both components tend to social health.

We note that the only instance where this imperative to give treats of a leader of any type, the cause is one which assists the

whole community, and the leader himself expressly refuses to benefit personally (for which point see 18:94-95).

It is the containment of the sexual drive within a righteous marriage and the preservation of this ideal from all sides which is the dominant aspect of *al zakāt* on a day-to-day basis; due is given on produce only occasionally; inheritances are executed only occasionally; important public works may be understood to be infrequent events. Containment of sexual drives within legal bounds is a permanent imperative the responsibility for which devolves upon both men and women, and any person with no financial means whatever may render *al zakāt* by simply observing the bounds for sexual intercourse God has instituted for believers.

The word *zakāt* in various contexts

The core, non-sectarian dictionary definitions of *zakāt* are *purity, sincerity and integrity*. There are occasions in the Qur'an where this noun is rendered — and, in fact, can only be rendered — after its core, non-sectarian dictionary definitions (18:81, 19:13), a practice which the Traditionalist himself follows.

As already stated, the standard imperative *uphold al ṣalāt, and render al zakāt* occurs without any qualification. The only occasion in which the verb *to give, to render* (Arabic: *ātā*) and *zakāt* occur together with a clear indirect object, the recipient is the prophet Yahyā — who is given *zakāt* by God (19:12-13); we note that Yahyā's defining characteristics are right dealing and sexual purity (he is described as 'honourable and chaste' at 3:39). The term *zakāt* occurs also in the general sense of *purity* at 18:81, a value which is typically rendered thus in that context by Traditionalist translators.

The term *ātā al zakāt* is also one component of the allegiance believing men and believing women have toward each other:

71 And the believing men and the believing women are allies of one another: they enjoin what is fitting, and forbid perversity, and uphold the duty, and **render the purity**, and obey God and His messenger; those: God will have mercy on them; God is exalted in might and wise. (9:71)

The wives of the prophet are exhorted to *render al zakāt* in a context where they can be assumed to have little or no material wealth of their own (see 33:28-34), and in which they are expressly directed to embrace perfect marital commitment to the Prophet (to the exclusion of possible further husbands after his death) and to maintain an exacting level of marital scrupulosity befitting their roles as his wives. This fits with our observations which treat of sexual integrity.

We noted two characteristics of the idolaters above:

6 Say thou: "I am only a mortal like you. It is revealed to me that your God is One God. So take a straight path to Him, and ask forgiveness of Him!" And woe to the idolaters:
7 **Those who render not *al zakāt*, and of the Hereafter they are deniers!** (41:6-7)

That idolaters deny the Hereafter is confirmed by experience. But it is also true that idolaters do not pay *al zakāt* (i.e. the bride price as a condition of marriage and, thereafter, sexual intimacy); rather, such people have *ad hoc* intercourse with women who have no fear of God and who are ignorant of their value as women. Moreover, sexual license is a defining characteristic of idolaters, whether in historical implementations such as Baal worship which involved ritual sex, or in the current modern implementation of generalised degradation across the population.

And since idolaters have no fear of God and no conception that they must give account on the Day of Judgment, they are unlikely to maintain any of the other requirements we have identified as constituting *al zakāt*.

Those who fear (i.e. due to lack of means) to send ahead charity at the time of confidential conversation with the Prophet — and who are, therefore, understood to be bereft of material means — are told, nevertheless, that they should *render al zakāt* (see 58:12-13); this imperative jars appreciably with the context given the Traditionalist's reading. However, sexual purity is something one may maintain in any material circumstance.

My rendering of 23:1-11 is below. Commentators try, unconvincingly, to bend this collocation (*fa'ala* in combination with the preposition *li*) to mean *those who work with* (i.e. collect) a yearly tax they call *al zakāt*. Though the preposition *li* has a range of functions, it can be understood here to play the same role as the *li* in the following verse where it provides stylistic support for the object only. The context immediately following this collocation (i.e. 23:5-7), I suggest, provides a supporting definition for what is meant by *al zakāt*.

- 1 Successful are the believers:
- 2 Those who in their duty are humble,
- 3 And those who from vain speech turn away,
- 4 **And those who act upon the purity.**
- 5 And those who preserve their chastity
- 6 Save with their wives or what their right hands possess, then are they not blameworthy;
- 7 — But whoso seeks beyond that: it is they who are the transgressors —
- 8 And those who attend to their trusts and their covenant,
- 9 And those who preserve their duties:
- 10 It is they who are the heirs,
- 11 Those who inherit Paradise; therein will they abide eternally. (23:1-11)

Summary

According to the Qur'an, compliance with the imperative to *render al zakāt* is a normative obligation upon the believer, whether one who adheres to the Qur'an or to the Torah. The unambiguous application of this convention across different (and differing) scriptures requires a generic value for *al zakāt*, which is what our broader analysis here supports.

In the Qur'anic context, the term *al zakāt* is a subset of all duties beholden upon believers comprising a number of aspects, all of

which are listed above.

To accept that *to render al zakāt* means what the Traditionalist claims for it is to ascribe to the term a value nowhere corroborated in the Qur'an, and to impart to the term the value of a proper noun, which numerous contexts definitively preclude. One result of the Traditionalist's impositions is a loss of the centrality in those societies in which he predominates of the sexual purity and upright dealings which are central to the Qur'anic preaching. Instead, nominally Muslim lands have been subject to a tax the principle of which contradicts the content and tenor of Qur'anic statements (for example 2:215, 2:219, 4:29, 6:136, 7:199), and most of the constituents of such societies think that they may do as they like so long as they pay a tax to the religion.

The value identified here for *al zakāt* comports with all contexts as well as with the uncontested common meanings (i.e. those senses untouched by the Traditionalist's hand) of the Arabic noun *zakāt* (namely *purity*).

I render *al zakāt* throughout *the purity*.

All instances in the text appear in the notes.

References

2:43, 2:83, 2:110, 2:177, 2:277, 4:77, 4:162, 5:12, 5:55, 7:156, 9:5, 9:11, 9:18, 9:71, 18:74, 18:81, 19:13, 19:19, 19:31, 19:55, 21:73, 22:41, 22:78, 23:4, 24:37, 24:56, 27:3, 30:39, 31:4, 33:33, 41:7, 58:13, 73:20, 98:5.

Shaytān, Jinn, and Related Terms

Considered

Introduction

The objective of this article is to summarise my reasoning for rendering a number of words in the translation which features in my work *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation* the way I do.

The subject matter lacks concreteness by definition since we are dealing, at least in part, with unseen forces. My results are, I think, both consistent within the terms I have set myself (of pan-textual integrity), and with the broader text.

I do not present involved detail on each of the topics I address here. A description of the logistics and specifics of the type of Satanism practiced by the ruling elites, or academic justifications for other aspects of my presentation would require tomes, and would not add much to achieving my stated purpose; this is not the place to convince people of such things.

Rather, I attempt here to place my findings before the reader in as short a space as possible. My results — in my view — are consistent, and that is more than one can say of the fist the Traditionalist has made by conflating some of the terms I treat of here. My results also fit in terms of my understanding of the Satanic features of society in general and of the ruling elites in particular; but, again, it is not my intention to convince the reader here of these features of *Realpolitik*.

Readers of this article will fall into three general camps: those already educated in the subjects I indicate here with a broad brush and who are, therefore, in no need of exposition; those who are not thus educated, but who will conduct their own research afterwards; and those who are neither educated in these topics and do not care sufficiently to verify one way or the other. The first two categories will take care of themselves, and any attempt to make the third type of person into something he is not would be futile.

In summary, then, I gloss over a number of areas of importance in order to concentrate on my stated objective of presenting my reasoning for rendering a number of words in my translation the way I do.

Purpose of this article

The Qur'an tells us that 'the satan' (Arabic: *al shaytan*) is an open enemy to mankind and that we are to take him as an enemy (35:6).

I once heard the Vietnamese generals whose strategies defeated the United States interviewed. They were asked, in short, why they were so unreasonable as to think they could beat the largest and most powerful military in the world. They said that their view was that if they did not think they could win, they would simply surrender. There is no glory in fighting a war you cannot win. However, they had thought through all parts of their strategy and come to the conclusion that they could win. That stayed with me.

As those who know my work will appreciate, my broader strategy and objective is found in *The God Protocol*. The present article is among those written to accompany *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation* which work is the heavy-artillery

component providing logistical support for *The God Protocol* spearhead. But since this article covers subjects understanding of which relate to *The God Protocol*, it is included as part of the appendix to that work also.

To fight an enemy effectively, one must understand who that enemy is, what his nature is, and how he operates. One needs also to understand where his weaknesses lie. And most importantly, one needs to know both how to use terrain to advantage against him, and how to gain leverage over him. One can try to stop an oncoming train by standing in front of it — or one can simply unbolt a few rails and let momentum do the rest.

In order to understand *al shaytan* we need also to include related terms and, in places, unpick the mess we have inherited.

The Vietnamese defeated the Americans because they were realistic about who they were dealing with both in terms of the front end (soldiers and bombs) and the back end (propaganda interests and cultural dysfunction on the enemy's home front). Had they got any part of their analysis fundamentally confused, their chances of success would have fallen off dramatically.

However, having got their analysis correct, they were able to execute a plan which was successful.

Overview

The Traditionalist's understanding of the terms we cover in this article is influenced as usual (one wants to say *contaminated*) to varying degrees by the extraneous literature to which he turns for the "extra" information he claims to need in addition to the Qur'an.

But some of the mess is not his fault. These questions are complex and aspects of them frustrate exhaustive analysis by dint of the subject matter: non-corporeal, invisible beings. However, by looking to the Qur'anic text and applying our standard process of pan-textual analysis, we can approximate understandings for each term which are consistent with the text.

Some of our conclusions correspond in places with parts of what the Traditionalist asserts. But we are able to make important distinctions; for example, we prove beyond any question that the typical value of an *incorporeal* being for *al jinn* / الجِنَّ is incorrect — at least if one is to treat the term consistently as it appears in the Qur'an.

We are dealing with a taxonomy which treats in part of invisible beings, and in which we find both main headings and subdivisions thereof. Demons — according to our analysis — certainly exist and, perhaps understandably, have no interest in being exposed.

Again, these are also complex issues. What has happened historically is that a number of related words have been treated as synonyms. And this is understandable; the meanings of words are frequently plastic; they change nuance over time. Culturally, the core terms of *al jinn* / الجِنَّ, *jānn* / جانّ, *al jānn* / الجَّانّ and the word we render *satans* which has an associated meaning of *adversaries* have been conflated.

The Qur'an, however, when treated as a complete text, serves to lock the meaning of key words into place, which allows the definitions of words to be recovered — or at least approximated — in the event that their meanings are fudged or lost.

Having unpicked the detail, we are presented with a comprehensive and comprehensible worldview in which the key distinctions between human political types are delineated, and in which the place of man within a context of angels, satans, and other unseen forces governing the physical and metaphysical realities which comprise our experience can be summarised. Moreover, that worldview includes within it much which traditions called scientific or occult attempt to explain.

My process in what follows is straightforward. There are three Sections, each part of which treats of one or more terms. Each of these topics opens with outline of the prevalent understanding; this is followed by a discussion which includes a description of my findings and examples from the text, and the topic ends with a summary and references for the term or terms covered.

SECTION ONE

al jinn / الجِنَّ and *al ins* / الإِنْس

The term *al jinn* / الجِنَّ is typically translated *jinn* (by which is meant ethereal, non-visible creatures) or *demons*. By *jinn* what is usually meant is invisible creatures with human-like aspects, some of which are good and some not. Meanwhile, *al ins* / الإِنْس is typically translated *men* or *mankind* and treated as a synonym of *al nās* / النَّاس.

We begin with *al jinn* / الجِنَّ.

I found that where *al jinn* / الجِنَّ occurs with what the Traditionalist considers a human complement, it is paired always with *al ins* / الإِنْس. Never does either part of the pair come with one of the other words which are routinely translated *jinn* or *mankind*.

By looking at the verses in which they occur and observing how they operate together in those contexts, I came to the following conclusions:

1. There exists an apposition in the text between *al ins* / الإِنْس and *al jinn* / الجِنَّ (by this I mean that they are to some degree contrasted or juxtaposed).
2. *al ins* / الإِنْس are human beings (i.e. they are members of the human race) but of a particular kind: the generality of men, the average men of the servile classes; i.e. those who are ruled by or submit to others: the masses, the followers, those who do not lead. (See particularly 6:128, 72:6.) This category will constitute the vast majority, and for want of a better word are those formerly called in England *commoners*. Thus, this category comprises the servile many, people with minimal or no power *de facto*.
3. *al jinn* / الجِنَّ (where it occurs in contrast to *al ins* / الإِنْس) signifies also members of the human race, but of another kind: leaders, alphas, and chiefs. These are those people who rule and operate according to their own will; the people whose decisions matter; the people who decide in what

world the commoners will live. This category would in the England of not so long ago have been called the *nobility* or the *aristocracy*. These are the dominant few.

4. At 18:50 we read that Iblīs was *of al jinn* / الجِنَّ. However, the context immediately following emphasises what is meant by this: that he operated according to his own will, he was not in subjection; his purpose and *modus operandi* is to lead mankind.

In short, *al jinn* / الجِنَّ are those few who command the masses (*al ins* / الإِنْس).

Thus, Napoleon, Hitler, Mao, Caesar, and the ruling banking families of history and today are all *al jinn* / الجِنَّ. And the men who follow them, whether it be in the armies of traditional battles, or those whose lives are shaped and reshaped in the economic movements planned for them such as the cultural revolutions in the West since the WWI and especially since 1960, are *al ins* / الإِنْس.

Given that the time of writing is characterised by feminised hysteria and wholesale delusion, it is worth adding that these distinctions are not value judgments necessarily. They are facts. A spaniel is not a Rottweiler, and vice versa. Things are what they are no matter how one might feel about them. Society has room for a lot of Indians but very few chiefs.

God made people in this way. This was recognised over millennia as objective reality, and that reality was reflected in the explicit class and caste systems of those times. Today, of course, we are under the tyranny of selective delusion (a policy which suits the elites at this time), and so people are unable to grasp these facts; or their feelings don't like facts, and so they deny them on that basis.

But if everyone were a Napoleon, who would drive the taxis and take care of the fields? Not everybody is a genius; not everybody is amazing. Most people are unremarkable. They live unremarkable lives; then they die. Again, this is a fact.

So today, the ruling elites which create the strategies via their think tanks which become the policy which is then presented in the media as current events are *al jinn* / الجِنَّ. And those whose lives are shaped by those decisions who typically have no conception that such decisions are being made — i.e. everyone else — are *al ins* / الإِنْس, that is, the peasantry, or those who serve the commanders.

The principle seems to be that people are born into one caste or the other. Before enforced delusion became the norm, this is what one referred to as *breeding*. Of course, training and environment are influences, but there are men who are born and bred to lead, and there are those who are born and bred to follow — a few outliers and misfits either way notwithstanding.

I am of the opinion that the ruling elites comprise particular racial and familial lines, and that while they promote genetic degeneration and dystrophy among those they rule, they themselves follow strict breeding regimens. Meanwhile, they allow for the outliers and misfits mentioned above by accommodating the former and weeding out the latter over time.

I have used Latin terms for *al jinn* / الجِنَّ and *al ins* / الإِنْس in my translation: *domini* and *servi* in the plural and *dominus* and *servus* in the singular. The reason I have opted for these terms is that they carry etymologically the central characteristic of their nature.

It is important to grasp here that *al jinn* / الجِنَّ and *al ins* / الإِنْس comprise the two political subdivisions of *al nās* / النَّاس (i.e. men, humankind, people).

The term *al nās* / النَّاس is found in apposition with *al jinna* / الجِنَّة, and this pairing is discussed later in the analysis.

Examples

Below is my rendering of verse 6:100.

100 And they make for God partners of the **domini**, when He created them; and they ascribe to Him sons and daughters without knowledge. Glory be to Him! And exalted is He above what they describe!
(6:100)

Is it not true that the commoners among men make godlike partners of their great men such as Alexander or Napoleon or the Caesars, and worship through their actions those who rule over them? Have not religions done much to confirm the rule of men as the will of God? Is not the cult of State-worship a debased and collectivised form of the same, and a natural corollary to the materialist narratives ascribed to Creation and human existence?

Certainly, historically, men have ascribed to the Caesars and other rulers connections with Deity. One thinks also in the West of Romans 13:1-7 which has been used to keep the believers in their place, for example, or of the divine right of kings. And all cultures have had their equivalent dogmas.

People worship power, and today is no different. Of course, the power of today's elites is embedded within the legal fiction called government which the masses are trained to think they have chosen. And the masses, true to type, look to their masters in the guise of "their" government to protect them. That this is a form of psychosis and Stockholm syndrome not only does not detract from its efficacy and ubiquity as a form of control and worship, it contributes to it. The masses think that by following the dominant power they can obtain safety. And today, worship of the cult of government, which is a composite of chemical, psychological, behavioural and other forms of conditioning, is almost universal.

Most people today profess forms of atheism. While it is not possible to speak for all atheists, my impression is that most are materialists and ascribe to what they think of as pre-existing and uncreated evolutionary forces something approximating *purpose* (though denied as Purpose, of course). And this purpose — although divested of the language of gratitude to God — tends eventually to meld into the notion of government as the inescapable outcome of an expression of that purpose. Here is a further verse:

112 And thus have We appointed for every prophet an enemy — satans of servi and domini — instructing one another in the decoration of speech as delusion, (and had thy Lord willed, they would not have done it; **so leave thou them and what they fabricate**)
(6:112)

(We note that the word translated above *satans* is *shayātīn* in the Arabic and is nuanced even beyond its plain secondary meaning of *adversaries* — a sense confirmed here by *enemy*. We address this topic in full later in our analysis.)

How could one leave the domini (Arabic: *al jinn* / الجِنَّ) if the word does not denote human entities?

And again:

128 And the day He gathers them all together: "O congregation of domini: you have desired many among the servi." And their allies among the servi will say: "Our Lord: we benefited one another; but we have reached our term which Thou appointedst for us." He will say: "The Fire is your dwelling, you abiding eternally therein!" save that God should will; thy Lord is wise and knowing.
129 And thus do We make the wrongdoers **allies of one another** by what they earned.
(6:128-130)

Here the conclusion is that 'wrongdoers' are 'allies of one another.' Again, this is impossible to square with the idea of *al jinn* / الجِنَّ as a non-corporeal entity, at least in any meaningful sense.

130 "**O congregation of domini and servi**: came there not to you messengers from among you, relating to you My proofs and warning you of the meeting of this day of yours?" They will say: "We bear witness against ourselves." And the life of this world deluded them; and they will bear witness against themselves that they were false claimers of guidance.
131 That is because thy Lord would not destroy the cities in injustice, while their people were unaware.
(6:130-131)

At verse 6:130 *al jinn* / الجِنَّ and *al ins* / الإِنْس are addressed as a single group to whom messengers came but who were deceived by the life of this world. Meanwhile, 6:131 treats of concrete, physical cities with physical people. Again, this simply does not square with *al jinn* / الجِنَّ as non-corporeal entities.

37 And who is more unjust than he who invents a lie about God, or denies His proofs? Those: there reaches them their portion of the Writ; when Our messengers come to them, to take them, they say: "Where is that to which you called, besides God?" They will say: "They have strayed from us." And they will bear witness against themselves that they were false claimers of guidance.
38 He will say: "Enter among the communities that have passed away before you of domini and servi into the Fire!" Whenever a community enters, it curses its sister; when they have followed one another therein all together, the

last of them will say to the first of them: "Our Lord: these led us astray; so give Thou them double punishment of the Fire!" He will say: "For each is double, but you know not." (7:37-38)

The scenario above clearly treats of individual communities being warned by messengers of God, of them rejecting that message and together entering the Fire, followed by mutual reproach. Reproach only makes sense among like kind, which fact is impossible to square with the idea of *al jinn* / الجين as a non-corporeal entity.

Consider now:

88 Say thou: "If the servi and the domini gathered to produce the like of this Qur'an, they would not produce the like thereof, though they were helpers one of another."
89 And We have expounded for men in this Qur'an every similitude, but most men refuse save denial. (17:88-89)

How could two entirely different entities, one of which is unable to see the other, gather together to achieve any end whatever?

As stated, *al jinn* / الجين are the people who command things to be done — and in terms of today, are those who run the business plan that everyone else (i.e. *al ins* / الإنس) is living through and think of as current events.

Here is a further example:

17 And there were gathered to Solomon his forces of domini and servi and birds; and they were marshalled. (17:70)

We will leave to one side the subject of 'birds', and focus on *al jinn* / الجين and *al ins* / الإنس. The fact that they were 'marshalled' suggests a single group of military forces. Does it not sound more likely that this treats of commanders and common soldiers than it does of spirit beings and humans?

What follows treats of the Queen of Saba' (whose story forms part of that of Solomon). While the language in the segment below does not use either *al jinn* / الجين or *al ins* / الإنس, the reader will be aware that the Queen of Saba' is addressing her ruling class, and that both she and they are aware of Solomon's policy of subjecting rulers:

29 She said: "O eminent ones: there has been cast unto me a noble writ;
30 "It is from Solomon, and it is: 'In the name of God, the Almighty, the Merciful:
31 "'Exalt not yourselves against me, but come to me submitting!"
32 She said: "O eminent ones: counsel me in my affair; I decide no affair until you bear me witness."
33 They said: "We possess power and possess strong might, but the command is for thee; see thou what thou wilt command."
34 She said: "Kings, when they enter a city, spoil it and make its most honoured people abject; and thus will they

do.
35 "And I will send a gift to them, and see with what the emissaries return."
(27:29-35)

I suggest that Solomon's practice of placing conquered rulers in subjection is what the Queen is alluding to; and that rulers are collectively known as *al jinn* / الجين.

Later in the same chapter, Solomon is speaking:

38 He said: "O eminent ones: which of you will bring me her throne before they come to me submitting?"
39 A mischievous one among the domini said: "I will bring it to thee before thou canst rise from thy place; and I am for this strong and trustworthy."
40 Said one with knowledge of the writ: "I will bring it to thee before thy glance return to thee."
(27:38-40)

My reading of this is that two former rulers are competing by means of superlatives for their master's good graces, and that this is an example of precisely the type of humiliation the Queen of Saba' wishes to avoid.

12 And to Solomon the wind: its morning course a month, and its evening course a month. And We made flow for him a spring of molten brass. And among the domini worked some before him, by the leave of his Lord; and who deviated among them from Our command — We will let him taste of the punishment of the Inferno.
13 They made for him what he willed of sanctuaries, and statues, and basins like pools, and vessels firmly fixed. "Work, house of David, in gratitude!" And few are the grateful among My servants.
14 And when We decreed death for him, there indicated his death to them only a creature of the earth eating at his staff. But when he fell down, it became clear to the domini that had they but known the Unseen, they would not have tarried in the humiliating punishment.
(34:12-14)

The description at 34:14 when Solomon's life — and hence rule — ended, fits best people of the calibre of the Queen of Saba' and her ruling elite: dominant human beings; moreover, dominant human beings in humiliating circumstances.

Identifying and unpicking the components across this narrative is made complicated by dint of the fact that *satans* (*shayāṭīn* / شَاطِطِينَ) also worked for Solomon. We will discuss these entities separately later in the analysis. For now, we will consider the following:

40 And the day He gathers them all together, then will He say to the angels: "Did these serve you?"
41 They will say: "Glory be to Thee! Thou art our ally, not them!" The truth is, they served the domini; most of them were believers in them.
42 And that day will you possess for one another neither benefit nor harm, and We will say to those who did wrong: "Taste the punishment of the Fire, which you denied!"

(34:40-42)

Of course, there are those who believe in hidden spirits, but I would assert that on the level of the day-to-day business of life, most men subject their time and efforts to the requirements of other men.

This question becomes thornier later into our analysis where we consider the fact that dominant minorities tend to possess — or be able to access — correspondingly greater occult powers than the average. At some levels we are dealing with people so demonised that their original soul is contractually supplanted by demonic forces. We unpick these subtleties later.

Meanwhile, those in positions of dependent power belonging to *al ins* / الإنس tend, when demonically influenced, to be so less than the rulers themselves. On the level of the day-to-day and the apparent, people serve those immediately above them in the hope of receiving benefits and security. However, this will end in recriminations.

27 But We will let those who ignore warning taste a severe punishment; and We will reward them for the worst of what they did.
28 That is the reward of the enemies of God: the Fire; they have therein the Abode of Eternity as reward because they rejected Our proofs.
29 And those who ignore warning will say: "Our Lord: show Thou us those who led us astray of the domini and the servi; we will place them under our feet, that they might be among the lowest!"
(41:27-29)

Consider also the following:

17 And he who says to his parents: "Fie upon you! Do you promise me that I will be brought forth, when generations have already passed away before me?" while they seek aid of God: — "Woe to thee! Believe thou; the promise of God is true," but he says: "This is only legends of the former peoples," —
18 Those are they upon whom the word concerning the communities of the domini and the servi which passed away before them became binding; they were losers.
(46:17-18)

Again, we are talking about human beings: a man and his parents; a man who refuses to follow the good counsel of parents. It is not clear from the context whether he pertains to the *al jinn* / الجين or to the *al ins* / الإنس segment of humanity, and for our purposes it does not matter.

Traditional values for *al jinn* / الجين and *al ins* / الإنس fall awkwardly here also:

55 But remind thou, for the reminder benefits the believers.
56 And I created the domini and the servi only that they should serve Me.
57 I desire no provision from them, nor do I desire that they should feed Me.

58 God, He is the Provider, the Possessor of Power, the Strong.

59 And for those who do wrong is a portion like the portion of their companions; so let them not seek to hasten Me!

60 And woe to those who ignore warning from their day which they are promised!
(51:55-60)

The narrative concerns food, something which one touches and sees, and needs in order to sustain the physical body. This comports poorly with the notion of *al jinn* / الجين as ethereal creatures.

The verse at 51:59 conveys a rhetorical imperative. This only makes sense if both *al jinn* / الجين and *al ins* / الإنس are human beings with which one could — at least potentially — communicate directly. The Qur'an does not require those it addresses to fulfil impossible tasks.

Proof that *al jinn* / الجين are human beings

The two portions of text which give us the most information about *al jinn* / الجين are at 46:29-31 and 72:1-14. In both cases, these segments follow narratives which treat of messengers who delivered God's warning to their people, and whose people were summarily destroyed thereafter in an act of God. These messengers are Hūd and Noah respectively (found at 46:21-26 and 71:1-28). The verses at 46:27-28 treat of characteristics common to both of the scenarios mentioned.

Thus, the stories of *al jinn* / الجين as warners to their respective communities both follow directly from segments which treat of total destruction, and both address issues raised in the preceding segments in a number of ways. As examples, we find in their speech the need to 'respond to the caller to God' (as opposed to the denial which precedes and results in destruction), and their call to believe in God provides a counterpoint to the rallying around false gods which precedes. We find also appeals to God's 'majesty' both at 71:13 and 72:3. The interested reader will find more points of correlation and comparison between the segments cited.

Given a value for *al jinn* / الجين of a ruling minority, the implication is that such men responded to a case of actual destruction by drawing the correct conclusions and exhorting their own people to avoid a similar fate. It is my view that the recipients of Muḥammad's initial preaching not only rejected (which is the Traditionalist view also), but that they must have been destroyed as a result. This question is expanded upon in my book *The God Protocol*.

However, even without acceptance of this point, we can prove definitively on a pan-textual basis that *al jinn* / الجين are human beings:

10 Their messengers said: "Can there be about God any doubt: the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth? He calls you, that **He will forgive you of your transgressions, and delay you to a stated term.**" They said: "**You are only mortals like us**, who would turn us away from what our

fathers served. So bring us a clear authority.”

11 Their messengers said to them: “**We are only mortals, like you**; but God gives grace to whom He wills of His servants. And it is not for us to bring you an authority save by the leave of God; and in God let the believers place their trust.

12 “And how could we not place our trust in God, when He has guided us in our ways? And we will be patient in that wherein you hinder us; and in God let those who would place their trust aright place their trust.”

(14:10-12)

We are interested here primarily in two phrases, translated above **He will forgive you of your transgressions** (Arabic: *يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ*; *يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ* مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ), and **delay you to a stated term** (Arabic: *يُؤَخِّرْكُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى*). These words are found in the mouths of messengers, and the retort — confirmed by the messengers themselves — is that the speakers are merely human beings.

Both phrases are found together at just one other place: in the mouth of Noah (71:4) — i.e. within one of the segments we list above which precedes (and mirrors) one of the principal sections treating of *al jinn* / *الجنّ*.

Noah was, of course, the man whose mission heralded the most widespread destruction to come upon the earth to date in scripture.

But — and this is important — the first phrase (Arabic: *يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ*; *يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ* مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ) is found also at one other place: in the mouth of *al jinn* / *الجنّ*, or domini:

29 And when We turned towards thee a band of the **domini**, listening in to the Qur'an, and when they were in its presence they said: “Listen attentively”; then, when it was concluded, they turned back to their people, warning.

30 They said: “O our people: we have heard a Writ sent down after Moses, confirming what was before it, guiding to the truth and to a straight road.

31 “O our people: respond to the caller to God, and believe in Him; **He will forgive you of your transgressions** and protect you from a painful punishment.”

(46:29-31)

The expression **He will forgive you of your transgressions** (Arabic: *يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ*; *يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ* مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ) occurs only at the three places listed above. At 14:10 we are told that messengers said things which included the expression **He will forgive you of your transgressions** (Arabic: *يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ*; *يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ* مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ), and we are told that the same messengers claimed specifically to be mortals and were confirmed as such by their audience. This specific phrase links 14:10-12, 71:4 and 46:29-31 and identifies the speakers in all three cases both as messengers and, specifically, as mortals.

To assert *al jinn* / *الجنّ* as anything other than mortals requires one to disregard the Qur'an's own evidence.

Muhammad Asad's understanding of 72:1

I will now touch on Muhammad Asad's understanding of *al jinn*

/ *الجنّ* in sūrah 72.

Asad was born Leopold Weiss, and was a Jewish convert to the Islamic religion. He was involved to some degree in the early days of the newly created state of Pakistan, but removed to Spain to see out his days after, I suspect, understanding the pointlessness of any mission in Pakistan.

His translation of the Qur'an is thoughtful, though extrapolative. His commentary is frequently insightful, and I quote him more copiously in my notes to *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation* than any other commentator, mainstream or otherwise.

I should state frankly that Asad did not apply the type of methodology I do (that of pan-textual analysis, and application of Qur'anic definitions). He also did not aim to enforce consistency in the way that I do. Rather, he takes a broadly Sunni line, though one infused by an atypical intelligence and capacity for reflection.

Thus, in considering Asad's comment to 72:1 below, the reader should understand that Asad neither applies to all cases of *al jinn* / *الجنّ* what he states here (he takes the Traditionalist line that *al jinn* / *الجنّ* means different things in different places), nor is he cognisant of distinction I identify between *al jinn* / *الجنّ* and *al ins* / *الإنس* on the one hand, and *al jinna* / *الجنّة* and *al nās* / *النّاس* on the other.

Nevertheless, his comment is not only insightful, it is useful; and it is particularly so when viewed in the light of the distinctions we are establishing here, namely, that *al jinn* / *الجنّ* and *al jinna* / *الجنّة* refer to entirely different entities, and that their meanings are consistent across the text.

His translation of 72:1 reads:

SAY: “It has been revealed to me that some of the unseen beings gave ear [to this divine writ],* and thereupon said [unto their fellow-beings]: “‘Verily, we have heard a wondrous discourse,

His comment below is attached at the point of the asterisk I have supplied in his translation above. Asad places his comment in light apposition to that of a Sunni authority, the Persian Al-Tabari, and so presents it somewhat tentatively. The meat of his comment is as follows:

[...]the jinn are referred to in the Qur'an in many connotations. In a few cases - e.g., in the present instance and in 46:29-32 - this expression may possibly signify “hitherto unseen beings”, namely, strangers who had never before been seen by the people among and to whom the Qur'an was then being revealed. From 46:30 (which evidently relates to the same occurrence as the present one) it transpires that the jinn in question were followers of the Mosaic faith, inasmuch as they refer to the Qur'an as “a revelation bestowed from on high after [that of] Moses”, thus pointedly omitting any mention of the intervening prophet, Jesus, and equally pointedly (in verse 3 of the present surah) stressing their rejection of the Christian concept of the Trinity. All this leads one to the assumption that they may

have been Jews from distant parts of what is now the Arab world, perhaps from Syria or even Mesopotamia.

What is of significance for our purposes is that Asad — himself a Jew, as we have said — associates *al jinn* / *الجنّ* with Jews.

Interestingly, the wording both here and at 46:29 is specific, stating in both cases that these people comprised some *part* of *al jinn* / *الجنّ* — and, by implication, not the totality thereof.

It is my assertion that Asad is materially correct in his analysis above. What he has missed is the distinction between *al jinn* / *الجنّ* and *al jinna* / *الجنّة*, and that *al jinn* / *الجنّ* indicates the dominant minority and is set in apposition with *al ins* / *الإنس* as the servile majority.

Understood thus, we not only have Qur'anic support for the reality under which we live in the world today, namely, of vastly disproportionate Jewish representation among elites which dominate all societies and under whose thrall we live, but the fact that Jews represent only a segment and not the totality of this dominant power is alluded to also.

I am not suggesting that *all* Jews are *al jinn* / *الجنّ*. It is clear from the broader Qur'anic text that among the Jews are what are called in my translation ‘doctors of the Law’ (i.e. a rabbinic caste of ideological enforcers), and that mistreatment of their lesser brethren for strategic reasons is a characteristic tactic (see 2:85 for example).

It is clear also from the text (see 72:11) that *al jinn* / *الجنّ* are not uniformly evil: some are righteous and some are not.

Colin Wilson's *The Occult*

After my own thinking on the subjects covered in this article was largely formed, and long after I had decided upon the terms *domini* and *servi* for *al jinn* / *الجنّ* and *al ins* / *الإنس* respectively, I happened to read *The Occult* by writer and philosopher Colin Wilson. The opening section of Chapter Two of that book, entitled *The Dark Side of the Moon*, is found below. I have added explanations of key terms inside square brackets.

In the autumn of 1969 I discussed questions of the occult with the poet Robert Graves at his home in Majorca. Graves immediately made a remark that startled me. ‘Occult powers are not so rare. One person in every twenty possesses them in some form.’

What interested me so much was the exact figure: 5 per cent. This is also the figure for the ‘dominant minority’ among human beings. In the early years of this century, Bernard Shaw asked the explorer Henry Stanley how many of his men could take over leadership of the party if he, Stanley, were ill. ‘One in twenty,’ said Stanley. ‘Is that figure exact or approximate?’ ‘Exact.’

The matter of the dominant 5 per cent was rediscovered during the Korean War by the Chinese. Wishing to economise on man-power, they decided to divide their American prisoners into two groups: the enterprising ones and the passive ones. They soon discovered that the enterprising soldiers were exactly one in twenty: 5 per cent.

When this dominant 5 per cent was removed from the rest of the group, the others could be left with almost no guard at all.

Evidence from zoology indicates that the ‘dominant 5 per cent’ may apply to all animals.

The interesting question arises: How far is the biologically dominant 5 percent the same thing as Graves’s ‘occult 5 percent’? There are certainly many reasons for assuming that the two groups are identical. In primitive societies the leaders are also priests and magicians. The men who led hunting parties would again be those who possessed a high degree of ‘jungle sensitivity’ [i.e. the ability to intuit advantageous decisions]. What is the power that distinguishes the leader? It is the power to focus, to concentrate the will in emergencies. That is to say, it is a form of Faculty X [i.e. the ability to access pre-existing streams of power lost to ‘civilised’ man in a more intense awareness of life].

In short, it seems probable that all human beings possess the vestiges of ‘occult powers’, the powers that spring from their deeper levels of vitality, what the playwright Granville-Barker called ‘the secret life’. The dominant 5 percent are more adept at canalising these powers than most people. The magicians, witch doctors, witches and mediums have been those members of the dominant 5 per cent who have developed their natural powers.

While I broadly agree with Wilson's themes, I believe that the ‘dominant minority’ he identifies among the American soldiers are — to use my own terminology — simply *servi* possessed of access to the hidden realm superior to that of their more deadened or less well-equipped compatriots.

Moreover, in my view, the Chinese were dealing with men who, by definition, were lower-caste *servi*. These men were blindly following orders given by commanders who were hundreds or thousands of miles away sipping tea, deliberating over maps and, perhaps, anticipating liaisons with expensive call girls in the evening in congenial surroundings. Yet this layer of dominance has been entirely omitted from Wilson's equation. Including this layer of dominance then, the calculation is more correctly 5 per cent of 5 per cent.

But military commanders answer to a visible tier above them of population managers in the form of politicians and other mind managers (media owners, so-called philanthropists, large foundations, etc.), which fact adds yet another process of division by twenty.

And this level itself answers to the hidden executive, or what we might call *real power*.

So if one is interested in a number for the actual ruling elite on the basis of Wilson's findings, we should apply his division by twenty to the total general population four times to reach a result which reflects the actual power pyramid.

Given a claimed world population in 2021 of 7.8 billion, this results in a top layer of under 50,000 genuinely dominant men. And among this number, the guiding executive is, again, likely to form 5 per cent.

This results in under 2,450 men — a number I think is likely broadly correct.

A corollary to this conclusion will be corresponding tiers of psychic or occult access. There is a difference between someone who is able correctly to intuit that it will begin raining at precisely three o'clock tomorrow afternoon and someone who routinely channels — and has the power to initiate — the broad outline of Satan's plan for enslaving humanity for the next fifty or hundred years. Both have a measure of what Wilson calls 'jungle sensitivity'. But to ignore the fundamental differences of scale is a major blunder.

If Wilson's findings are correct, then they are correct in a context which assumes a flat structure with no natural staggered hierarchy, no levels of nobility, no ziggurat amid a sea of hovels. I do not make that assumption, and I do not believe the Qur'an reflects it, either.

When I am discussing *al jinn* / الجنّ, I mean the capstone of the pyramid both in terms of *real power* and in terms of *occult power*, which phenomena I believe are intrinsically connected, and which we outline later; I mean the roughly 2,500 men who sign off on the wars, economic cycles, political and sexual revolutions, mass movements of peoples, and technological and other waves of change which comprise the dominant themes of the closed-circuit dramas which form the lives of billions of politically and esoterically ignorant peons. I do not mean the five in a hundred infantry soldiers more capable of effecting an escape from their captors than the remaining ninety-five.

Sūrah 72: *Al Jinn*

We will look now at sūrah 72 in some detail.

This sūrah opens with *al jinn* / الجنّ but treats also indirectly of *satans* (Arabic: *al shayāṭīn* / الشَّيَاطِين). By presenting the relevant parts of this sūrah with key notes as they appear in *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation* (indicated here by means of an asterisk) we will be better prepared also to understand the Section below which has as its subjects *satans* and *Iblīs* / إبليس.

We are interested here in 72:1-15 and 72:19. I will lay out the verses and supply the related notes below each.

1 Say thou: "It is revealed to me,* that a band* of the domini listened in, and they said: 'We have heard an amazing recitation

* Many chapters have defining characteristics. Here that characteristic is *annahu* or *that (it)*, and closely-related constructions. The verse at 72:1 identifies what was revealed to the Messenger, and other translators tend to render along the lines I have here in terms of the construction mentioned above. Thereafter, translators tend to elide this construction where it reappears. I can understand that because where this feature appears elsewhere in the broader text of the Qur'an it tends to be redundant in English. So on first blush it makes sense to elide it in the remainder of the sūrah also. But it occurs in the present sūrah with such frequency that I was compelled to consider this feature as significant in some way. My conclusion is that it

appears so repeatedly in the chapter for two reasons. Firstly, the subject matter itself treats of *al jinn*, whom we understand to be representative of the dominant men who sit atop any society — including ours — and rule. In our broader discussion of that topic, we identify a correlation between the powers wielded by ruling elites and the effective use of esoteric or occult powers by those elites. Thus, this repeated feature emphasises the fact of this sūrah's *revelation* to the Messenger, effectively linking all sentences which contain the feature with the opening statement: *Say thou: it is revealed to me, that[...].* Moreover, the recurrent accent upon the word *that*, while easily (and, again, correctly) elided in other circumstances, serves here not only to put the reader in mind of this sūrah as something *revealed* to Muḥammad, but juxtaposes that fact with the words of *al jinn* who describe historical attempts to force access to the heavenly realms to obtain information, and that such attempts are now all but futile. Thus, this format itself makes plain that the revelation given to Muḥammad is superior to whatever the schemes of *al jinn* might be. Secondly, this same mechanism sets in place an emphasis on the revealed nature of verse 72:19 — which falls outside that segment which comprises the words of *al jinn* — effectively pulling it back into a focus with the same emphasis on *revelation* as the statements of *al jinn*. Finally, the same mechanism serves a different but related function at 72:27. Without the, perhaps, pedantic emphasis which results from my rendering of this sūrah, these important points would be lost.

* Arabic: *nafar: men* (as a collective); *band, party, troop*. This word is used in the opening verse of both segments which deal most extensively with *al jinn* in the Qur'an: 46:29-31 and 72:1-14. The construction has a partitive emphasis: it is 'a band of the domini' (i.e. some portion of the total number of domini), not all members of that group. This nuance will be of increasing interest as we progress through the present sūrah.

2 "Guiding to sound judgment, and we have believed in it, and will not ascribe a partnership with our Lord to anyone.'

3 "And that: 'Exalted be the majesty of our Lord! He has taken neither consort nor son.*

* Muhammad Asad understands this statement to support his view that the speakers are Jews, since the position here refutes the calumnies heaped upon God by Christians. I agree with this view within the context of my identification of *al jinn* as dominant rulers. See also note to 72:4 below.

4 "And that: 'The fool among us* ascribed a wanton falsehood to God.'

* Generally thought by those who hold to the Traditionalist view of this chapter to refer to Iblīs. Like me, Muhammad Asad does not accept uncritically the view that *al jinn* are non-human entities — at least, he does not do so at this point. Asad, himself a Jew (born Leopold Weiss), supplies a comment which I include for interest: *If we accept the supposition that the beings spoken of here were Jewish strangers, the "outrageous things" (shatat) which they mention would appear to be an allusion to the deep-set belief of the Jews that they were "God's chosen people" - a belief which the Qur'an consistently rejects, and of which the new converts now divested themselves.* The reference could also be

to the foolish in general — for example, by analogy with the construction *most moderate of them* (i.e. *among them*) at 68:28 — or to the creators of lies about God, such as the inventors of the Talmud, or Saul of Tarsus. However, my view is that since it is *al jinn* who are speaking — whom I identify as representative of the dominant men or ruling elites of the time — I think it most likely that they are referring to one of their own on that basis. Accordingly, I think the reference most likely to indicate Emperor Constantine who, it will be remembered, convened and presided over the Council of Nicaea in 325 CE. The result of this Council, at least according to Wikipedia as of January 2021, was that: *The Council declared that the Son was true God, coeternal with the Father and begotten from His same substance, arguing that such a doctrine best codified the Scriptural presentation of the Son as well as traditional Christian belief about him handed down from the Apostles. This belief was expressed by the bishops in the Creed of Nicaea, which would form the basis of what has since been known as the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed.* Emperor Constantine undoubtedly meets our criteria for *al jinn*, and so while the speakers in the sūrah seem most likely to have been Jews, as per Muhammad Asad's comment, their defining characteristic within the Qur'anic framework is not here Jewishness, but membership of a ruling caste. And on that basis, the speakers would regard Emperor Constantine as one of their own. This understanding comports both with my view of *al jinn* as representatives of a dominant minority (the Jewish aspect of which is identified by Asad), and with the refutation of common Christian errors at 72:3.

5 "And that: 'We had thought that the servi and the domini would not ascribe a lie to God.*

* The implication is clearly that the speakers were wrong in their assumption. If we grant that the reference at 72:4 is to Emperor Constantine as I assert, the present verse makes sense. Constantine (as a member of the ruling elite, or *domini*) presided over a gathering at the Council of Nicaea in 325 CE of around 300 bishops, men whose political position at that time in Church history was unambiguously that of *servi*. See note at 72:4.

6 "And that: 'Men among the servi sought protection with men against* the domini, so they increased them in baseness.*

* The issue of how to understand the word *min* (Arabic: من) in this context is a thorny one. The fact is that *min* forms a standard part of the construction in which the verb which precedes it here occurs, and does so in combination with its complement particle (Arabic: *bi* / ب). Thus, a construction familiar to most Muslims is: *I seek protection with* (Arabic: *bi* / ب) *God from* (Arabic: *min* / من) — i.e. against — *the accursed Satan*. We find this construction unambiguously used at 19:18, 23:97, 40:27, 113:1-2, 114:1-4. The remaining instances of the form I of this verb (2:67, 11:47, 23:98, 44:20) use *lest* or *that* (Arabic: *an* / ان), and we can disregard those here. The question is whether one is to regard 72:6 as divergent from those structures with identical components at 19:18, 23:97, 40:27, 113:1-2, 114:1-4, and if so, on what basis. I will present in my own wording the two possible alignments, then give other translators' renderings with my comments, before presenting my conclusions. If we are to read the first clause of the present verse in alignment with its fellows

in *min*, then we must understand it as: *Men among the servi sought protection with men against the domini*. Here the import is that men among the servi sought protection with others like themselves *against the domini*. This reading, using my own terminology, is consistent with all other instances which employ the same grammatical components. However, the divergent reading (i.e. one which, though possible to Arabic is anomalous to 19:18, 23:97, 40:27, 113:1-2, 114:1-4) is: *Men among the servi sought protection with men among the domini*. Here the import is that men of one kind sought refuge with men of another kind and the complement is left unfulfilled. We will now consider some translators. Here we are interested in the constructions used, not translators' understanding of key terminology. A. J. Arberry has: *But there were certain men of mankind who would take refuge with certain men of the jinn*; Hilali & Khan, keen to avoid textual evidence pointing to humans in the second case, have: *'And verily, there were men among mankind who took shelter with the masculine among the jinns*; Asad has: *Yet [it has always happened] that certain kinds of humans would seek refuge with certain kinds of [such] invisible forces*; lastly, Saheeh International has: *And there were men from mankind who sought refuge in men from the jinn*. We see that the first three translators favour what I am calling the divergent reading, while Saheeh International fudges the issue by using the ambiguous *from*, which can mean both *from among* and *against*. The problem, in my view, is less one of grammar than one of exegesis. The Traditionalist does not possess an understanding of each of the types of human and non-human entities discussed in Article XXV which is consistent in all places in the Qur'an (he derives it from extraneous sources), so it is natural that he struggles in his exegesis here. We have been able to present a textually consistent identification of the key types, and that has assisted us in presenting an exegesis of the verses of this sūrah to this point, one which comports both with that identification and with the text on the page. The question is whether we can continue in that vein here while applying Occam's razor; i.e. the principle that the option requiring the smallest number of assumptions is probably the correct one. In our case, provided our exegesis is not unduly disrupted, it requires less assumptions — given that 72:6 contains the same grammatical components as 19:18, 23:97, 40:27, 113:1-2, 114:1-4 — to accept that 72:6 comports with its fellows and that the meaning of the troublesome *min* in this verse is what it is in all other comparable cases: *from* in the sense of *against*. This results in a full verse in: *Men among the servi sought protection with men against the domini, so they increased them in baseness*. Understood thus, we find a ready fit in the Servile Wars, three periods of slave uprisings in Rome (135–132 BC, 104–100 BC, 73–71 BC) which were brutally put down by the Romans, resulting in the wholesale crucifixion, torture, and death by other horrific means of the rebellious slave armies. While I cannot prove definitively that this is the reference, it fits both with the identifications I have provided and with historical reality, and aligns easily with a reading of the grammatical components found in the verse which is consistent across all comparable instances. In order to avoid an ambiguity of the type found in the Saheeh International translation I have rendered *min* in this case *against*.

* I.e. the *domini* increased those among the *servi* in baseness. See note to 72:6 above. Arabic: *rahaq*. The Arabic senses include: *lowness, vileness, meanness; weakness* (Lane, p. 1777).

7 "And that: 'They* thought, as you* thought, that God would never raise up* anyone.'

* I take the speakers here to have in view the *domini* in the preceding verse. Seen in this light, the implication is that the rulers of the time in question dismissed the idea of God raising up any messenger or prophet (see also other notes to this verse). Interestingly, the leader of the first slave uprising mentioned in the note above, Eunus, rose to prominence among the slaves through his claim to be both prophet and a wonder-worker. Clearly, the Roman elites did not subscribe to Eunus' assertions. See notes to 72:6 and 72:7.

* I.e. the broader group of *al jinn* which the speakers are addressing. I take this broader group to comprise non-Jewish elites. See note to 72:7 below.

* We need to address the question of what the verb *ba'atha* means here. It is used in two main senses in the Qur'an: *to raise up* (i.e. a messenger or prophet) and *to raise up* (i.e. after death). Among the translators I frequently review, the Traditionalists Hilali & Khan, Saheeh International, and Muhammad Asad all render after the first view, whereas the non-Traditionalist N. J. Dawood renders after the second with: *that God could never resurrect the dead*; non-Traditionalist A. J. Arberry is ambiguous: *that God would never raise up anyone*. I can only assume that the first three translators were primed to incline to their view by the usual sources, whereas the non-Traditionalists remained relatively ignorant of those sources and simply followed the Arabic on the page to the best of their abilities. The Qur'an contains 52 instances of the form I of this verb (2:56, 2:129, 2:213, 2:246, 2:247, 2:259, 3:164, 4:35, 5:12, 5:31, 6:36, 6:60, 6:65, 7:14, 7:103, 7:167, 10:74, 10:75, 15:36, 16:21, 16:36, 16:38, 16:84, 16:89, 17:5, 17:15, 17:79, 17:94, 18:12, 18:19, 18:19, 19:15, 19:33, 22:7, 23:16, 23:100, 25:41, 25:51, 26:36, 26:87, 27:65, 28:59, 36:52, 37:144, 38:79, 40:34, 58:6, 58:18, 62:2, 64:7, 64:7, 72:7), and both usages are frequent among them. We need a concrete criterion by which to align the present case with one of these two meanings. We find that the construction here at 72:7 of an active verb in the negative (Arabic: *lan / لَنْ*) is found at one other place only (40:34). There the text expressly mentions '*a messenger*'. On that basis, we can concur with the Traditionalist reading: the import here is of raising up a messenger. This leaves us with the question of the broader meaning. Muhammad Asad notes here: *Thus Tabari (on the authority of Al-Kalbi) and Ibn Kathir [states that] the overwhelming majority of the Jews were convinced that no prophet would be raised after those who were explicitly mentioned in the Old Testament: hence their rejection of Jesus and, of course, Muhammad, and their "reaching out towards heaven" (see next verse) in order to obtain a direct insight into God's plan of creation.* While I agree in general terms with Asad here, there exists a broader aspect to the present case. I would agree more readily and fully with him if the text read '*we thought*' rather than '*you thought*' in this verse. There are, of course, cases in the Qur'an where *you* is used where *we* is clearly the import (dialogue among the companions of the cave at 18:19 comes readily to mind), but in addition to the fact that *we* and *us* are routinely and consistently used by the speakers in this segment of this sūrah outside the present instance (see 72:1, 72:2, 72:3, 72:4, 72:5, 72:8, 72:9, 72:10, 72:11, 72:12, 72:13, 72:14) we must not disregard the fact that the speakers here are

identified in both segments which treat most expansively of *al jinn* in the Qur'an (72:1-14 and 46:29-31) as some portion of a greater number (see 72:1, 46:29). Thus, I am of the view that the change in personal pronoun here at 72:7 to *you* indicates a shift in addressee beyond that of the core group of speakers — or one which at the least embraces a group broader than the core group indicated by the peppering of first-person plural pronouns. On that basis, I believe that the speakers here are addressing, or at least indicating, the full complement of *al jinn*, perhaps including the speaking Jewish element also, but extending beyond it to include the non-Jewish elements. When we consider the remaining segment in which we can derive details for *al jinn* (46:29-31) we find that '*they turned back to their people, warning*' (46:29), and that a speaker among them twice uses the warning phrase which is so central to our work in *The God Protocol*, namely, *O our people*. Thus, given the available Qur'anic evidence, the case seems strongest that the shift to *you* at 72:7 implies a cut to the scene where the speakers appeal to their own people at 46:30-31 and, in my view, verses 72:8-15 continue in the same vein. Supposing this is correct, who are their people? Other Jews? I think not. At the level of the apex of temporal power, certainly in our own day, racial and other affiliations mean little. And in any case, a call to one's own people presupposes a connection of the basis of the stated defining characteristic, and the stated defining characteristic in either of the contexts listed is not Jewishness, but temporal dominance. Thus, given a group of Jewish dominant rulers as the subject of this part of the sūrah, an appeal to their people — especially given my reading of 72:4-6 — presupposes other dominant rulers, not other Jews. Supposing we are right, what does this mean? It means that here *al jinn* — either including the Jewish element or without it — was of the view that God would never raise up a messenger. And if our understanding of the Roman component in verses 72:4-6 is correct, this produces a tension with the (false) prophet and would-be freer of slaves from tyranny Eunus (see notes to said verses above). The implication here, of course, is that those addressed are wrong in their assumption: God *was* to raise up someone.

8 "And that: 'We* touched* the heaven, but found it filled with strong guards and flames.'*

* In my analysis, 72:8-15 treat of the appeal of *al jinn* to their own people (see note to 72:7 above). Muhammad Asad (whose own process of investigation was not much dissimilar to mine on this point) feels that in the first instance this refers to the Jewish people, but also humanity at large and: *[...]may be understood as alluding not only, metaphorically, to the arrogant Jewish belief in their being "God's chosen people", but also, more factually, to their old inclination to, and practice of, astrology as a means to foretell the future. Apart from this - and in a more general sense - their "reaching out towards heaven" may be a metaphorical description of a state of mind which causes man to regard himself as "self-sufficient" and to delude himself into thinking that he is bound to achieve mastery over his own fate.* My own view is that the reference is to the broader ruling elite — both Jewish and non-Jewish — and references their application of dark arts by which occult means they fortify their power and advance their agenda.

* Arabic: *lamasa*. This form I verb occurs four times in the Qur'an. In the remaining cases (4:43, 5:6, 6:7) it treats of physical

touching of various kinds in a direct sense, despite efforts by some translators to obfuscate that plain nuance here. Given that *al jinn* are dominant human beings we can understand the phrasing of the present verse to indicate the offices of satans in their service (see note below).

* The association in this portion is clearly with the satans (Arabic: *al shayāṭīn*); see also in this connection 15:16-18, 37:6-10, 67:5 as well as 26:210-212, 81:25. It is my view that both houses of the ruling elite — Jewish and non-Jewish — utilise demonic forces.

9 "And that: 'We sat there on seats to hear; but whoso listens in now finds for him a flame waiting.'*

* This indicates a strict limitation placed by God upon the powers of the ruling elite and their access to the heavenly realms.¹ This limitation contrasts with the feature of the present sūrah which emphasises this narrative as something *revealed* (i.e. sent down by God) to the Prophet. See note to 72:1.

10 "And that: 'We know not whether evil is intended for him who is in the earth, or whether their Lord intends for them rectitude.'*

* This statement provides a further indication of the limits which apply to the ruling elite to that supplied at 72:8-9.

11 "And that: 'Among us* are those righteous, and among us are other than that; we are of diverse paths.'

* I.e. among the ruling elites. In my analysis, 72:8-15 treat of the appeal of *al jinn* to their own people (see note to 72:7 above).

12 "And that: 'We know that we will never escape God in the earth, nor will we escape Him by flight.'*

* It is my view that the dominant minority maintains power in large part by means of demonic forces. These forces mean that elites have known for hundreds of years that escape either into the earth or into the heavens is impossible. This sets in some relief the claims made by modern scientists and government agencies which specialise in the popular forms of cosmology and cosmogony which NASA typifies. Cf. 55:33.

13 "And that: 'When we heard the guidance, we believed in it,* and whoso believes in his Lord, he will fear neither loss nor baseness.'*

* I take this to mean that when the ruling elite of the time in question heard the guidance given to Muhammad, they believed in it. This fits with my broader thesis which is that a) the inhabitants of Muhammad's place of origin rejected his message and — in keeping with the Qur'anic narrative — were destroyed, and that b) since Muhammad was the messenger for all mankind, the acceptance of his message by the ruling elites of

1 One is put in mind, naturally, of that ancient phenomenon which is today called *astral projection* or *remote viewing* in which the practitioner is merged (whether knowingly or not) with a demonic agent, with the result that the two become virtually indistinguishable.

that time explains both the rapid spread of the Islamic empire and the fact that God did not destroy the entire world at that time.

* This choice of words invites contrast with 72:6; see notes to 72:6 and 72:7.

14 "And that: 'Among us are those submitting,* and among us are the unjust.* And whoso has submitted, those have sought rectitude.'

* Clearly, the ruling elites of that time submitted, as evinced by the rapid capitulation of the surrounding empires to Muslim rule (see note to 7:13).

* The point is made that the same dominant group contains evil men also. It remains to be seen which category best typifies the elites of today in the face of a call to guidance which follows the Qur'anic protocols, although I suspect it is the latter. See my work *The God Protocol*.

15 "And as for the unjust, they are firewood for Gehenna."
19 "And that,* when the servant of God stood up calling to Him, they were almost a compact mass about him."*

* The reappearance here of the grammatical feature we identified in the note to 72:1 indicates to me that the subject of this clause is again *al jinn*. Some Traditionalists understand the verse along the same lines, although without sharing my identification of *al jinn*. Given my analysis of the pivot in personal pronoun from *we* to *you* at (see note to 72:7 above), 72:8-15 treat of the appeal of *al jinn* to their own people, and I see the return to the subject of *al jinn* here as a continuation of that analysis: a Jewish portion of the ruling elites of that time addressing their peers, which is primarily treated at 46:29-31. At 46:29 we read that '*they turned back to their people, warning*'. This is followed by two *O my / our people* statements (46:30-31), which format is crucial to the Qur'anic protocol of warning (see my work *The God Protocol*). The second of these reads: '*O our people: respond to the caller to God[...]*'. I believe it is the speaker in this instance which is referenced to at 72:19 as '*the servant of God*', and that '*they*' are *al jinn* of non-Jewish types (as discussed in notes above to this sūrah). Others are of the view (I assume derived from extraneous sources) that the reference is to pagan Arabs. Muhammad Asad covers that base while entertaining other possibilities. While I disagree with this analysis, I include it for interest: *Lit, "would almost be upon him in crowds (libad, sing. libdah)" - i.e., with a view to "extinguishing God's [guiding] light" (Tabari, evidently alluding to 9:32). Most of the commentators assume that the above verse refers to the Prophet Muhammad and the hostility shown to him by his pagan contemporaries. While this may have been so in the first instance, it is obvious that the passage has a general import as well, alluding to the hostility shown by the majority of people, at all times and in all societies, to a minority or an individual who stands up for a self-evident - but unpopular - moral truth.*

* I.e. the dominant men to whom this group of *al jinn* were calling as discussed in the notes to this sūrah above flocked to the side of their messenger (see note to this verse above) in such numbers that he was hemmed in. As a result of their acceptance,

the world at this time was not destroyed (see particularly note to 72:14), and there ensued a rapid capitulation of huge territories to Muslim rule.

Summary and references

In short, I identify *al jinn* / الجِنّ as *those with an independent will to power; those able to initiate and impose their own plan*, and *al ins* / الإنس as those who follow; those who implement the plan of others.

While I accept fully that there exists a non-corporeal, demonic aspect to the world system and which underpins the power structures thereof, I am unable to find support in the Qur’anic usage of *al jinn* / الجِنّ and *al ins* / الإنس for anything other than two types of human in free and open communication with each other representing the dominant and servile castes of society.

I agree with Muhammad Asad’s assessment that *al jinn* / الجِنّ as found in sūrah 72 likely references a Jewish element, but am of the opinion based on the broader text that *al jinn* / الجِنّ comprise a ruling caste which is not exclusively Jewish but, rather, which comprises a very thin cross section which includes within it ruling elites of all significant ethnicities.

I have taken a point from Colin Wilson’s book *The Occult* treating of the proportion of men which is equipped with the requisite initiative to lead, and extrapolated from his findings on the basis of the hierarchies suggested by our investigations into *Realpolitik* upward from the level of the common soldier to that of the hidden hand of genuine power in our day and suggested a steering group behind the Satanic powers of this day of under 2,500 men.

I have also ascribed corresponding occult abilities based on Colin Wilson’s investigations to those who comprise the dominant minority at the highest level of world power.

I discuss *al jinna* / آلِجِنَّةَ separately later in this article, and agree that it has a principal sense which relates to *demons*. This latter term has become conflated with *al jinn* / الجِنّ, which is understandable due to the similarity of the words and changing background cultural influences. Further confusion arises between the two terms given the inherent faculty for channelling demonic powers which dominant rulers naturally possess.

We discuss the Qur’an’s single description of Iblis as ‘of the domini’ at 18:50 later in this presentation.

al jinn / الجِنّ

6:100, 6:112, 6:128, 6:130, 7:38, 7:179, 17:88, 18:50, 27:17, 27:39, 34:12, 34:14, 34:41, 41:25, 41:29, 46:18, 46:29, 51:56, 55:33, 72:1, 72:5, 72:6.

al ins / الإنس

6:112, 6:128, 6:128, 6:130, 7:38, 7:179, 17:88, 27:17, 41:25, 41:29, 46:18, 51:56, 55:33, 72:5, 72:6.

ins / إنس and *jānn* / جانّ

As discordant though it is with the norms of Arabic grammar,

my view, based on the Qur’an’s usage of the terms, is that *ins* / إنس and *jānn* / جانّ are the singular of *al ins* / الإنس and *al jinn* / الجِنّ respectively. (We discuss the meaning of *al jānn* / الجَانّ separately below.) And within their understanding of the terms as a human being and an ethereal non-human creature, Traditionalist translators tend also to treat *ins* / إنس and *jānn* / جانّ in English as singular nouns.

I base this view on the fact that it fits both the following segment (where the terms listed occur in close proximity), as well as the other instances where these components occur.

- 31 We will attend to you, O you two encumbered ones!
 32 Then which of the blessings of your Lord will you deny?
 33 O congregation of **domini** and **servi**: if you are able to penetrate the regions of the heavens and the earth, then penetrate! You will not penetrate save by authority:
 34 — Then which of the blessings of your Lord will you deny? —
 35 Sent against you will be a flame of fire and smoke; and you will not be helped.
 36 Then which of the blessings of your Lord will you deny?
 37 And when the sky is rent asunder, and turns rose-red like oil,
 38 — Then which of the blessings of your Lord will you deny? —
 39 Then that day, neither **servus** nor **dominus** will be questioned about his transgression.
 40 Then which of the blessings of your Lord will you deny?
 (55:31-40)

The word *ins* / إنس occurs twice more in the Qur’an and in contexts which are similar to each other but which may be correlated with the segment above:

- 56 In them: maidens of modest gaze, whom there deflowered before them neither **servus** nor **dominus**:
 57 — Then which of the blessings of your Lord will you deny? —
 (55:56-57)

- 74 Whom there deflowered before them neither **servus** nor **dominus**:
 75 — Then which of the blessings of your Lord will you deny? —
 (55:74-75)

The context in the two segments above treats of an undeniably *physical* realm — sexual intercourse with females — a value which requires mental gymnastics to correlate with the traditional conception of *jānn* / جانّ as an ethereal, non-human being.

There exist two further instances of *jānn* / جانّ in the Qur’an (27:10, 28:31). While they have historically caused some confusion, given our definition of the term as *dominus* (or *one with a will to power*, or *one able to impose his own will*), both cases are resolved.

The scenario in both cases is identical: God instructing Moses to cast his rod. In both cases, we read that, having been cast, the

rod became ‘as if it were’ a *jānn* / جانّ. We know that the defining characteristic of *al jinn* is that of active will. Thus the rod came alive and acted as though upon its own will.

Here are both scenarios with the reading implemented:

- 10 “And cast thou thy staff.” And when he saw it stirring as if it were a **dominus**, he turned away, and did not return.
 “O Moses: fear thou not, the emissaries fear not in My presence,
 11 “Save whoso did wrong; then he changed to good after evil, so am I forgiving and merciful.
 (27:10-11)

I suspect that many translators seize upon *serpent* while translating *jānn* / جانّ by analogy with the segment below.

- 19 He said: “Cast thou it down, O Moses.”
 20 And he cast it down, and then was it a **serpent** moving.
 21 He said: “Take thou it, and fear thou not; We will return it to its former state.
 (20:19-21)

The word rendered at 20:20 *serpent* is *ḥayya* — which objectively means *snake* or *serpent*. We have the same point confirmed below:

- 107 So he cast his staff — and then was it a clear **serpent**!
 (7:107)

The word in this case is *ṭhu’bān* which also means *snake* or *serpent*.

The segment at 20:19-21 is a retelling of what we find at 27:10-11 from a different perspective (a frequent phenomenon in the Qur’an). And, rather than delve into the knotty problem of a Qur’anicly consistent value for *jānn* / جانّ, translators tend to drop the problem down the back of a filing cabinet and move on.

Again, *serpent* is the meaning at 20:20. We are told the rod of Moses was — or became — a serpent as a fact. But 27:10 does not establish a fact, it offers a comparison.

We find the same usage below also:

- 31 “And cast thou thy staff.” And when he saw it stirring as if it were a **dominus**, he turned away, and did not return.
 “O Moses: draw thou nigh, and fear thou not. Thou art of the secure.
 (28:31)

Again, this is a counter-factual scenario; a simile based on a non-real situation. (Cf. *The man pushed through the crowd as if he were a train*. Was he in fact a train? No, he was not.)

The slack treatment of the term *jānn* / جانّ we have identified results in a discrepancy since the same translators require it to mean something else entirely (usually: a single non-material entity) in the remaining places where it occurs.

In our work, there is no such discrepancy. Our understanding of *jānn* / جانّ in all cases is *dominus*, and by this we mean something with its own will to power. And in the two instances

above, where the rod which Moses cast is likened to a *jānn* / جانّ the comparison fits exactly: Moses’ rod acquired its own will; it did what it wanted, which behaviour is that which characterises our understanding of *jānn* / جانّ.

Summary and references

We established above that *al ins* / الإنس and *al jinn* / الجِنّ treat of human beings of different status.

Despite a clear divergence from the normal rules of Arabic, usage in the three existing contexts supports our view that *ins* / إنس and *jānn* / جانّ are the singular of *al ins* / الإنس and *al jinn* / الجِنّ respectively.

The comparison of Moses’ rod as something which came alive and had a will of its own fits our definition of *jānn* / جانّ as one with an individual will to power and ability to do what he wants.

ins / إنس

55:39, 55:56, 55:74.

jānn / جانّ

27:10, 28:31, 55:39, 55:56, 55:74.

al jānn / الجَانّ

Traditionally, *al jānn* / الجَانّ is treated as indicating Iblīs as the key or chief *jinn*, (and by *al jinn* / الجِنّ is meant ethereal beings which form human-like communities).

While accepting that non-human *demons* (*satans*) are fully part of the Qur’anic worldview, I do not find support in the Qur’an for *al jinn* / الجِنّ in the sense summarised above.

We have covered the two instances of *jānn* / جانّ, which term we understand as *dominus* in its broader sense of *one with a will to (his own) power*. We note that in neither case does the word denote a *dominus* in the narrower political sense, but is *like* one (i.e. possesses the characteristics thereof without in fact being such a thing).

The convention *al jānn* / الجَانّ occurs twice and in neither case is found in connection or contradistinction with either *al ins* / الإنس or *ins* / إنس. Both instances are found in the same context — a context which allows us positively to identify *al jānn* / الجَانّ with Iblīs on a pan-textual basis. On this point we agree entirely with the dominant historical understanding of this term.

We will see later that Iblīs became *al shayṭān* — that is, the (leading) *adversary* against God; the word *shayṭān* is synonymous with *adversary* (cf. Hebrew: *satan*).

Clearly, there is an overlap between *satan* (adversary) and *dominus* in the sense of *will to (one’s own) power*. And there is a connection also between the *domini* (i.e. the ruling elite) and Iblīs as chief of the demons, since we have established above that the dominant minority at each level of the political pyramid tends also to be those with the greatest occult powers.

However, it would be a mistake to conflate the *domini* (i.e. the

ruling elite) and Iblīs as the leading demon so far as to view them as entirely of the same type. The term *domini*, as we have summarised, has both a general and a subsequent more specialised, political sense, and we need to be clear which is meant in this case.

We know that some among the *domini* (in that specialised, political sense) are righteous, which fact means that such individuals neither advance nor follow a Satanic creed (i.e. a creed which is antithetical — or *adversarial* — towards the commandments of God). While it may be countered that the agenda followed by the ruling elites of the last century is so uniformly evil that there can be no distinction between those elites and the creed of the *satans*, if we are to take the Qur'an's presentation as representative also of the present reality, then one must allow that a righteous contingent among the ruling elites exists today.

Given that some among the *domini* are righteous, this fact precludes the application of the specific, political sense of the term *dominus* to Iblīs, since his creed is uniformly that of an *adversary* to God.

This leaves us with the general sense of *one possessed of a will to (one's own) power*. This clearly applies to Iblīs fully since he refuses to follow the command of God and follows his own will, and this is how we understand *al jānn* / الجان in the text.

To maintain a distinction between *dominus* as an individual among the dominant human minority, and the same word with the definite article applied to Iblīs, I render the latter *the demon dominus* and supply a note in each case.

26 And We created man from sounding clay, from dark slime transmuted.

27 And the demon dominus created We before of the fire of scorching wind.
(15:26-27)

14 He created man of sounding clay like pottery,
15 And He created the demon dominus from a mixture of fire.
(55:14-15)

The words of Iblīs himself below confirm this identification.

12 He said: "What prevented thee from submitting when I commanded thee?" Said he: "I am better than he; Thou createdst me of fire, and Thou createdst him of clay."
(7:12)

76 Said he: "I am better than he; Thou createdst me of fire, and Thou createdst him of clay."
(38:76)

Summary and references

The contrast in neither instance of *al jānn* / الجان is between *al jānn* / الجان and *al ins* / الإنس.

The term *al jānn* / الجان — as per the traditional reading —

references Iblīs; we render this designation *the demon dominus*.

al jānn / الجان
15:27, 55:15.

Summary of terms in this segment

1. *al jinn* / الجن in Qur'anic parlance means those with a will to power: the dominant ones, the rulers, those who implement their plans. I translate this throughout *domini*. This group comprises a tiny minority of mankind.
2. *al ins* / الإنس in Qur'anic parlance means the servile or submissive ones, those who are ruled by the *domini*. This forms the vast majority of mankind, and this majority — wittingly or unwittingly — serves the ruling elite. I translate this throughout *servi*.
3. The singular of *al jinn* / الجن is *jānn* / جان, and this is translated throughout *dominus*.
4. The singular of *al ins* / الإنس is *ins* / إنس, and this is translated throughout *servus*.
5. The term *al jānn* / الجان — as per the traditional reading — references Iblīs; we render this designation here *the demon dominus*, and understand it to refer to his independent will to power.

SECTION TWO

Iblīs / إبليس; *al shaytān* / الشَّيْطَان; *shaytān* / شَيْطَان; *al shayāṭīn* / الشَّيْطَانِيْنَ and *shayāṭīn* / شَيْطَانِيْنَ

Iblīs / إبليس

Before we look at the remaining words in the *j-n-n* root, we should consider the subject of the *shaytān*, and to approach this subject correctly, we need to look first at the person of Iblīs.

Iblīs is mentioned by name eleven times in the Qur'an. This personality is considered one of the angels by many classical scholars, but tends to be thought of as one of *al jinn* / الجن by contemporary writers. We have unpicked some important features of the term *al jinn* / الجن above, and do not find in the Qur'anic text support for associating this term with a community of non-human beings.

A detailed overview of the debates and nuances in regard to the nature of Iblīs among various sects on this topic is beyond the remit of this article. While Iblīs is mentioned by name predominantly in the context of angels, the Qur'an does not say that he was an angel or that he 'fell', and it is possible that the identification of Iblīs as a fallen angel among some Muslims is a reflection of views of Hebrew and Christian scriptures.

The entities we will look at in this Section fall into the general heading of *al jinna* / الْجِنَّة, which topic we discuss more fully later. But we can enter this subject with the benefit of having untangled the (historically often inconsistent) lumping together of *al jinn* / الجن (*domini*) with *al jinna* / الْجِنَّة, which clears some of the dead wood.

We present all instances where Iblīs is mentioned by name in the Qur'an below with comments. As we proceed, the reader will doubtless note:

1. Where *Iblīs* is identified, there frequently occurs a seamless merging with *al shaytān* / الشَّيْطَان which term seems to imply his function.
2. The close association in a number of the segments between Iblīs and the angels.

As we will come to see, *shaytān* / شَيْطَان and its plural *shayāṭīn* / شَيْطَانِيْنَ — which we render *satan* and *satans* respectively — are closely allied with the concept of *adversary*, both etymologically by dint of usage. This direct correlation is made clear in the notes to *The Qur'an: A Complete Revelation* in every instance, and that direct correlation explains certain verses which otherwise remain cryptic, for example, 37:65.

62 Is that better as a welcome, or the Tree of Zaqqūm?
63 We have made it a means of denial for the wrongdoers.
64 It is a tree that comes forth in the root of Hell,
65 **Its spathes are as the heads of satans,**

My note to 37:65 reads:

The allusion here — given our underlying definition for *shayāṭīn* of *adversaries* — suggests the age-old practice of displaying the heads of defeated enemies on spikes on castle battlements and similar places.

We will now list the contexts in which Iblīs is mentioned by name and provide comments.

34 And when We said to the angels: "Submit to Adam," then they submitted. Not so **Iblīs**; he refused, and had waxed proud, and was of the false claimers of guidance.
35 And We said: "O Adam: dwell thou and thy wife in the garden, and eat thereof freely wheresoever you will; but approach not this tree lest you be of the wrongdoers."
36 But the **satan** caused them to fall therefrom, and turned them out of what they were in; and We said: "Get you all down, an enemy to one another; and for you in the earth are a dwelling-place and provision for a time."
37 Then received Adam words from his Lord, and He turned towards him; He is the Accepting of Repentance, the Merciful.
38 We said: "Get you down from it all together. And if there comes to you guidance from Me, whoso follows My guidance: no fear will be upon them, nor will they grieve.
39 "But those who ignore warning and deny Our proofs: those are the companions of the Fire; therein they abide eternally."
(2:34-39)

Iblīs himself is not stated as an angel, but is listed among those who refuse to submit to Adam in the context of angels who do submit. We note also the seamless transition to *al shaytān* / الشَّيْطَان at 2:36.

At this point it would seem that Iblīs is either a rebellious angel (in which case all angels may be assumed to be created of the

same substance as he), or he is an entity distinct from the angels and who, along with the angels, was in existence prior to Adam.

We look to the remaining segments for possible clarification.

11 And We created you; then We formed you; then said We to the angels: "Submit to Adam," and they submitted. Not so **Iblīs**; he was not of those who submit.
12 He said: "What prevented thee from submitting when I commanded thee?" Said he: "I am better than he; Thou createdst me of fire, and Thou createdst him of clay."
13 He said: "Get thee down therefrom; it is not for thee to wax proud therein, so go thou forth; thou art of those brought low."
14 Said he: "Grant Thou me respite until the day they are raised up."
15 He said: "Thou art of those granted respite."
16 Said he: "Because Thou hast caused me to err, I will lie in wait for them on Thy straight path,
17 "Then will I come to them from before them, and from behind them, and from their right, and from their left; and Thou wilt not find most of them grateful."
18 He said: "Go thou forth therefrom, condemned and banished. Whoso follows thee from among them — I will fill Gehenna with you all together."
(7:11-18)

The motif of filling Gehenna will be significant later in our presentation.

We note that, as a rebellious agent, Iblīs operates within the bounds set him by God, and is active in his enmity towards the descendants of Adam.

Additionally, we have previously identified *al jānn* / الجان — as per the traditional reading — with Iblīs (Iblīs' protest that he was created of fire bears this out), and render this designation in our work *the demon dominus*.

While we have included the local verses above, here is a broader context:

26 And We created man from sounding clay, from dark slime transmuted.
27 And the **demon dominus** created We before of the fire of scorching wind.
28 And when thy Lord said to the angels: "I am creating a mortal from sounding clay, from dark slime transmuted,
29 "And when I have formed him and breathed into him of My Spirit, then fall down, to him in submission,"
30 Then the angels submitted, all of them together.
31 Not so **Iblīs**; he refused to be with those who submit.
32 He said: "O **Iblīs**: what ails thee that thou art not with those who submit?"
33 Said he: "I am not one to submit to a mortal whom Thou hast created from sounding clay, from dark slime transmuted."
34 He said: "Then go thou forth from it, for thou art accursed.
35 "And the curse is upon thee until the Day of Judgment."
36 Said he: "My Lord: grant Thou me respite until the day

they are raised."

37 He said: "Thou art of those granted respite

38 "Until the day of the known time."

39 Said he: "My Lord: because Thou hast caused me to err, I will make it fair to them in the earth; and I will cause them to err all together;

40 "Save Thy sincere servants among them."

41 He said: "This is a straight path to Me:

42 "My servants — thou hast no authority over them save those who follow thee among those who err;

43 "And Gehenna is their promised place all together.

44 "It has seven gates; and for each gate is a portion assigned."

(15:26-44)

At 15:27-28 the creation of the demon dominus is indicated as a single event and contrasted in terms of materials with the creation of a man. If the demon dominus were created of the same stuff as the angels, one might expect that connection to be supplied here — however, no such indication is given. And again:

61 And when We said to the angels: "Submit to Adam," then they submitted. Not so **Iblīs**; he said: "Shall I submit to one Thou hast created of clay?"

62 He said: "Hast Thou seen this whom Thou hast honoured above me? If Thou grant me respite until the Day of Resurrection, I will master his progeny save a few."

63 Said He: "Depart thou! And whoso follows thee of them: Gehenna will be your reward; an ample reward.

64 "And incite thou whom thou canst of them with thy voice, and rally thou horse and foot against them, and partner thou them in their wealth and children, and promise thou them," — but the **satan** promises them only delusion —

65 "My servants: over them thou hast no authority." And thy Lord suffices as disposer of affairs:

(17:61-65)

Again, while Iblīs is commissioned to attack Adam and his progeny from all sides, he has no authority over those who sincerely turn to God. We note also the seamless transition to *shayṭān* / الشَّيْطَانُ at 17:64.

50 And when We said to the angels: "Submit to Adam," then they submitted. Not so **Iblīs**; he was of the domini and was perfidious towards the command of his Lord; take you him and his progeny as allies instead of Me? And they are an enemy to you; evil an exchange for the wrongdoers!

51 I made them not witness to the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor to the creation of themselves; and I take not those who lead astray as support.

(18:50-51)

We have discussed the general application of domini above. Its sole signification in the case of Iblīs here simply identifies him as one who asserts his own will to power, a fact which is confirmed by the remainder of the sentence in which Iblīs is described as disregarding the command of God and of following his own command. Thus, domini is used here in its primary signification of *one who asserts and imposes his will*. Additionally, there is no

contrast in this case with *al ins* / الْإِنْسِ.

The text states that Iblīs has progeny. While some will claim that this is a figure of speech, that view would require that a pattern of figurative usage be identified for the term across the Qur'an, which is impossible (for all instances of this word in the text see 2:124, 2:128, 2:266, 3:34, 3:36, 3:38, 4:9, 6:84, 6:133, 7:172, 7:173, 10:83, 13:38, 14:37, 14:40, 17:3, 17:62, 18:50, 19:58, 19:58, 29:27, 36:41, 37:77, 37:113, 46:15, 52:21, 52:21, 57:26).

So we must proceed on the basis that Iblīs has offspring in the sense of genetically related descendants capable of producing more of the same.

Granted a positive identification of Iblīs with the *satan* (*al shayṭān* / الشَّيْطَانُ), we can regard his progeny as *satans* (or demons); that signification will broaden to include a human aspect in our analysis of *al jinna* / الْجِنَّةُ in the next segment.

We learn also that Iblīs and his progeny were not witness to the creation of the heavens, the earth, or themselves. Thus, they are creations of finite span and limited knowledge.

We now consider a further segment:

116 And when We said to the angels: "Submit to Adam," then they submitted. Not so **Iblīs**; he refused.

117 Then We said: "O Adam: this is an **enemy** to thee and to thy wife. Then let him not turn you out of the garden, that thou be wretched.

118 "It is for thee to be neither hungry nor naked therein, 119 "And that thou suffer neither thirst therein, nor the heat of the sun."

120 Then the **satan** whispered to him, saying: "O Adam: shall I direct thee to the Tree of Eternity and a dominion that decays not?"

121 And they ate thereof, and their shame became clear to them; and they began to draw over them of the leaves of the garden; and Adam **opposed** his Lord, so he erred.

(20:116-121)

We note firstly another seamless transition to *al shayṭān* / الشَّيْطَانُ at 20:120. Meanwhile, at verses 20:117 and at 20:120 the connection between *enemy* and *adversary* is made clearly; and by following the *satan*, Adam *opposed* God (20:121).

In the segment below, the viewpoint shifts to the Judgment.

90 And the Garden will be brought nigh to those of prudent fear

91 And Hell will be made manifest to those who err;

92 And it will be said to them: "Where is what you served,

93 "Besides God? Do they help you, or help themselves?"

94 And they will be hurled therein, they and those who err;

95 **And the forces of Iblīs all together.**

96 They will say while they dispute therein:

97 "By God, we were in manifest error

98 "When we made you equal with the Lord of All Creation!

99 "**And none but the lawbreakers led us astray,**

100 "So now we have no intercessors,

101 "Nor sincere loyal friend.

102 "Would that we might return and be among the believers!"

(26:90-102)

We will look at what is meant by *the forces of Iblīs* later in this article. However, we can assume human agents given that the term translated here *the lawbreakers* (Arabic: *al mujrimūn*) at 26:99 can nowhere outside this context be linked with non-human agents (6:55, 6:123, 6:147, 7:40, 7:84, 7:133, 8:8, 9:66, 10:13, 10:17, 10:50, 10:75, 10:82, 11:52, 11:116, 12:110, 14:49, 15:12, 15:58, 18:49, 18:53, 19:86, 20:74, 20:102, 25:22, 25:31, 26:99, 26:200, 27:69, 28:17, 28:78, 30:12, 30:55, 32:12, 32:22, 34:32, 36:59, 37:34, 43:74, 44:22, 44:37, 45:31, 46:25, 51:32, 54:47, 55:41, 55:43, 68:35, 70:11, 74:41, 77:18, 77:46).

20 And **Iblīs** had proved right in his assumption about them, and they followed him save a faction among the believers.

21 And he had no authority over them save that We might know him who believes in the Hereafter from him who is thereof in doubt; and thy Lord is custodian over all things.

(34:20-21)

We note that most men will follow Iblīs, and that only a faction among the believers will not. Thus, being a believer does not exclude one from following Iblīs. We note also that Iblīs performs a particular function: to distinguish those who believe in the Hereafter from those who do not and that, ultimately, he is subject to God.

We turn now to the final segment which mentions Iblīs by name.

71 When thy Lord said to the angels: "I am creating a mortal from clay,

72 "And when I have formed him, and breathed into him of My Spirit, then fall down, to him in submission."

73 Then the angels submitted, all of them together.

74 Not so **Iblīs**; he had waxed proud, and was of the false claimers of guidance.

75 He said: "O **Iblīs**: what hindered thee from submitting to that which I have created with My hands? Hast thou waxed proud? Or art thou of the exalted?"

76 Said he: "I am better than he; Thou createdst me of fire, and Thou createdst him of clay."

77 He said: "Go thou forth from it; for thou art accursed;

78 "And upon thee is My curse until the Day of Judgment."

79 Said he: "My Lord: grant Thou me respite until the day they are raised."

80 He said: "Thou art of those granted respite

81 "Until the day of the known time."

82 Said he: "Then by Thy power and glory will I cause them to err all together;

83 "Save Thy servants among them that are sincere."

84 He said: "Then the truth: — and the truth do I say —

85 "I will fill Gehenna with thee, and whoso follows thee of them all together!"

(38:71-85)

The segment above reiterates and confirms motifs we have already seen to this point.

Summary and references

We are not able to provide definitive proof on the nature of Iblīs vis-à-vis the angels. My view is that Iblīs is active on the unseen strata of the operating system of the Matrix as it were, as are angels. We discuss this Matrix more fully in the next Section.

Iblīs was created of fire, but was not privy to the creation of the heavens and earth, or to that of himself. While he is mentioned in one breath with the angels multiple times, it does not follow that he was an angel; the point is left moot. We allow for this lack of clarity in our translation by rendering the Arabic *illā* (normally rendered *save*, in the sense of *except* or *excepting*) by means of a new sentence in *Not so* (e.g. *Not so Iblīs*).

We have noted several seamless transitions from Iblīs to *al shayṭān* / الشَّيْطَانُ and conclude that the latter term identifies the function of the personage called Iblīs. We develop this question below as well as the underlying meaning of *satan* (*shayṭān* / شَيْطَانٍ) as *adversary*.

We have established here that Iblīs has progeny in the plain sense of that word; and given an identification of Iblīs with the *satan*, at least where the context demands it we can assume his progeny to be *satans* (*shayṭān* / شَيْطَانٍ).

We consider the *satan* (*al shayṭān* / الشَّيْطَانُ) below.

Iblīs / إبليس is found at 2:34, 7:11, 15:31, 15:32, 17:61, 18:50, 20:116, 26:95, 34:20, 38:74, 38:75.

al shayṭān / الشَّيْطَانُ; *shayṭān* / شَيْطَانٍ; *al shayṭān* / الشَّيْطَانِ Typically, the words listed above are translated *satan(s)* or *devil(s)* or similar. More Western-influenced translations will talk about evil impulses and the like.

As touched on above, a further reason for the confusion about some of the terms which form the focus of this article is the fact that the words which refer to *satan* / *satans* in the Qur'an have an underlying or related meaning of *adversary* or *adversaries*. We have pointed out cases above where that correlation is clear, and we shall see more in what follows.

While all *satans* are *adversaries*, only some humans are, and it is not always clear which is in view. We have also anticipated the opaque or 'merging' quality of *satans* into humans which we will touch on more fully further into the article.

On a pan-textual basis, it is clear that *shayṭān* means *adversary*; *adversary* is also the primary meaning of שָׂטָן (*satan*) in Hebrew (see Strong's Concordance 7854).

We can form a pan-textual view of the Qur'an's use of *al shayṭān* by reviewing all instances. Since there are so many, we will summarise the contexts.

al shayṭān / الشَّيْطَانُ

2:36 — caused Adam and his wife to fall.

2:168 — mankind is not to follow him; he is an open enemy who enjoins evil and sexual immorality, and that we ascribe to God

what we don't know.
 2:208 — those who heed warning are not to follow him; he is an open enemy to those who heed warning.
 2:268 — promises those who heed warning poverty, and enjoins sexual immorality.
 2:275 — can possess to the point of making men lose control of themselves.
 3:155 — causes men to slip on the basis of what they themselves have earned.
 3:175 — has allies whom he can fill with dread.
 4:38 — is a companion to those who spend without fear of God and who do not believe in God and the Last Day.
 4:60 — desires to cause men to stray.
 4:76 — those who heed warning are to fight his allies; his plan is weak.
 4:83 — can be followed by believers save by the bounty of God and His mercy.
 4:119 — can be taken as an ally instead of God.
 4:120-121 — he promises those who follow him only delusion and leads them to Gehenna.
 5:90-91 — alcohol, gambling, idolatry, and divination are his handiwork; those who heed warning should avoid them. He wishes to turn them away from the remembrance of God and from duty.
 6:43 — he can delude men by hardening their hearts and making them see their actions as fair.
 6:68 — he can cause a man to forget God's directives.
 6:142-144 — he is an open enemy to man (by creating and ascribing lies to God which then take on the form of a religion).
 7:20-22 — he whispers subtle lies in order to divert from the command of God; he claims to be on one's side and to have one's interests at heart. He is an open enemy.
 7:27-28 — children of Adam exhorted not to let him subject us to means of denial (of God); it is clear that he has others like him who are allies of those who do not believe. Those who follow them justify their sexual immorality.
 7:175-179 — he follows the man who detaches himself from the proofs of God and causes him to err; such men are indifferent to exhortation or rebuke.
 7:200-202 — he provokes believers but can be resisted by seeking refuge in God.
 8:11 — can scourge believers, but that can be removed by God.
 8:48 — can make men's deeds seem fair to them, but will turn tail and disown those who follow him. He fears God, though he tempts men to turn against God.
 12:5 — can cause discord among brethren and provoke them to plan against their own.
 12:42 — can cause a man to forget something.
 12:100 — can provoke to evil among brethren.
 14:22 — lies to his followers and will disown them on the Day of Judgment; his only power is to call (i.e. suggest / offer). Man is at fault for following him.
 16:63 — he makes the deeds of men who end in the Fire fair to them.
 17:27 — he is ungrateful to God.
 17:53 — he provokes to evil among men; he is an open enemy to man.
 17:64-65 — he promises only delusion; he has no authority over God's servants.
 18:63 — can cause a man to forget (in this case, the directive of a prophet of God).

19:44 — is defiant to the Almighty.
 19:45 — being his ally results in punishment from the Almighty.
 20:120 — whispered lies (in this case, to Adam).
 22:52-54 — spoils the work of messengers and prophets by polluting their message; but God abolishes that pollution and makes it a means of denial for the diseased and hard in heart, and makes plain the truth to those given knowledge.
 24:21 — those who heed warning are not to follow him; those who follow him enjoin sexual immorality and perversity.
 25:29 — he is a traitor to man.
 27:24 — makes men's deeds fair to them so they turn away from the path of God.
 28:15 — can cause a man to kill his brother; he is a manifest and misleading enemy.
 29:38 — makes men's deeds fair and turns away from the path of God.
 31:21 — he invites to the punishment of the Inferno.
 35:6 — is an enemy to mankind, and should be taken as one; calls his party to be companions of the Inferno.
 36:60-65 — children of Adam instructed by God not to serve him; he is an open enemy. He will lead a great multitude astray into Gehenna.
 38:41 — can touch one with distress and punishment.
 41:36 — can provoke; one should seek refuge in God.
 43:62 — we are not to let him divert us; he is to us an open enemy.
 47:25 — can entice, and grant temporary respite.
 58:10 — private (i.e. conspiratorial) conversation is of him, to grieve those who heed warning; he cannot harm them but by God's permission.
 58:19 — can overcome one and make one forget the remembrance of God; those who do are his party. They are the losers.
 59:16 — calls man to deny God but disowns him once he has denied Him.

shaytān / شَيْطَانٌ

4:117-121 — a *rebellious satan* called to instead of God; one cursed; will lead men astray; promises only delusion and guides to Gehenna.
 15:17 — every *accursed satan* finds the sky guarded against him.
 22:3-4 — every *rebellious satan* is followed by those who dispute concerning God without knowledge; he leads those who follow him into the punishment of the Inferno.
 37:6-10 — every *refractory satan* finds the lower heaven of stars a protection; they are unable to listen in to the exalted assembly (of God); they are pelted and repelled. Those who snatch a fragment are followed by a flame.
 43:36 — a satan is assigned as a companion to those who are blind to the remembrance of the Almighty.
 81:25 — it (i.e. the Qur'an, or at least sūrah 81) is not the word of an *accursed satan*.

al shayātīn / الْشَّيَاطِينُ and *shayāṭīn* / شَيْطَانِينَ

2:14 — addressed directly by men who claim falsely to believe.
 2:102 — (the Jews) followed what they recited (of sorcery); the satans themselves denied God; what they teach men deprives those who adopt it of any share in the Hereafter.
 6:71 — can seduce a man away from guidance.

6:112-113 — God has appointed for every prophet an enemy: satans of servi and domini who create flowery speech and lies.
 6:121 — instruct their allies to dispute (with men); if one follows them, he is an idolater.
 7:27 — are the allies of those who do not believe.
 8:30 — those upon whom misguidance was due take them as allies instead of God, and think they are guided.
 17:27 — the squanderers are brothers of them.
 19:68 — are to be brought into Gehenna with men on bended knee.
 19:83 — the satans are sent upon the false claimers of guidance, inciting them onwards.
 21:82 — among them were those diving and doing other work for Solomon.
 23:97-98 — the Prophet told to say: "My Lord: I seek refuge in Thee from the goading of the satans, / And I seek refuge in Thee lest they be present with me."
 26:210-212 — did not bring it (i.e. the Qur'an) down; they are not able to, and they are excluded from hearing.
 26:221-222 — descend upon every sinful deceiver.
 37:65 — the Tree of Zaqqūm has spathes like the heads of satans (note: heads of adversaries have traditionally been placed on spikes on battlements).
 38:37 — built and dived for Solomon.
 67:5-11 — the lower heavens are thrown at them; they will enter the punishment of the Inferno; the same is for those who deny their Lord and the warnings they received.

Summary and conclusions

A constant characteristic within contexts which treat of *satan* / *satans* is that of *adversary*, which point comports with the Hebrew sense of the word שָׂטָן (*satan*).

Clearly, demons (i.e. non-human, ethereal beings) exist. Within our taxonomy, these are *satans*; all *satans* are *adversaries* (i.e. to the command of God).

The question is: are all *adversaries* demons? Is the term not being used to refer, at least some of the time, to human beings also? My view is that to answer these questions we need to be specific about what we mean. In the interests of time, I will resort to popular culture to assist in making the necessary distinctions, at least in part.

In the film *The Matrix*, the agents (chief among whom is Agent Smith) are analogous to what one might properly call *satans* in the sense of *demons*. Agent Smith and his colleagues serve — and are biologically related to — some dominant character (whom we do not see represented in the film). This dominant character may be taken as analogous to what we are calling in our work *the demon dominus*, and who here is named Iblīs. Iblīs is, as it were, the head of the Agency, the one for whom all agents work.

This Agency Head is, in certain contexts, *the satan*. However, *the satan* is used as a generic term in the Qur'an also. We can compare this usage with the generic term *agent* in the context of the Matrix: ultimately all agents represent the Agency Head.

In addition to the lack of consistent specificity (due to the

cohesion of purpose and loyalty among *satans*) between any individual *satan* in general (Arabic: *shaytān* / شَيْطَانٌ) and *the satan* (Arabic: *al shaytān* / الشَّيْطَانُ) since the latter term may or may not refer specifically to Iblīs, there exists a further level of complexity as far as humans (Arabic: *al nās*) are concerned. As we have already seen, humans collectively comprise two general categories: *al jinn* / الْجِنُّ and *al ins* / الْإِنْسِ, or domini and servi respectively.

For a moment we will consider our own physical and metaphysical reality as a matrix similar to that in the movie. We can regard this matrix as something akin to a computer system. That computer system has a front end (i.e. that small part of the system's processes the user sees on the screen, and which is the extent to which most people's perception of reality reaches), and a back end (i.e. the majority of the system's processes, all of which inform, regulate, and drive the entire system — including what the users see and interact with).

Satans are capable of traversing the Matrix unseen as well as operating within the seen part of it. That is, they can move freely through the underbelly of the operating system undetected and enter the visible part of the Matrix at any point which receives them. As such, they are able to 'absorb' both the unsuspecting and the willing participants in the visible world and use them for their own purposes.

Unsuspecting participants may be used for temporary purposes and discarded either at no cost to the satan, or at the expense of the target, who will never be the wiser. Willing participants are a separate category, and that includes those who form binding contracts with the demonic forces.

(I have come to understand that satanic forces buy people at their own estimate of their worth. The ruling elites sell themselves for specific ends; the ignorant masses often pay to serve the *satans*.)

The metaphor we have established above serves as the best launchpad I can think of from which to elaborate upon the points I wish to make.

Having considered all instances of *satan* / *satans*, I am of the view that the meaning of the term in the Qur'an is fluid as regards human beings. Certainly, there exist demons, and these demons are *satans* which operate according to their agenda in the world, as we have stated. However, lesser human beings (servi) who — though perhaps not 'agents' in the permanent and positive sense — may operate to some degree unconsciously as agents at any time.

People who allow themselves to be so used are, I would assert, what the Qur'an calls *the party of the satan*, and are those whom the satan has induced to forget God. These people are used by satans at no cost to themselves and, absent any active repentance and return to God on the part of the human vehicle, that person's destination is the Fire.

18 The day God raises them all together, they will swear to Him, as they swear to you and think that they stand upon something. In truth, it is they who are the liars.

19 The satan overcame them, and made them forget the remembrance of God. Those are **the party of the satan**. In truth, **the party of the satan**, they are the losers. (58:18-19)

5 O mankind: the promise of God is true; so let not the life of this world delude you; and let not the Deluder delude you about God.

6 The satan is an enemy to you; so take him as an enemy; he but calls **his party** that they might be among the companions of the Inferno.

(35:5-6)

There exists another category of man also, perhaps closer to the character called Cypher in the movie *The Matrix*. These are those who are not 'deluded', but who willingly and wittingly contract with Agents to achieve social and material advantage within the framework of the Matrix.

If we cast our minds back to our broadening of the themes provided by Colin Wilson which produced a coterie of top-level rulers under 2,500 men, we will recall that the force of initiative and will to command among men is attended with a corresponding increase in occult power: Thus, there will be people of the type analogous to Cypher — those who trade their souls for little or nothing among the lower or mid levels. But at the level of genuine domini, not only is the will to power at its zenith, so also are the occult faculties.

In addition to this, elite families breed to optimise their genetic lines and receptivity to the satanic forces which keep them in charge. Such are those among the domini who have compromised their souls (see 2:102 for confirmation that such denial entails loss of hope for good in the Hereafter). This category comprises those who are active in their allegiance with the satan. They actively oppose those who stand up for what is true and right and are, in my view, what the Qur'an calls *the allies of the satan*.

76 Those who heed warning fight in the cause of God; and those who ignore warning fight in the cause of idols. Then fight **the allies of the satan**; the plan of the satan is weak. (4:76)

I have inferred that Qur'anic usage indicates that the term *satan* extends to a wide number of demonic entities, and within that framework I take Iblīs as the highest-level *satan*. On that basis, I take 'the forces of Iblīs' to comprise both 'the party of the satan' and 'the allies of the satan'.

94 And they will be hurled therein, they and those who err;
95 And **the forces of Iblīs** all together. (26:94-95)

Summary and references

According to our analysis, the dividing line between the following senses of *satan* is both opaque and porous:

- *Satan* in the sense of temporary human *adversary* (i.e. one

who is passively and unwittingly used in opposition to the command of God);

- *Satan* in the sense of permanent human *adversary* (i.e. one who actively serves as an adversary to the command of God for reasons of ambition or greed);
- *Satan* in the sense of *demon* (i.e. a demonic entity descended from Iblīs);
- *Satan* in the sense of Iblīs.

Leaving aside the historical conflation of terms we have already summarised, the understanding of *satan / satans* in the Qur'anic text has been plagued by the complexity caused by the multiple facets listed above whose gradations, levels of transparency, and distinctions have been compounded by pre-existing and subsequent cultural notions about non-material entities.

In conclusion, we take the existence of *satans* in the sense of *demons* as a given, and accept the degree to which humans serve demons on a sliding scale. At the zero end of this scale we would find those who sincerely serve God, and at the maximum end of it we would find those who deny God among members of the domini.

This understanding resolves and explains such verses as those where the domini say:

8 "And that: 'We touched the heaven, but found it filled with strong guards and flames.'

9 "And that: 'We sat there on seats to hear; but whoso listens in now finds for him a flame waiting.'
(72:8-9)

The contents of the verses above readily connects with verses which speak of *satans* (15:16-17, 26:210-212, 37:6-10, 67:5). At 72:8-9 above, it is the domini speaking — that is, men whose levels of temporal power must be assumed to be matched by equally high levels of occult power. Those who at each level in the power hierarchy (from the levels of servi through the 'nobility' to the actual rulers) exercise a commensurate potential control over *satans* to its fullest extent integrate with their demons to such a degree as to render themselves fully possessed, at which point the distinction between satan and human becomes meaningless. In the case of servi, this will result in general possession, and of minor powers. In the case of the domini, it was capable, at least up to a point in history, of gaining them near access to the heavenly court.

This point is important: at whatever level in the temporal hierarchy a man fully submerges his will in that of a satan, the man and the satan become effectively one unit, which question brings us to the category we review in the next Section: *al jinna / الجنّة*.

All instances of *satan / satans* are found at 2:14, 2:36, 2:102, 2:102, 2:168, 2:208, 2:268, 2:275, 3:36, 3:155, 3:175, 4:38, 4:60, 4:76, 4:76, 4:83, 4:117, 4:119, 4:120, 5:90, 5:91, 6:43, 6:68, 6:71, 6:112, 6:121, 6:142, 7:20, 7:22, 7:27, 7:27, 7:30, 7:175, 7:200, 7:201, 8:11, 8:48, 12:5, 12:42, 12:100, 14:22, 15:17, 16:63, 16:98, 17:27, 17:27, 17:53, 17:53, 17:64, 18:63, 19:44, 19:44, 19:45, 19:68, 19:83, 20:120, 21:82, 22:3, 22:52, 22:52, 22:53, 23:97, 24:21, 24:21, 25:29, 26:210, 26:221, 27:24, 28:15, 29:38,

31:21, 35:6, 36:60, 37:7, 37:65, 38:37, 38:41, 41:36, 43:36, 43:62, 47:25, 58:10, 58:19, 58:19, 58:19, 59:16, 67:5, 81:25.

SECTION THREE

al jinna / الجنّة; *al nās / النّاس*

We will look at these two terms as far as possible together.

The term *al jinna / الجنّة* occurs five times: 11:119, 32:13, 37:158, 37:158, 114:6 and is typically conflated by the Traditionalist with *al jinn / الجنّ* (which we translate as *the domini*).

Before looking at the main topics in this Section, we will briefly address a related though secondary topic: that of the word *jinna / جنّة*. This word means — and I translate it throughout — *possessed* (7:184, 23:25, 23:70, 34:8, 34:46). It is related to *majnūn*, which I translate also *possessed*. All translators treat these two words in similar fashion.

The underlying sense of the *j-n-n* root is of something *hidden*. And given this fact, we may appreciate the potential for confusion among the terms in this root that we look at in this article.

But the term *al jinna / الجنّة* is a separate textual entity from *jinna / جنّة*, as the Traditionalist agrees. The question concerns only what it means.

The Traditionalist view is that *al nās / الناس* was created from a single soul (4:1, 39:6), and means men, people, mankind or humanity, i.e. the totality of human being across all races, and operates as the plural of *al insān / الإنسان*.

I broadly agree with this, although with some caveats and distinctions which fall beyond the remit of this article. However, such things notwithstanding, within our taxonomy, *al nās / الناس* is the umbrella term for both *al jinn / الجنّ* and *al ins / الإنس* — or the domini and the servi respectively.

This category covers all beings of a material corporeality possessed of freedom of choice.

Of the five times *al jinna / الجنّة* occurs, three come together with — and in contradistinction to — *al nās / الناس*. And of these three, two treat of the same outcome. I list these two instances below with their contexts, and comment upon them together.

116 Oh, that among the generations before you there had but been a remnant forbidding corruption in the land save a few whom We saved among them! But those who did wrong followed what they had been given therein of opulence, and were **lawbreakers**.

117 And never would thy Lord destroy the cities in injustice, when their people were those who do right.

118 And had thy Lord willed, He would have made mankind one community; but they will cease not to differ, 119 Save he upon whom thy Lord has mercy. And for that He created them; and the word of thy Lord will be fulfilled: "I will fill Gehenna with the *jinna* and mankind all together."

(11:116-119)

12 And if thou couldst see when the **lawbreakers** hang their heads before their Lord: "Our Lord: we have seen and heard, so send Thou us back. We will work righteousness! We are those who are certain!"

13 And had We willed, We could have given every soul its guidance. But the word from Me is binding: "I will fill Gehenna with the *jinna* and mankind all together!"

14 "So taste! Because you forgot the meeting of this your day, We have forgotten you. And taste the punishment of eternity because of what you did!" (32:12-14)

Both scenarios include mention of *lawbreakers*, which word consistently pertains to human actors throughout the text. The verse at 11:117 treats of cities, which implies — I would say conclusively — that the objects at 11:119 and 32:13 must both be human. Thus, were we neither primed that *al nās / الناس* comprises all types of humanity, nor that *al jinna / الجنّة* comprise non-human entities, one would incline to the view that both terms signify categories of human being given the surrounding context.

But we have established that *al nās / الناس* comprises all humanity, and that it consists of two categories: domini and servi.

We are confronted with the question, then: if *al nās / الناس* comprises all humanity, since the context treats of human objects, is not mention *al jinna / الجنّة* here superfluous if they are human also?

We will return to this important question in due course, and turn now to sūrah 114, the last sūrah in the Qur'an, and the third and final case where we find *al jinna / الجنّة* together with — and in some contrast to — *al nās / الناس*.

- 1 Say thou: "I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind,
- 2 "The King of mankind,
- 3 "The God of mankind,
- 4 "From the evil of the retreating whisperer
- 5 "Who whispers in the breasts of mankind;
- 6 "From the *jinna* and mankind."
(114:1-6)

A counterpoint between *al jinna / الجنّة* and *al nās / الناس* is here emphasised, with *al nās / الناس* occurring in this short sūrah the same number of times as *al jinna / الجنّة* is found in the entire Qur'an.

Interestingly, the wording of the final verse reproduces identically the core portion of the two other verses where *al jinna / الجنّة* and *al nās / الناس* occur together (11:119, 32:14). And despite the fact that *min / من* can have meanings in the context at 114:6 other than that in the previous instances, it is the case that the Arabic reads in all three places: *min al jinnati wa al nās / مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ*. This signifies to me that the segments are logically as well as thematically connected. On that basis, I look to 114:1-6 to provide a broader context on the basis of which to understand *al jinna / الجنّة*, then with that

understanding we can review the other cases and see if those findings fit.

The summary below presents my understanding of the Matrix with the basic layers of the operating system identified:

At the top, surrounding and underlying all things is God, the Creator. He occupies the Unseen together with the next level: the angels.

Below the angels, the Unseen splits into Unseen and Seen. In the Unseen on this level are the hidden forces which drive the Matrix (all unseen aspects of the physical and metaphysical world), as well as Iblis and all the satans in the direct sense of demons.

In the seen part of this level, we find the so-called natural world which comprises human beings on the one side, and everything else on the other. Humans are distinct by virtue of the fact that they have free will and can choose to serve God or not.

The human group itself divides into two: domini and servi.

As we have also touched upon, human society is not flat; there exist natural hierarchies — levels within the societal pyramid — which strata intersect at various points from the lowest of the servi through to the true domini who form the capstone.

My assertion is that the key elements in this system are the following:

- Corporeality (i.e. pertaining to the Seen or the Unseen);
- Purpose (for what purpose any part of God's creation is intended: angels to obey God; satans to defy Him; humans to serve Him, etc.);
- Will (the presence or otherwise of freedom of choice);
- Destination (whether a place in the Fire or the Garden).

All aspects of God's creation may be assessed on each of these. However, there is an aspect of duality in each.

To take man: in terms of corporeality he pertains to the Seen. Yet if one includes sleep, imagination, prayer, will, intuition and any number of other factors, he is understood also to pertain to an unseen realm.

Regarding purpose, will, and destination: while it is the case that God created men to serve Him, it is a fact that most do not. Is God's purpose thwarted? I would say not. It is, rather, that we do not understand how our will stands in relation to God's purpose. That lack of understanding accepted, then, the fact remains that despite the fact that we perceive that we possess freedom of will, God's will is over all, and our destination is ultimately a function of that reality.

Even within our limited grasp on things, whether man pertains to the servi or the domini, his power to choose a path regarding God is fundamentally equal; both have their burdens and their power to choose. (This point may seem moot to some; however, the Roman philosopher and former slave Epictetus remarked that while Caesar could chain his leg to a post, he could not make him dislike it. By the same token, Marcus Aurelius — though

Emperor — evinced a love of truth in no way inferior to that of Epictetus.)

My broader point is that, as we have already touched upon, the distinction between satans on the one hand and passive or active human agents for those satans within the Matrix on the other can be a subtle one.

I believe that, like *al nās* / الناس, *al jinna* / الجِنَّة is an umbrella term and comprises all generally non-corporeal beings below the angels, i.e. the hidden forces which drive the operating system which we perceive as the Seen (and which forces have no free will), but includes also Iblis himself as and his armies of demons.

While the Qur'an does not explicitly say what these hidden forces are, we can make inferences on the basis of what we know. We know that once the Hour strikes, all matter is going to lose its potency: the mountains will become dust, the sky will be removed, and all that will remain is the face of God. After this, human beings will be resurrected in forms which — while recognisable — will be new. The Garden itself also will be recognisable — or comparable to what we know — but it will also be entirely new.

However, there is a further element to this, which is why *al jinna* / الجِنَّة is mentioned in connection with the umbrella term for all humans. There are those among men who follow the satans blindly and whose destination is Gehenna. But there are others who willingly and actively sell their souls to Iblis for worldly gain. These people often acquire — at least in the short term as we shall see in the quote below — status and power. But those who do this are not simply occasional or temporary vehicles for satanic agents; they become agents. That is, their fundamental spiritual make-up changes.

Once a man has made such a pact, he essentially acquires a separate form of citizenship with that realm we are calling *al jinna* / الجِنَّة. This is why the Qur'an specifically names these people as entering Gehenna since, while physically they pertain to the human race, their spirit — through an act of conscious will — has changed its fundamental allegiance.

We find this view supported obliquely here:

102 And they followed what the satans recited during the reign of Solomon; and Solomon denied not; but the satans denied, teaching men sorcery, and what was sent down upon the two angels at Babylon, Hārūt and Mārūt. And they taught no one until they had said: "We are but a means of denial, so deny thou not." Then from them they learn that by which they cause division between a man and his wife; but they harm no one thereby save by the leave of God. And they learn what harms them, and profits them not, knowing well that whoso buys it has in the Hereafter no share; and evil is that for which they sold their souls, had they but known.

103 And had they believed and been in prudent fear, recompense from God would have been better, had they but known.

(2:102-103)

The fact of conscious, willing contract is emphasised; the satans require that a man who contracts with them is personally responsible for what he 'buys' from them.

I am saying that *al jinna* / الجِنَّة comprises the Unseen reality which drives the material world and in which layer the satans operate and that anyone who makes such a contract becomes *al jinna* / الجِنَّة in the same way that anyone who takes the citizenship of France becomes French. It is a matter of conscious, contractual fealty.

This explains the facility for 'luck' experienced by those who compromise their souls for this world, and are thus aligned with the *shaytān*. In my observations of those who serve the *shaytān*, they tend to end badly and their master always short-changes them. The *shaytān* will buy a man at that man's own estimation of his worth. But he always turns around and betrays him.

At the level of minor players, this characteristic is true of men such as Goethe's Dr Faust, or of men such as Casanova or Crowley. However, it will ultimately prove true of the top levels of the ruling elite. Today, the elites clearly feel themselves so close to their goal of all ages. But the satan's characteristic of betraying his followers after their complete commitment to him indicates to me that the elites' monolith is a house of cards; given the right gust of air, it will collapse around their ears.

So, in summary, *al jinna* / الجِنَّة comprises the totality of that realm of the Unseen which is inferior to that of the angels (i.e. that which consists of the drivers behind the operating system of the Matrix, and the demons themselves). But — and this is the crucial point — *al jinna* / الجِنَّة includes those among domini or servi who have contracted with satans actively and willingly for gain (the Cyphers, as it were). Such people are no longer covered in terms of lordship, kingship, and godhood as per the formulations in the verses below.

- 1 Say thou: "I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind,
 - 2 "The King of mankind,
 - 3 "The God of mankind,
 - 4 "From the evil of the retreating whisperer
 - 5 "Who whispers in the breasts of mankind;
 - 6 "From the *jinna* and mankind."
- (114:1-6)

The 'retreating whisperer' is that satan which crosses from the Unseen into the breasts of men (temporarily absorbing as it were a human who has taken no permanent fealty with the satans), but *al jinna* / الجِنَّة have to be mentioned separately properly speaking since in their human form they are permanent agents of Iblis, all visible correspondence with other human beings notwithstanding.

In its human application, I would translate *al jinna* / الجِنَّة by means of *demoniacs* or *demon-possessed* to indicate those who have fully become agents of the Matrix as it were, and functionally indistinguishable from satans. In my view, these human forms house spirits which comprise the progeny mentioned in the following verse.

- 50 And when We said to the angels: "Submit to Adam,"

then they submitted. Not so Iblis; he was of the domini and was perfidious towards the command of his Lord; **take you him and his progeny as allies instead of Me?** And they are an enemy to you; evil an exchange for the wrongdoers!
(18:50)

In its broader application of that part of the Unseen in which the drivers of the Matrix and the satans reside, I would translate *al jinna* / الجِنَّة by means of *hidden forces*.

I believe that the second category which falls under the meta-category of *al jinna* / الجِنَّة comprises the unseen drivers which impel those physical and metaphysical forces which we are trained to think of as the Laws of Nature. These are those forces which we all encounter and which comprise the underlying operating system of what we are calling the Matrix. Scientists encounter these forces through the barrier of the apparent, and measure, manipulate and describe their characteristics, but they cannot reach those forces themselves. These are those forces which, in effect, Materialists worship and around which they base their religions.

By the so-called hard sciences and by esoteric and metaphysical practices man may progress some way into the forest, but he can never emerge the other side of that forest. Man is locked into a range, and that range is encompassed on all sides by God.

To use another computing analogy, we may progress some way beyond the obvious constructions of the front end (mouse, windows, filing systems, etc.) and observe to some extent that various drivers and system files interact with each other according to particular patterns. But the forces behind those drivers are hidden from us the user.

Materialists disregard the createdness of the entire system, and assume the forces as givens and insist that everyone do the same. To a large extent, they have been successful in transforming the mass of men — usually without the cognisance of their target — into secular humanists (i.e. Materialists). Those who retain an apprehension of their own createdness and of the Hereafter as its obvious function regard that system itself as both temporary and as a witness to the power of the Creator.

The Qur'an is clear that at the Hour all things will change, and that the constitution of those who arise in the Hereafter will be, though comparable, factually different to what we know now. The Qur'anic references to the casting of *the hidden forces* (Arabic: *al jinna* / الجِنَّة) into Gehenna comports with this view: the entire range of hidden forces from demons through all those forces which underpin and act as drivers upon the physical and metaphysical world of this temporary creation will be discarded at the point of the Hour.

Materialism is essentially idolatry — not because there is an inherent tension between systematic, analytical, provable knowledge and faith in God, but because while claiming not to be a religion itself, Materialism takes God's laws as permanent givens but disregards the Lawgiver.

I surmise that *al jinna* / الجِنَّة — or what we will call *the hidden*

forces — comprises in total invisible forces of two types: those with individual, malevolent will (*satans*), and those with no individual will (the underlying forces driving the operating system of the Matrix).

Thus, when the Qur'an states that *al jinna* / الجِنَّة are destined for Hell, this references both the damned condition of the satans and the temporary nature of the underlying operating system upon which this *dunyā* (or temporary life) rests and depends.

This brings us to the last verse which contains *al jinna* / الجِنَّة.

158 And they have made between Him and the *jinna* a kinship — when the *jinna* know they will be summoned. (37:158)

The term in question could be understood here in both its general applications.

On the one hand, if we take *al jinna* / الجِنَّة in the sense of *hidden forces* or *drivers* behind the creation, we can say that Materialists fabricate a correlation between God and His creation. In this regard, I reproduce Muhammad Asad's comment at this verse, and follow it with my own thoughts: *Whereas most of the classical commentators are of the opinion that the term al-jinnah denotes here the angels, since they - like all beings of this category - are imperceptible to man's senses, I believe that the above verse refers to those intangible forces of nature which elude all direct observation and manifest themselves only in their effects: hence their designation, in this context, by the plural noun al-jinnah, which primarily denotes "that which is concealed from [man's] senses". Inasmuch as people who refuse to believe in God often tend to regard those elemental forces as mysteriously endowed with a purposeful creative power (cf. Bergson's concept of the élan vital), the Qur'an states that their votaries invent a "kinship" between them and God, i.e., attribute to them qualities and powers similar to His. The idea is that the creation is in some manner God, the "laws" of which exist beyond any conception of God; what they are not — and must not be recognised as within the doctrine of Materialism — is a function of God's command.*

We have already noted that when the Hour strikes, all the "laws" which govern the visible realm will fail. So what happens to them? Since they have their origins in that unseen realm in which demons also operate — and demons themselves are destined for the Fire — I infer that the "laws" which the Materialist worships are destined for the same place.

On the other hand, if we take *al jinna* / الجِنَّة in the sense of *demoniacs* or *demon-possessed*, into this category fall those who have sold their souls to demonic forces in order to achieve worldly fame and success. In our time, this would comprise most of those who form the pantheon of modern gods called "stars", as well as those at the forefront of business and in other fields. It certainly includes the majority of those families which comprise the domini of our day and which plan and execute the agendas which shape the world.

One quite often sees that such people have compelling and attractive personalities. For myself, I have noted that public figures at the sub-domini levels who have made these types of deals completely change. They typically attain an amount of

fame and prestige, but are unable to get beyond a certain level. Then something happens to them, and they "come back" and are suddenly somehow different. They have been sprinkled with fairy dust. Thereafter the media gives them a constant and favourable wind, and the person himself now espouses a narrative which just happens to fit in every respect with the broader Satanic agenda.

The reason for this is that they have made a deal; they have joined the ranks of *al jinna* / الجِنَّة.

The human members of *al jinna* / الجِنَّة appear to manifest unusual abilities and are possessed of what seems to be incredible luck, or creative or financial genius. What is happening is that they are accessing the demonic realm, while those around them are entirely ignorant of the spiritual dimension. The contrast between such people and the mass of men is all the more stark when we consider that since the nineteenth century Western man has been fully trained in Materialist dogma, and is thus incapable of grasping either an understanding of the physical world in its proper context because it denies the non-physical world.

In terms of sports, one might compare those who understand the Matrix from those who do not to two teams: one team is training using steroids, a highly effective diet, and is plugged into AI, while the other team is living on junk food and doesn't have a basic understanding of the rules of the game. There can be no serious competition between the two. This is not to say that *al jinna* / الجِنَّة are the only people who are going to Hell. There are many within the base category of *al nās* / الناس who are going to Hell also. The core point is the shift in status. And one's status is defined by one's response to the Lord of All Creation.

There exist many means of obtaining satans. There are corporate means such as fraternal orders, mystery schools, oaths and the like. But there are also lower orders of what you might call freestyle demoniacs. These would include many who ingest certain types of music. I would list sexual deviations and many so-called "psychological" and "psychiatric" maladies under the same heading. The ingestion of satanic films and other supposed entertainment will turn the unschooled into open-access wetware when combined with a number of other delivery systems (state-mandated education, inferior food, pharmaceutical poisons, etc.).

My estimation is that *al jinna* / الجِنَّة predominate among certain bloodlines, and that knowledge of how to access the powers associated with this connection are passed down within those bloodlines. As touched on, there exist also lesser strata which serve satans, and this includes the majority of those who comprise the "stars" of the present pantheon created by the media, as well as sports heroes, business people and politicians. They use secret societies as the means of conveying their knowledge, and together implement a plan the details of which most of those seen in the public space are generally ignorant of.

I do not believe that anyone is born possessed; the opening of the soul to such infestation seems to require a decision on the part of the recipient. However, it appears that those who are

either born into a particular line or who are abused or misused as children are particularly susceptible to such forces.

Clearly, it is also true that these people are expendable, and they are regularly "thrown under the bus" as the expression goes. But at the lower levels, there is a never-ending stream of wannabes who can't wait to have their few years in the sun.

At the higher levels, many of these people live in fear. Certainly, this world is kind to them; but there is no VIP lounge the other side of death, and death is an insoluble problem for them.

Added to this is the problem that they are serving an entity which will disown them:

48 And when the satan made their deeds fair to them, and said: "None among men can defeat you this day, when I am at your side," then when the two companies came within sight of one another, he turned on his heels and said: "I am quit of you; I see what you see not. I fear God"; and God is severe in retribution. (8:48)

Summary and references

Within the framework of the pan-textual approach taken here, the view of the classical commentators that *al jinna* / الجِنَّة at 37:118 includes the angels is sustainable only if one agrees that the angels are also to be cast into the Fire as per *al jinna* / الجِنَّة at 11:119 and 32:13. This view can not be sustained on a broader basis.

While our understanding of *al jinna* / الجِنَّة is necessarily multifaceted, it is consistent across all cases, and comports both with the other terms we have looked at in this article and with the broader text.

We find it impossible to translate by means of a single word a term which covers both those fully possessed agents of the hidden realm in human form (and in whom the distinction between possessed human and full demon has ceased to apply) as well as the hidden forces. Therefore, we render this term as the *jinna* and supply a note to our translation in each instance.

The term *al nās* / الناس is found together with *al jinna* / الجِنَّة at 11:119, 32:13, and 114:6.

The term *al jinna* / الجِنَّة occurs also twice at 37:158.

Final word

My case against the ruling elite of today is one based in the reality that powerful men will dominate. I'm not against there being a ruling elite; there is no point being against reality. It is natural that there be a ruling elite, just as every mountain must have a summit.

My argument against the ruling elite is that they are failing in their obligation to guide the herd in the direction of righteousness. The masses will do what they always do, which is to follow.

One can train the herd to believe and to do anything, given enough time and inducements or blandishments. The elite know this — and they are correct; they have been manipulating the herd into the shape of a dystopian, amoral nightmare for over a hundred years, creating what they see as a perfected form of slavery.

But with power comes responsibility. The elites of the world are bound by the rules of *noblesse oblige*. Elites will rule; but they need to apply that responsibility correctly, which means to do so with the requisite fear of God, and for the ultimate benefit of both themselves and the herd which they manage.

Since the elites have gone off the reservation of their natural obligations, they need to be held to account.

Such is the principal topic of my work *The God Protocol*, and is discussed more fully there.